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BET EMET MINISTRIES

Hebrew For "The House of Truth"

Craig M. Lyons M.Div.



THE BIBLICAL "PATTERN" OF WORSHIP & THE GOD-FEARER IN THE FIRST CENTURY SYNAGOGUE-"CHURCH"

[Before We Begin...The Method Of Interpretation Of Jesus As Used On This Website](#)

I, as a non-Jewish believer in God, have always wanted to attend the "synagogue-church" that I read about in the book of Acts; in other words if I could choose any congregation where I and my family could attend and worship God I would choose the "synagogue-church" in Jerusalem as described in the Book of Acts to be my church home if possible. I have always desired to return to that unique time in the first century, sitting at James' feet or the feet of other Apostles, when I could have heard the "**present truth**" as taught by the Apostles and Disciples of "the Christ". Notice in the passage below the warning that there exists a "present truth" in the days of Peter which alternately means that not always will "this truth" possibly exist.

2Pet 1:12 12 Wherefore I will not be negligent to put you always in remembrance of these things, though ye know them, and be established in the present truth. (KJV)

Notice if you will that Peter mentioned that there was a "present truth" which he described in the first century which sadly I have discovered, along with other truth seekers, gets diluted, corrupted, and altered down through time due to many influences; none of which are positive. The end result is that what we have inherited today in Western Christianity is anything but the reflection of that "present truth" as it existed in the first century.

If one has done any serious study into the history and origin of Christianity then they have without a doubt

noticed the alteration and change in the Apostle's Doctrine that has occurred over the last two thousand years as we find Judaism and Gentile Christianity polarized at different ends of the theological spectrum. The fruits of **Replacement Religion** are noticeable by any serious student of the origins of Gentile Christianity.

Systematic theology is the study of all facts about God and His work, from any and every source, but revealed primarily in the Bible, and brought together in a coherent and inter-related manner in order to instruct, encourage and guide the saints in godliness. What we need to remember when we progress throughout this website is that if Gentile Christianity is the culmination and fulfillment of Biblical Judaism as it maintains then we should NOT expect to find the contradiction of or the replacement of prior theological religious doctrines, dogmas, and theologies but rather an overlap and harmony expressed between them as found in Biblical Judaism and Gentile Christianity. The problem that I found in Seminary and afterwards in my serious studies of my faith is that we do not find this harmony and overlap but rather an outright replacement of prior Jewish religious beliefs by later antisemitic Gentile religious beliefs taken from the Gentile's background in sun worship. It would do you well to see these things for yourself in preparation for the further studies on this website as we trace the **"Pattern of Worship"** throughout the Hebrew Scriptures as well as the New Testament to see if we have been taught this **"Eternal Pattern of Worship"** as Gentile followers of Jesus and "the Christ".

Answer for yourself: Have you ever contrasted or compared the "Systematic Theology" between Judaism and Gentile Christianity? **Well you should as it is an eye opening experience to see for yourself just how Gentile Christianity, which is made to be the culmination of Biblical Judaism, departs so drastically from the faith of its parent.**

Answer for yourself: In Malachi 3:6 it is recorded that God revealed to the prophet Malachi: "For I am the LORD, I change not..."(KJV)? Then if you believe this statement is true then have you wondered how the God who "changes not" decided to change the "faith once given to the saints" as we find so clearly demonstrated when we compare the systematic theology of Biblical Judaism and Gentile Christianity? It is time we think deep thoughts that are bathed in knowledge long kept from us a followers of the Biblical Jesus and "the Christ".

The stark realization is, as I have discovered in my studies over the last 17 plus years, that the **"Pattern of Worship"** as well as numerous religious dogmas intended to be taught to all mankind by Israel has been adulterated and changed almost beyond recognition today by the antisemitic predisposition of the early Gentile Christian Church following the destruction of the Temple. **Nowhere is this more tragic than in the area of worship as we as Gentile believers today have deviated from the "Pattern of Worship" given to Israel and which was intended to be taught to the Gentile world.**

Sadly this opportunity of recovering this "Pattern of Worship" does not exist today in Christianity as we have so far removed ourselves from the Biblical and Jewish Roots of our parent faith; Biblical Judaism. We should remember that Paul teaches;

Rom 11:17 17 And if some of the branches be broken off, and thou, being a wild olive tree, wert grafted in among them, and with them partakest of the root and fatness of the olive tree; (KJV).

It should appear clearly that if **we as non-Jewish believers are grafted in among the olive tree of Israel that we should "resemble" our parents not only theologically but in worship of the Creator as well.** This is where the "Pattern of Worship" given to King David comes in as we will soon discover. We will soon see by any doubt that **we as non-Jewish believers have departed from this "Pattern of worship" drastically and that goes without saying theologically as well.** Any attempt to restore this "Pattern of Worship" is usually met with the cries of "bondage" by those who fail to grasp the tragic alteration of this "Pattern of Worship" over the last two thousand years.

Yet I found over the years of intense Biblical and historical study, both during and after Seminary and during my Pastorate years, that it is possible to gleam the knowledge hidden behind the Hebrew and Greek words of our Christian Bibles and **restore the picture of what First Century Worship entailed; especially as it**

concerned the non-Jewish believers who will be called in this website a "God-fearers". Not only that but I will show you in this website that although the opportunities might not exist where you can return to **"the faith once given the Saints"** (Jude 1:3) in your typical denominational or non-denominational congregations of today there is nothing stopping you from incorporating the **Divine Pattern of Worship** as practiced in the first century "synagogue-church" into you life and into your families lives. I did and the outgrowth of this "repentance" (called Teshuvah in Hebrew) was the formation of Bet Emet Ministries and a congregation that returned to the true Hebrew Roots of the Christian Faith as it existed in the earliest centuries before Rome obliterated it almost beyond recognition. **One only needs to read Constantine's Easter letter to see this tragic loss of the "Divine Pattern of Worship" intended for the all of mankind.**

RETURNING TO THE PATTERN OF WORSHIP COMMANDED BY GOD

First of all you need to know that there is a "Pattern of Worship" that God desires be followed but few know of its existence today. Space does not allow at this time we examine it in detail but as we study throughout this website we will see beyond any doubt that such a "Pattern of Worship" exists and we will be instructed how to incorporate this "Pattern of Worship" into our lives. In fact we find that all the way back with Egypt mankind knew of this "Pattern" and we see this in the religious ethic of Egypt: **"So as above so below"**. We need look no further than King David to see that he would be reminded of this "Pattern of Worship" when given the plans for the Temple and its construction by God.

As a typical Christian I assume you desire to follow in the steps of Jesus (Yeshua is the Hebrew name) and consider yourself a follower of Jesus of Nazareth described in the Christian New Testament. Likewise it goes without saying that such a follower of Jesus and "the Christ" also assumes that he also continues to follow the **"Apostle's doctrine"** of the early Jerusalem Messianic Church (Synagogue).

Acts 2:42 42 And they continued steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers. (KJV)

But few Christians have ever taken the time to study for themselves the origin of most of mainline Gentile Christianity's Religious dogmas and doctrines and compare them with the "Apostle's Doctrine" that existed in the first century in Jerusalem. Not having done this the best one can do is **assume** that he is a follower of Jesus. Notice I said "assume"!

Answer for yourself: Are you confident that you are a follower of a Jewish Rabbi named Yeshua in the first century? Well you might want to read the accompanying article and think really hard on this one.

Having done in-depth scholarly studies into my Christian faith for over fifteen years to date **I and Bet Emet Ministries has felt compelled to make this information available to the Christian believer and numerous websites have been created that tackle this issue and we have covered this issue in-depth and the work has been done for you and we encourage you to examine this information for yourself. If you do take the time to search out the origin for your Catholic and Protestant Religious Dogmas of today you see sadly see that most represent a Replacement Religion that has little if anything in common with the "Apostolic Doctrines" of first century Judaism. It is not a stretch to say that we as followers of Jesus and "the Christ" today practice a totally different religion from the Jesus of Nazareth and the Messianic Apostles of the first century.**

Having seen these tragic departures from "the faith once given the Saints" the question that arises in the minds of the readers of Bet Emet Ministries is a simple one: **"Having shown us what not to do on other websites then what is it that we should do; how, as non-Jewish believers in God, should we worship and how do we return to the true Apostolic Doctrine"?** This website is devoted to answering this very important

question as we will turn our focus on restoring the true Jewish Roots to the Christian Church and the Gentile believer and God-fearer as seen in the New Testament. In so doing we will repent and draw near to the Kingdom of Heaven.

RECOVERING THE "PATTERN OF WORSHIP"...THE ARTICLES AWAIT YOU

DO YOU WANT TO LEARN MORE ABOUT THE TRUTH CONCERNING THE HEBREW ROOTS OF CHRISTIANITY?

Recover The Faith Once Given To The Saints Which Has Been Perverted By Gentile Christianity...Return To "The" Faith Once Given To The Saints...The Real Faith Of Yeshua Which Went Into All The World In The Great Commission And Which Was Stamped Out By Constantine And Rome In The Early 4th Century.

NewsLetter Bet Emet Libraries...Get The Facts...Learn The Difference Between Religious Rhetoric And The Truth About What Happened To Christianity....Catch Up On Bet Emet Newsletters...Return To The Faith Once Given The Saints



If You Want To Be Included On Our Mailing List Of New Teachings.....Just E-Mail Us And You Will Be Included

OTHER WEBSITES TO HELP IN YOUR STUDY AND RECOVERY OF LOST TRUTH

See Bet Emet Ministry's Other Websites In Order To Recover Long Long Biblical Truths



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AS TO THE METHOD OF INTERPRETATION OF "JESUS" ON THIS WEBSITE

Greetings and welcome to Bet Emet Ministries. My name is Craig Lyons and I am at present a "resigned" Pastor of the Christian faith. There are many reasons for this resignation from the Christian Ministry in my life following Seminary and eight years of a very successful ministry and it is to these issues we must turn since you asked either to be added to the teaching ministry of Bet Emet Ministries or are a reader of one of many of our ministry's websites.

So often when surfing the Internet people find one of our Websites and get confused when beginning in the "middle" so to speak their study of the "Jesus Story" as presented by our ministry's many websites. **Bet Emet's Websites are intended to be a "Spiritual Pilgrimage" in ones study of "the Christ" and "Jesus"; moving from the inherited and assumed "Historical Jesus Christ" to the "Mystical Jesus Christ" and finally to the "Mythical Jesus Christ".** You see there are 3 different Jesus that we encounter down through these last 2000 years of interpretation of Biblical history concerning the depiction of Jesus in the New Testament. In fact we can trace the Revelation of the "Karast/Christ" back to 13,000 years B.C.E. Only two of these depictions of "the Christ" are true; one is false. The study of our ministry's websites will reveal the answer to you concerning which of the above "Jesus" are false and which are not and how to correctly approach and interpret the Jesus of the New Testament.

If one undertakes the study of Bet Emet's Websites, and understand it has been my life's work, then one is prepared to understand what has happened to Christianity down through the centuries and how **Divine Truths, once expressed through allegory, metaphor, myth, and simile by the Ancients who first perceived the Revelations of God, has been suppressed, altered, and tragically lost today through the "literalization" of such revelations given to us by the Ancients.** Simply said it is we who have lost the "gnosis" to interpret the "Christ" and "Jesus" correctly when reading the New Testament. This is a tragic story to say the least and renders us as "believers" and "followers of the New Testament Jesus" as idolators and we never know it because our Bibles and New Testaments which we inherited from Rome are "forged" in key "theological places" let alone our prior conditioning to approach and interpret everything we read in the New Testament as if a "literal" event and occurrence. If you are diligent to study and learn from what is shared on these multiple sites from our ministry then over time you will come to understand how it is possible to follow the "New Testament Jesus" in one way which ends with idolatry and in another way which ends in holiness and righteousness. **The key to all of this rest in the true identity of "the Christ," "the Logos", and "Christ Jesus".** We are all familiar with these terms but we will see hopefully there is a big difference between what we have been taught about them today by standard orthodoxy and what these terms meant to the original Christians and Ancients who gave the world these Spiritual Concepts in the first place. Both the Essenes and Rome's has played a key role in the loss of these Divine truths and the substitution of falsehoods as you will come to see in the study of our websites. "Surely that is not possible I hear you say" but I only wish it were so. For your study and thought are these websites developed and revised over the years as Bet Emet Ministries' studies has progressed and deepened in our understanding of God and as more parts of the "theological puzzle" of Christianity became apparent to myself and others through dedicated study.

These websites are intended to be "a step by step" process in your pilgrimage of learning. We begin by looking at the surface of the texts and then moving deeper as the websites progress in depth and deeper understanding of "the Christ" as well as the New Testament "Jesus". In so doing we look often at the hidden and esoteric meanings that lie beneath these same texts which we inherited and were told to interpret "literally". In other words we begin our websites with a "literal-historical" interpretation of "the Christ" and "Jesus Christ" and move in later websites to the "Mystical Christ" and finally to the "Mythical Jesus Christ". As alluded previously we begin by looking at the *assumed "literal historical Jesus"* and approach the texts and explain them "literally" as we have been instructed since growing up most likely since childhood in the Christian faith we inherited. In so doing, using a historical Jewish Jesus as the vehicle to deliver such truths, it is my intent to show you and separate for you a Jewish Messiah and Judaism's truth from a non-Jewish Messiah and untruths given us by antisemitic Rome in their depiction of the New Testament Jesus we inherited in our Roman Bibles. **As your studies progress it is my hope that you will come to see the depiction of this "Jesus" in the New Testament in a deeper light; not as a historical-literal person but the "personification of Divine truth" that was entrusted to the Jewish nation for the Gentile world. As the websites progress you will come to see just whom this "Divine Mystical Christ within" really is and how this concept has tragically be changed by Rome and given a "literal-historical" life of its own which is not accurate to historical fact nor archeology and its records provided to us today.** It is a real shame that the only Jew to ever came to you and me as a "light to the Gentile world" was this New Testament Jesus dressed up like Constantine and bearing "literalized" sunworship and related religious concepts which simply are not true in their "literal sense" since they bring the sin of idolatry with them and their Christology. **Over time you will come to see the Divine Truths behind these "literalized" concepts however when they remain as the allegories they were intended for it is then, and only then, can they express the Divine truths as originally intended and as understood by the ancients who gave them to mankind in the first place.** This enlightened understanding comes when you study later websites dealing with the "Mystical Christ" of the Gnostic Christians and Ancient Egypt and their "Karast" (our term for the Christ). Rome changes these allegorical Divine Truths when they "literalized" them and portrayed them in the form of a "historical Jesus Christ" to the exclusion of the "Christ within" all mankind and when they made them an "assumed historical event". The problem facing us is that Rome never tell us what they did in the Roman book we inherited; the Roman Bible containing the New Testament. We simply grew up believing everything we read as if "literal" and "historical"; never suspecting that behind these stories were the original "Mythical Christ" and "Mythical Christ" as had been understood by the Ancients for thousands of years.

In closing it is my intent as a yet ordained Pastor who desired to serve the Creator and help His children do the same that once this information came to light over the years of my studies I realized that someone has to share and tell others of this deception in order that our worship of the Creator be in "Spirit and in Truth. Bet Emet, Hebrew for "House Of Truth", has done as best it can to present these truths in hopes that your love for and worship of God be likewise; in Spirit and in Truth which I have found is tragically lacking in the "literalized" version of "the Christ" given to us by Rome today.

The order of our study is very important. If you start from the beginning and work your way through these websites as if you are reading the "best of many books" (which you are since our websites are the summary of hundreds of special books researched throughout the years) then you will end your study with few unanswered questions and you will have arrived at the truth you sought and have a very clear picture of whom God is and what He requires of you, the non-Jewish believer in Christianity today. Sure the trip is hard, long, and time consuming and filled with both tears and joy as you deal with what has happened at the hands of men who served themselves rather than God. But the goal must be kept squarely before you....to come to the Truth once known about God by these Ancients who framed many of the very same religious doctrines that sadly have come down to us altered today and sadly cover the pages of our Bibles and New Testament. You will come to see that there is a very big difference from the Jewish Bible and the corrupted Gentile Christian Bible we inherited from Rome. This is Rome's doing! All of this is dealt with on our websites and you will get to it in time

if you are diligent in your study.

Let us end with one passage from the Hebrew Scriptures:

Jer. 14:14 14 Then the LORD said unto me: 'The prophets prophesy lies in My name; I sent them not, neither have I commanded them, neither spoke I unto them; they prophesy unto you a lying vision, and divination, and a thing of nought, and the deceit of their own heart.'

It is time that we do diligent study in order to overcome these "lies" which we have inherited from Rome and others and repent of such error if it be in our life. It is time we search out and return to the faith of our Fathers who carry the Ancients traditions and truths with them. Today we find these truths best in Judaism which is not surprising since Judaism carries the legacy of Egypt and their higher Spiritual Truths preserved for the world. Few know this today because of lack of study but the beginning study in these areas has been done for you on our many websites. **It is time you accept the mantle of such study which in first century Israel was "the highest form of worship".**

Lev 20:77 Sanctify yourselves therefore, and be ye holy; for I am the LORD your God (the Jewish Tanakh)

Understand then that as you read and study the following website we approach the "Jesus of the New Testament", as viewed in the following website, through the spectacles of an "assumed historical" interpretation. Using the interpretation of Jesus as a historical person, even though the unforged evidence for his historical existence is lacking and points to another interpretation of "the Christ" entirely, is beneficial to us in learning the necessary religious concepts which we deal with in the following website when contrasting the truths of Biblical Judaism with the dishonesty and erroneous religious teachings of Gentile Roman Christianity. This must be kept in mind in everything you read and study in the following site. In the following website I **choose to use the vehicle of an "assumed historical Jesus" to present these higher truths to the reader;** especially in light of the fact that Israel is the light to the Gentiles and Jesus is the only Jew to ever come to me with the revelation of God (albeit dressed up like Constantine carrying "literalized sunworship with him). Teaching the religious truths of Judaism through the vehicle of a Jewish Rabbi whom we call "Jesus" allows us to see through the eyes of a Jew since, as stated before, the only Jew to come to us with the revelation of God was this Roman version of the "New Testament Jesus". **Personally when reading the New Testament through the eyes of a Jew, and knowing the truth about the Mystical and Mythical Christ, I have come to look at the "New Testament Jesus" as the personification of the best of Rabbinical instruction that Israel had to offer.** Again he is the only Jew to ever come to me carrying the Revelation of God with him. You can thank Rome for Israel no longer being a "missionary religion". It is tragically sad that the depiction of this New Testament Jesus is "un-Jewish" in many areas of his presentation in the New Testament let alone a gross distortion of the expected Jewish Messiah as promised by the Prophets and Normative Conservative Judaism. We deal with these many issues on many of our websites and in so doing restore the Jewishness necessary to discern truth from fiction as it applies to the non-Jewish believer and seeker of God today.

Let me say again that it is very important that once finding Bet Emet Ministries and our websites that you study the websites in the intended order suggested. Many readers come to our websites randomly in searching the Internet and, possessing different levels of understanding concerning "the Christ" and the "New Testament Jesus", have already seen the fallacy of the historical interpretation of Jesus as depicted in the New Testament. Many come to our ministry's sites and skipping around from site to site without their intended order of study get confused as to the progression of our studies presented in our 14 websites concerning "the Christ" and the "Jesus of the New Testament". In so doing it appears that at one time we present a "historical Jesus" and at other times on later websites reveal the fallacy of such an interpretation of the New Testament Jesus when allegory and myth better explains Jesus and the events in the "Jesus Story". At times Jesus appears to be nothing more than a "myth" and at others times a "Mystical Christ within each child of God". Without the

proper knowledge of these concepts given in such an organized progression of study of our sites it will appear confusing or contradicting to the average reader or student. **In diligent study of our sites, when taken in order, the reader will both see and progress in his study beyond the "assumed historical Jesus" to a more correct understanding of the "Mystical Christ within" and finally the truths behind the "Mythical Christ Jesus".** But this takes time and much reading and we have at Bet Emet tried to simplify this for the interested student. We ask that you be understanding of the ministry's attempt to present the "milk of the Word" to those who have yet not attained such a level of understanding of the "Mystical Christ" (<http://firstnewtestament.netfirms.com>) let alone the Mythical Christ (<http://www.egyptcx.netfirms.com>), (<http://jesusastrotheology.netfirms.com>) and (<http://paganizingfaithofyeshua.netfirms.com>). It is our hope that in time we all can come to see differences between the assumed "historical Jesus" (a myth taught through the medium of a presumed historical person to serve as an example to be emulated by all mankind), the "Mythical Christ" (personification of the Sun and its path through the Zodiac and the equinoxes and solstices which make for the seasons of the year) and the "Mystical Christ" (expressing a hidden teaching, a secret doctrine, given under strict and exacting conditions to approved candidates by the Masters of Wisdom regarding the descent of the Logos and Soul into matter, ie., mankind). Paul speaks of this:

Col 1:27 27 To whom God would make known what is the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles; which is Christ in you, the hope of glory: (KJV)

I believe it is time we progress with our studies on this website remembering what has been said above.

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COMPARISON OF HEBRAIC AND CHRISTIAN RELIGIOUS DOCTRINES...WHICH REFLECT THE "MIND OF CHRIST" THAT IS TO BE IN US?

In Seminary I remember taking courses in Systematic Theology. In other words, what do the Baptist's believe about God, man, sin, redemption, forgiveness, etc. The course was a theological analysis of the Baptist Faith and the rationale for its beliefs in these different areas.

I never will forget after graduation I sat down and asked myself some rather simple questions after having earned my Masters's Degree in Divinity: "How come I didn't learn much about a Jewish Rabbi named Yeshua while at the Seminary", "How come I know so much about Paul but the life of Yeshua was not stressed", "How come I know how to build a church but don't know much concerning a Jewish Jesus", "What was in that mind of Christ anyway and do I believe the same things he did"? That was just the beginning of it for me. From there my thoughts graduated even deeper as I asked myself such heart-stirring questions like these:

- 1. What did Yeshua believe about God, man, sin, worship, redemption, atonement, forgiveness, salvation, giving, etc.?
- 2. Would Yeshua hold to my Baptist religious belief system in all these above areas?
- 3. Did Yeshua believe differently in these theological areas from which I had been taught by the Baptists?
- 4. Were there religious doctrines I held and were taught at Seminary which Yeshua could not believe in personally? Which were they?
- 5. If Yeshua could be demonstrated to believe differently from my religious beliefs in the above theological areas then why should I continue to hold such divergent religious beliefs which can be shown not to be Yeshua's views in these areas?
- 6. What religious beliefs do I currently have which Yeshua could not accept and why continue in them when it can be shown that they oppose and contradict what Yeshua both believed and practiced as his faith in the first century?
- 7. What was in that mind of Christ and in what areas do my religious belief system contradict what "the Christ" believed?
- How much do I know about the Jewish faith and since Christianity is the supposed fulfillment of Biblical faith then does my Christian faith and religious beliefs contradict Jewish beliefs or do they overlap and confirm them?
- How could I find out such information in order to verify that I truly was a follower of

Yeshua? Do I need to study what Judaism teaches and what was in this mind of "the Christ"?

MY PERSONAL QUEST FOR THE HISTORICAL YESHUA

Well I had my Masters degree and I began my Pastorate. All was well until I began my study in earnest of Biblical Judaism. My readings into such areas brought me into contact with many scholars, many of which were Jewish. In trying to understand Yeshua the Jew I found that by reading Jewish authors who were writing and "reclaiming" Yeshua as a valuable part of Jewish history that I would benefit most since they were balanced and fair in their analysis. My thoughts were quickly rewarded by what I uncovered which often provoked me to think thoughts I had never thought before.

After reading hundreds and hundreds of books over the next ten years, I was totally shocked to find that the Jewish Jesus/Yeshua was completely different than what was represented by the Christian Church as the Protestant "Jesus". My blind-spot had been removed as I encountered two entirely different "Jesus".

What was most shocking in analyzing the copious amounts of data over the years was that in the vast majority of areas my Protestant "religious beliefs" were shown to be contrary and opposite of what the first century Jesus had been taught and believed and followed as his faith. That was hard for me to take at that time in my life as the stark realization of this awakening rested heavy upon me and I realized the implications for my pastorate. **I had invested years and untold resources only to find out that in the final analysis my "religious beliefs" given me by Gentile Christianity about Yeshua were contrary and conflicting with his in most areas of religious inquiry.**

I present this information to you not to anger anyone but to warn good Christian people that they have not been told the truth about this man from Galilee which is depicted in our New Testaments. What we need if for the "real Yeshua" to please stand up! In hopes of helping your decipher the truth from error concerning the real Yeshua and what he believed as a first century Jew reflective of normative Biblical Judaism I have categorized in summary fashion points of Systematic Theology for your examination which reflect both the Jewish and the Christian points of view.

If you are reading these pages most likely you are a follower of Yeshua or you think you are. If that be true then it is impossible to follow someone "correctly" unless you know what the person really believed and are aware that you agree theologically in these same areas of religious inquiry. The following is a summary of religious positions taken from Second Temple Judaism and the religion of Yeshua; for after all Yeshua is a Jew and not a Christian. Contrasted with them are current mainline Christian positions in these same areas. I leave the analysis up to you as well as the conclusions to which you arrive based on your comprehension. I would only ask yourself when reading the following to ask yourself at every junction: ***"Which would the Jew Yeshua believe"?***

WHAT WOULD YESHUA OF SECOND TEMPLE JUDAISM BELIEVE?

The following is a comparison of theological interpretations of the Bible by both Judaism and Christianity. One is in error of many of the points of Scripture. With your current understanding and knowledge of the Word of God I invite you to read and compare the respective stances of both camps against the revealed word and will of God in the Bible. Remember our standard is the Word of God and not Catholic and Protestant pronouncements upon the Bible. Next I invite you to investigate it out for yourself in more detail and verify to yourself which views are more in line with Biblical teaching. I thank God I did.

NATURE OF GOD:

Judaism- Monotheism, oneness of God as opposed to Trinity.

Christianity-Dualism or Trinitarianism, the doctrine of the Trinity had not yet been accepted by the Church in the 3rd Century (cf. Encyc. Jud., Vol 10, p. 16.). The Trinity would be a religious creation borrowed from non-Jewish paganism stemming from Babylon.

NATURE OF MAN:

Judaism-Man is born good. Until the age of accountability (13 male, 12 female) one's sins are the responsibility of one's parents. At that age one became responsible before God for the commandments and the Law. It is at that time Paul would remind us..."when the Law came I died". For you see, there is not that sinneth not. With such responsibility come the penalty for violation of the Law...death. From the age of accountability one is considered a responsible adult who can choose not to sin.

Christianity-Man is born evil, a "victim" of original sin; man therefore has no choice but to sin. There is no concept of "Original Sin" in the religion of Yeshua.

FORGIVENESS OF SIN:

Judaism-There is no provision for willful sin except repentance and restitution. Man is cut off from God. The Jewish view challenges the doctrine of "eternal security" or "once saved always saved" and the resultant imbalance of "grace and not law".

Christianity-Man may sin and still be pardoned by God in the next life no matter how he lives if he only "believes" in the Christian creeds and theology concerning Jesus. This results in the unbiblical doctrines concerning "once saved always saved" & "eternal security of the believer". Purgatory is the "fire-escape".

SATAN:

Judaism-The adversary is a created angelic being who is in complete subjection to the sovereignty and will of God. Satan is neither fighting God nor man, but is God faithful servant to bring man to a point of decision where he must choose for or against God. Based on such a decision man is rewarded or punished. Also in Biblical Judaism "Satan" is used for the personification of the flesh of mankind which leads man to sin. Such willful decisions to sin is truly adversarial to mankind.

Christianity-Dualism; there are two equal forces of good and evil in the universe and they are constantly fighting it out (derivation of Persian captivity). This is the legacy of Persian religion and Zoroastrianism which infected parts of Israel following the Babylon Captivity.

MARRIAGE AND SEX:

Judaism-Sex is good, mandated by God as the first positive commandment in the Bible. (The marriage bed is undefiled.)

Christianity-Sex is inherently sinful (in sin was I conceived...which refers not to original sin but sexual conception prior to the mikvah following a woman's menstruation). The sex act is always sin unless for the purposes of procreation. In marriage sex is no longer a "mortal" sin but only a "venial" sin. Christianity maintains that absence from sex is meritorious.

ORGANIZATION STRUCTURE OF THE COMMUNITY & ASSEMBLY:

Judaism-The synagogue is the core of the religious and secular life of the community following the loss of the Temple. It is not an ecclesiastical structure, and the leaders are paid no salary. It is not hierarchical but rather emphasizes the priesthood of all members of the community.

Christianity-The church is a building or something one does on Sunday, a religious service instead of a community. It does not have the same organizational structure and leadership levels as ancient Judaism & the early Church (Nasi, Chazan, etc.) It is ecclesiastical and hierarchical.

FREQUENCY OF ASSEMBLIES:

Judaism-Met once a week on the Sabbath except for Festivals (emphasis is building families).

Christianity-Usually twice-three times a week unless special events then can meet nightly (emphasis is building a congregation).

THE MISSION OF THE SYNAGOGUE VS CHURCH:

Judaism-The strongest emphasis is placed on teaching and study of Torah (discipleship) to build spiritual maturity in the person. Such fruit is seen in making this world better by helping others imitate God.

Christianity-Preaching has replaced teaching; focus on evangelizing the already saved Sunday after Sunday instead of instructing & teaching them for growth & spiritual maturity through the release of their gifts and service.

SALVATION:

Judaism-Righteous non-members of the assembly will also have a share in the world to come and be saved ("righteous Gentiles"-the righteous of all nations-Noahide Laws) (Matt. 25:1, Rom 2:12-15).

Christianity-If one does not "believe in Jesus" or "the theology of Yeshua as created by Gentile Christianity" & "go to church" he will go to hell.

SPIRITUALITY:

Judaism-The sanctification of all of life to God; down to earth where rubber meets the road where the focus is on living in the kingdom of God now; not just other-worldly (after death).

Christianity-Departmentalizes life in sections: secular and spiritual. Main focus is other-worldly with preparation mostly centered on the world to come.

GIVING:

Judaism-1/3 of your gifts go to the 1) Teachers, choir, maintenance, 2) 1/3 to the benevolence (poor/almsgiving), 3) 1/3 goes to yourself to build yourself up in God (festivals)

Christianity- Give to churches and ministries; no accountability over the direction and handling of the funds. Does not follow the Biblical tithe.

DAY OF REST:

Judaism-Saturday the Sabbath as commanded in the Ten Commandments.

Christianity-Sunday; as based on later traditions-early Church councils of the 4th century and their compromise with sun-worship (loss of Jewish roots).

RELATIONSHIP TO ISRAEL IN THE BIBLE:

Judaism-The world is divided into 2 camps: Jews & Gentiles, chosen and not chosen. One is either born a member of the chosen people or become a member either as a proselyte or by becoming a God-fearer.

Christianity-Not a part of Israel, but is a Gentile replacement of the chosen of God. The Jews have been rejected and replaced as God's chosen people by the Gentile church (replacement theology). The church is the "new Israel". Israel is spiritualized and when you read "Israel" in Scripture you are to think of the church, not of physical Israel (at least when blessings are concerned and not the curses; the curses are left for "physical Israel"). The world is divided into 3 camps: Jews, Gentile Christians, and Gentile pagans. Christians have lost their Jewish roots and identity.

NATURE OF THIS LIFE:

Judaism-Life is seen as a preparation for the world to come. Trials & temptations are from God's hand and are blessings in disguise because they refine our character (James 1:2).

Christianity-Prosperity; One can write your own ticket by speaking to God, Satan, or the situation using scriptural promises as a formula. Trials & tribulations are a curse, not from God but from Satan, and there is no reason we should experience them if we are uttering positive confessions.

PROPHECY:

Judaism-One cannot know the time of the coming of the LORD nor should one speculate about the future; one should keep his garments white by continual repentance because His coming will be sudden and unexpected.

Christianity-The LORD's coming is imminent; not to be unexpected for the believer since he will be able to interpret the "signs" of the LORD'S coming. Many offer exact predictions.

FAITH:

Judaism-Expressed as a response to a religious belief system through obedience and good deeds (Jas. 2:14-26) which is faith in action; a living faith.

Christianity-Faith in God, elevating belief above tangible action and obedience. Agreement to an accepted set of doctrine at each particular assembly brings guaranteed acceptance within that same assembly. Any religious doctrinal divergence from the norm jeopardizes one's standing in the assembly.

RESPONSE TOWARD EVIL:

Judaism-Permitted self-defense, legitimacy of defending oneself.

Christianity-Passive resistance, pacifism.

THE BIBLE:

Judaism-Hebraic background of the whole Bible (even the New Testament). Proper understanding only possible when viewing the Bible in its original history, culture, and original language.

Christianity-Hellenization of Scripture (viewing the Bible through the eyes of Greek culture and language instead of Hebrew).

THE LAW (TORAH-OLD TESTAMENT)

Judaism-All men and under the laws of God; to the Jew he was given the Noahide Laws & Mosaic Law as a foundation; to the Gentile he was given the Laws of Noah only. It is the obedience to the laws of God that brings blessing, social order, and blessings from God.

Christianity-The Law is evil and we are delivered from the commandments of God by faith in Jesus and the religious creeds formulated about him. The Law has passed away and we are under grace and if anyone tries to live according to the Commandments he is under a curse.

WEALTH:

Judaism-There is no merit in poverty.

Christianity-There is merit in poverty.

BAPTISM:

Judaism-Practiced continued immersions throughout life to enter into a heightened Presence of God (every Sabbath, before each Festival, after repentance from sin, after a woman's menses each month to remove uncleanness due to contact with blood, etc.).

Christianity-Baptized only once into Messiah.

THE LORD'S SUPPER:

Judaism-Every week the Sabbath entailed 3 meals: Friday evening to begin Sabbath, followed by two Sabbath meals. This is called the Lord's Supper and is connected with the Sabbath.

Christianity-Name given to Christian Communion consisting of a cracker and a cup of grape juice which can be traced to pagan mystery religions as representing the body and blood of their gods.

HOLY DAYS:

Judaism-Celebrates the Festivals of the Lord according to Leviticus 23.

Christianity-Celebrates the Gregorian Holidays which are all derived from Paganism and have Yeshua's named now connected to give them pseudo-legitimacy.

WORSHIP

Judaism-Adheres to the "Pattern of Worship" given to King David and which is passed down through history even until this day.

Christianity-Substitutes another "pattern" of man's creation instead of adherence to the Biblical "Pattern of Worship" given to Israel which is intended to be followed by all mankind.

TIME TO GET SERIOUS

Answer for yourself: Now upon examination of this list, let me ask you "What does the Bible Yeshua used have to say on these issues (The Old Testament)?"

Answer for yourself: Which do you think is more correct?

Answer for yourself: Which are you following?

Answer for yourself: Which beliefs did Jesus hold and believe in?

Answer for yourself: Do we want the mind of Christ and does this mean accepting the Jewish understanding over the anti-Semitic Roman doctrines we have inherited?

Answer for yourself: Do you contemplate a change?

Answer for yourself: What would Jesus want you to believe?

Answer for yourself: What did he believe and what will you now believe when your study convinces you otherwise than the way you have been taught in the Gentile Church?

Answer for yourself: What is God's Religious Belief System and should you not want to make it yours?



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Shalom.



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CONSTANTINE'S EASTER LETTER AND THE LOSS OF "THE FAITH ONCE GIVEN TO THE SAINTS"

I have up to this point given a detailed account of the apostasy encountered by the early Gentile Church under the influence of Constantine. Why did this man turn from established orthodoxy handed down by the apostles? The answer comes when we see what was in the heart of such a man that caused him to accept certain values and beliefs. We are the recipients of his "false-belief system today." For an example, let us see into his heart as we examine why the Christian Church today celebrates and observes Easter instead of Passover as God COMMANDED!

CONSTANTINE I: ON THE KEEPING OF EASTER

From the Letter of the Emperor to all those not present at the Council. (Found in Eusebius, Vita Const., Lib. iii., 18-20.)

When the question relative to the sacred festival of Easter arose, it was universally thought that it would be convenient that all should keep the feast on one day; for what could be more beautiful and more desirable, than to see this festival, through which we receive the hope of immortality, celebrated by all with one accord, and in the same manner? It was declared to be particularly unworthy for this, the holiest of all festivals, to follow the custom [the calculation] of the Jews, who had soiled their hands with the most fearful of crimes, and whose minds were blinded. In rejecting their custom, (1) we may transmit to our descendants the legitimate mode of celebrating Easter, which we have observed from the time of the Saviour's Passion to the present day [according to the day of the week]. We ought not, therefore, to have anything in common with the Jews, for the Saviour has shown us another way; our worship follows a more legitimate and more convenient course (the order of the days of the week); and consequently, in unanimously adopting this mode, we desire, dearest brethren, to separate ourselves from the detestable company of the Jews, for it is truly shameful for us to hear them boast that without their direction we could not keep this feast. How can they be in the right, they who, after the death of the Saviour, have no longer been led by reason but by wild violence, as their delusion may urge them? They do not possess the truth in this Easter question; for, in their blindness and repugnance to all improvements, they frequently celebrate two passovers in the same year. (Oh by the way...if Constantine had read the Bible you would see that God allows for the celebration of Passover exactly one month later for those who were unclean when it was supposed to be celebrated, or who traveled from such far distances that they could not make it in time) Again Constantine is wrong!

We could not imitate those who are openly in error. How, then, could we follow these Jews, who are most certainly blinded by error? for to celebrate the passover twice in one year is totally

inadmissible. But even if this were not so, it would still be your duty **not to tarnish your soul by communications with such wicked people [the Jews].** Besides, consider well, that in such an important matter, and on a subject of such great solemnity, there ought not to be any division. Our Saviour has left us only one festal day of our redemption, that is to say, of his holy passion, and **he desired [to establish] only one Catholic Church.** Think, then, how unseemly it is, that on the same day some should be fasting whilst others are seated at a banquet; and that after Easter, some should be rejoicing at feasts, whilst others are still observing a strict fast. For this reason, a Divine Providence wills that this custom should be rectified and regulated in a uniform way; and everyone, I hope, will agree upon this point. As, on the one hand, **it is our duty not to have anything in common with the murderers of our Lord;** and as, on the other, the custom now followed by the Churches of the West, of the South, and of the North, and by some of those of the East, is the most acceptable, it has appeared good to all; and I have been guarantee for your consent, that you would accept it with joy, as it is followed at Rome, in Africa, in all Italy, Egypt, Spain, Gaul, Britain, Libya, in all Achaia, and in the dioceses of Asia, of Pontus, and Cilicia. You should consider not only that the number of churches in these provinces make a majority, but also that it is right to demand what our reason approves, and that we should have nothing in common with the Jews. To sum up in few words: By the unanimous judgment of all, it has been decided that the most holy festival of Easter should be everywhere celebrated on one and the same day, and it is not seemly that in so holy a thing there should be any division. As this is the state of the case, accept joyfully the divine favour, and this truly divine command; for all which takes place in assemblies of the bishops ought to be regarded as proceeding from the will of God. Make known to your brethren what has been decreed, keep this most holy day according to the prescribed mode; we can thus celebrate this holy Easter day at the same time, if it is granted me, as I desire, to unite myself with you; we can rejoice together, seeing that the divine power has made use of our instrumentality for destroying the evil designs of the devil, and thus causing faith, peace, and unity to flourish amongst us. May God graciously protect you, my beloved brethren.

THE CONSTANTINE CONSPIRACY

We at Bet Emet Ministry are aware through the study of history of the compromise which led the institutional church into apostasy (departure from the true faith). We at Bet Emet feel the Lord has called us to awaken those who are asleep to the facts of the terrible apostasy from the faith of Jesus and who are comfortable in their compromise with paganism in the practice of their own faith (mainline Christianity). I do hope this treatise peeks the interests of many, causing more investigation of the subject and more light on the nature of the great apostasy to whom multitudes are not aware. With the intriguing prospect that mysteries and conspiracies of the past can become common knowledge, perhaps more "ordinary" believers like myself will join in the process of the restoration of the truth in these latter times.

This anti-Judaism which became anti-Semitism (even anti-Israel), exempted the church, in its opinion, from following the scriptural commands of the Sabbath and the holy feasts, such as Passover. The church equated obedience to these scriptural mandates with following Judaism (called today "being under the Law"). They supposed that since the Jews were so proud of observing the Sabbath and holy feasts, they would be in league with Judaism if they also followed these things. Of course, since many in Judaism (but not all) denied the truth of Yeshua (Jesus) as Messiah, the church thought keeping the Sabbath and Passover would be equated as associating with those who deny Messiah (Christ). This, of course, was a false doctrine which overcame the church.

Answer for yourself: Have you ever investigated why the Jews reject the "Christian Jesus?" Well, until you do then you will not possess the knowledge that explains why, and once having such knowledge, then your study of the Jesus of the New Testament becomes paramount in your life because the arguments of the Jews are often irrefutable.

All Christians and Jews, centuries later, are affected by this apostasy. Most Christians think of Sunday and Easter as biblically mandated holy days and are totally ignorant of this being false doctrine and pagan worship days. Also, there are many Jewish people who think of Yeshua as leader of a Gentile (thusly pagan) religion, forgetting his Jewishness and his defense of the Law as a rabbi. Both

mainstream Rabbinical Judaism and mainstream Christianity stubbornly follow their respective traditions, voicing the idea that to do otherwise would leave one "not a Jew" or "not a Christian" as the case may be. The few Christians who faithfully keep the Sabbath and enjoy the Jewish holy feasts are consigned to being a cult by mainstream Christianity. They are mostly not respected as real Christians. The minority of Jewish people who accept Yeshua as Israel's valid Messiah are viewed as traitors and apostate Jews by the mainstream Jewish community. By some they are likened to being non-persons.

Thankfully, in response to this dilemma, the Father has raised up the Messianic Jewish Movement. Notice I did not say Messianic Christianity. The emphasis here is upon Judaism and not Christianity. This movement is the joining together of Jewish believers and righteous Gentiles (we prefer the term non-Jewish or Ephraimic believers). This is a union of observant Jews who look to the coming of their Messiah and non-Jewish believers who keep the Sabbath and enjoy the Holy Biblical Festivals. The effect is a new Israel, a unified holy people who are separated from paganism. We respect Christians because they are followers (ideally) of Yeshua (representation of the Adom Kadmon..the ideal perfect man) and we respect Jews because they are preservers (ideally) of the commandments of God. In addition, we believe in order for our Christian brothers and sisters to fully follow the Yeshua of the New Testament they should obey the commandments of the Law, which the Yeshua of the New Testament keeps himself and said would be kept and taught by those faithful to the Kingdom of God.

In many of our writings at Bet Emet we are dealing with the problem of the historical denial of the scriptures by the Gentile church. What I found was that the whole issue of church apostasy comes down to a time and a man who transformed the environment and system in which Christianity and Judaism operated. I propose that the events which culminated in and included the rule of an Emperor named Constantine culminated a conspiracy; one that must be overturned by an equally powerful divine conspiracy, prayerfully accomplished in our time. It is our hope at Bet Emet Ministries that through your desire for truth and your diligent study you might come to see this horrible deception and our separation as followers of the Jesus of the New Testament and "the Christ" and return to the Biblical "Pattern of Worship" which was "once given to the saints" (Jude 1:3).



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"SO AS ABOVE...SO BELOW": THE DIVINE "PATTERN" OF WORSHIP...ARE YOU AWARE?



First of all please look at what you recognize as "the Star of David" above.

Answer for yourself: Do you notice that the star is pointing both upwards and downwards? What could this mean? Is there hidden meaning here that we are missing? Well you have to study Egypt and Egyptian religion to understand the religious concepts hidden in the Star of David. Archeology today is teaching us just whom the identities of the Biblical Patriarch actually are and you be amazed to find out that these Patriarchs are Biblical Pharaohs. In Seminary I always wondered why Amenotepe III wrote many of the Proverbs. Today I know that he is the Biblical Solomon and his father, King David, is Tuthmose III. Well that is a teaching for another day but if one was to undertake such a rigorous study of Egyptian Monotheism then you will find that the center core of all that they believed is that "So above then so beneath". In other words the Divine Pattern is to be reproduced on earth as it is in heaven above and not only their architecture and pyramids reveal this but their very core religious theologies as well. But that study has to wait but understand this as we move on the children of the Egyptians who intermarried with Semites are the Jewish nation and no wonder that Biblical Judaism has almost the same religious tenants of their Egyptian fathers but even the Star of David points "as above so beneath" which reveals to us that Divine Axiom in disguise. Now let us continue since our focus is on the "Pattern of Worship" (above) that is to be reproduces on earth (below) according the Divine Pattern above.

Exod 25:8-9 8 And let them make me a sanctuary; that I may dwell among them. 9 According to all that I shew thee, after the pattern of the tabernacle, and the pattern of all the instruments thereof, even so shall ye make it. (KJV)

Answer for yourself: Is there a "Pattern" of Worship that we are to follow and if there is what is it? Do we follow it at our Christian churches? Well we need to look into this matter to be certain.

Let us look at the Hebrew word used for "pattern" above:

Strong's Concordance tell us that the word for "pattern" is Strong's number 8403: tabniyth (tab-neeth'); from 1129; structure; by implication, a model, resemblance: KJV-- figure, form, likeness, pattern, similitude.

The word clearly indicates that connected with the worship of God is the necessary construction of an earthly example of something that has a Spiritual/Heavenly existence (similar, like another). The idea carried with this word is one of "comparison" between two items. This "pattern", as a model, refers to a representation,

generally in miniature, to show the construction or appearance of something that is a resemblance of "something else". It also carries the idea of a simplified representation of a system or phenomenon, as in this sense the representation of the worship due the Creator. Egypt understood this and coined the terms "So as above, so below" and their offspring the Jewish nation understood this religious concept and adapted it from them. Both Egypt and Israel had in common equinox Temples for example. We find that Egypt build the Giza Plateau as a representation and likeness of what they saw in the Heavens above them. It was a "mirror image" so to speak. We see the same example of this spiritual concept in the New Testament:

Matt 6:10 10 Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven. (KJV)

Earth is to be a carbon copy or reflection of the Divine. We as mankind are to reflect the "real" and manifest as best we can the "image of God" both within us and without through our influence and our conduct. More on this in a second as we continue our thoughts.

Let us examine other passages referring to this "pattern".

Exod 25:40 40 And look that thou make them after their **pattern**, which was shewed thee in the mount. (KJV)

Num 8:4 4 And this work of the candlestick was of beaten gold, unto the shaft thereof, unto the flowers thereof, was beaten work: according unto the **pattern** which the LORD had shewed Moses, so he made the candlestick. (KJV)

Josh 22:28-29 28 Therefore said we, that it shall be, when they should so say to us or to our generations in time to come, that we may say again, Behold the **pattern** of the altar of the LORD, which our fathers made, not for burnt offerings, nor for sacrifices; but it is a witness between us and you. 29 ***God forbid that we should rebel against the LORD, and turn this day from following the LORD, to build an altar for burnt offerings, for meat offerings, or for sacrifices, beside the altar of the LORD our God that is before his tabernacle.*** (KJV)

Answer for yourself: Did you notice a strong admonition in the above verse?

Notice in this verse the strong admonition to NOT construct a "false" man-made substitute in worship for what God has commanded to be made and used in His worship which is not according to "the" pattern given by God Himself (selah)!!!

Of course this necessitates that one is aware of this "Pattern of Worship" in the first place. Sadly this "Pattern" of which I speak is hidden behind the Hebrew and Greek words of our Christian Bibles and the English does a poor job at revealing it; in fact it masks it from our view. More verses need to be examined so let us keep reading.

II Ki 16:10 10 And king Ahaz went to Damascus to meet Tiglath-pileser king of Assyria, and saw an altar that was at Damascus: and king Ahaz sent to Urijah the priest the fashion of the altar, and the **pattern** of it, according to all the workmanship thereof. (KJV)

Now here is where it gets very interesting and it is here we find the hidden implications for non-Jews and their worship of God.

1 Chr 28:11-20 11 Then David gave to Solomon his son the **pattern** of the porch, and of the houses thereof, and of the treasuries thereof, and of the upper chambers thereof, and of the inner parlours thereof, and of the place of the mercy seat, 12 And the **pattern** of all that he had ***by the spirit***, of the courts of the house of the LORD, and of all the chambers round about, of the treasuries of the house of God, and of the treasuries of the dedicated things: 13 Also for the courses of the priests and the Levites, and for all the work of the ***service of the house of the LORD***, and for all the vessels of ***service in the house of the LORD***. 14 He gave of gold by

weight for things of gold, for all instruments of all manner of service; silver also for all instruments of silver by weight, for all instruments of every kind of service: 15 Even the weight for the candlesticks of gold, and for their lamps of gold, by weight for every candlestick, and for the lamps thereof: and for the candlesticks of silver by weight, both for the candlestick, and also for the lamps thereof, according to the use of every candlestick. 16 And by weight he gave gold for the tables of shewbread, for every table; and likewise silver for the tables of silver: 17 Also pure gold for the fleshhooks, and the bowls, and the cups: and for the golden basons he gave gold by weight for every bason; and likewise silver by weight for every bason of silver: 18 And for the altar of incense refined gold by weight; and gold for the pattern of the chariot of the cherubims, that spread out their wings, and covered the ark of the covenant of the LORD. 19 All this, said David, the LORD made me understand in writing by his hand upon me, even all the works of this pattern. 20 And David said to Solomon his son, Be strong and of good courage, and do it: fear not, nor be dismayed: for the LORD God, even my God, will be with thee; he will not fail thee, nor forsake thee, until thou hast finished all the work for the service of the house of the LORD. (KJV)

Answer for yourself: Did you notice that this "Pattern" was given by the Spirit of God?

Answer for yourself: Did you notice the highlighted words "service"?

Strong's Concordance reveals the true meaning of the word "service" in these verses:

5656 `abodah (ab-o-daw'); or `abowdah (ab-o-daw'); from 5647; work of any kind: KJV-- act, bondage, + bondservant, effect, labour, ministering (-try), office, service (-ile, -itude), tillage, use, work, X wrought.

Answer for yourself: What can we learn from the root word from which "abodah" is taken?

The root word comes from 5647 `abad (aw-bad'); a primitive root; to work (in any sense); by implication, to serve, till, (causatively) enslave, etc.: KJV-- X be, keep in bondage, be bondmen, bond-service, compel, do, dress, ear, execute, + husbandman, keep, labour (-ing man, bring to pass, (cause to, make to) serve (-ingself,)), (be, become) servant (-s), do (use) service, till (-er), transgress [from margin], (set a) work, be wrought, worshipper.

Answer for yourself: So now what have we seen? Without a doubt God has commanded His worship according to a particular "Pattern" given to the Jewish people who are his Servants who are commissioned to communicate these truths about God to the whole world.

Isa 49:6 6 And he said, It is a light thing that thou (Israel) shouldest be my servant to raise up the tribes of Jacob, and to restore the preserved of Israel: I will also give thee for a light to the Gentiles, that thou mayest be my salvation unto the end of the earth. (KJV)

Let us read a few more verses.

Ezek 43:10 10 Thou son of man, shew the house to the house of Israel, that they may be ashamed of their iniquities: and let them measure the pattern. (KJV)

Heb 8:5 5 Who serve unto the example and shadow of heavenly things, as Moses was admonished of God when he was about to make the tabernacle: for, See, saith he, that thou make all things according to the pattern shewed to thee in the mount. (KJV)

Strong's Concordance and "pattern"

5179 tupos (too'-pos); from 5180; a die (as struck), i.e. (by implication) a stamp or scar; by analogy, a shape, i.e.

a statue, (figuratively) style or **resemblance**; specifically, a sampler ("type"), i.e. **a model (for imitation)** or instance (for warning): KJV-- en- ex-) ample, fashion, figure, form, manner, pattern, print.

Thayer's Greek Lexicon and "pattern":

5179 tupos- 1) the mark of a stroke or blow, a print 2) a figure formed by a blow or impression a) used of a figure or image b) used of the image of the gods 3) form: **the teaching which embodies the sum and substance of religion and represents it to the mind**, the manner of writing, the contents and form of a letter 4) an example: a) in the technical sense, the pattern in conformity to which a thing must be made b) in an ethical sense, a dissuasive example, a pattern of warning; used of ruinous events which serve as admonitions or warnings to others c) **an example to be imitated; used of people who are worthy of imitation** d) in a doctrinal sense; used of a type, that is, a person or thing prefiguring a future (Messianic) person or a thing

CAN WE DRAW ANY CONCLUSIONS?

I surely think we can.

Plato believed there are two "realities" or "worlds." This is exactly what both Egypt and the Jews believe and expressed in their religious symbolism and religious doctrines and no greater example could be found than the Temple described here and the pattern for its construction which was given to King David by God. Plato, like Moses and King David and the Rabbis knew that there exists an Invisible World and a Visible World. The Visible World is the world we see with our eyes, the world of sights and sounds and it is not "the real" but only a reflection of the "real" which exists in the invisible world of the Spirit/Energy (God). The Invisible World is the world of ideas that exist in the Spiritual realm. It is this second world, the Invisible world, that is the true reality to Plato, Egypt, and the Jewish nation attest. **The visible is but a reflection of the "real" and when we see that we are speaking of worship in the verses above this means that there exists in the "Invisible realm" of the Spirit/Heaven a "pattern for worship" of God that needs to be emulated and followed by all mankind in this visible world. The Jewish nation was entrusted with this "Pattern of Worship" for the whole of mankind.**

If you understood the above then this becomes all the more important as our studies progress and we see for ourselves that both the Jewish nation and the non-Jewish peoples of the world kept the same "pattern of worship as seen for example in worship of the Creator involving the Biblical Seasons and Biblical Festivals and Sabbaths. This you need to understand can be shown to apply both before Moses and after Moses and the 613 Laws given to the Jews by Moses. This means that long before the Jewish nation non-Jews were keeping these "holy days" by Revelation and the Hebrew texts and Scriptures detail this for us. Often however these "truths" are hidden behind English words that cover up these facts. This is a startling revelation that awaits you as you see with your own eyes for example that Abraham kept the Passover even before it gained the historical significance it holds today. Even more important is the examples we will soon see which teach us that in the New Testament that non-Jews and Jews both kept the Sabbath day and the 7 Biblical Festivals after the time of Christ. We even see Paul teaching non-Jews to observe and keep Havdalah which observes and commemorates the Sabbath as it passes and the new week begins. Paul taught his Gentiles churches this "Pattern" and we in Christianity today are basically ignorant of it and have a substitute religious calendar given us by antisemitic Rome. Even more startling is the revelation that there are certain passages in the Holy Tanakh that God commanded be read on certain days and that this "pattern" of reading of the Torah/Tanakh at certain times makes all the more sense when one come to understand that God has certain things to say and communicate to His people on special times and days of the year. Simply said you would not say to a person "happy anniversary" on his "birthday" and vice versa. Even more startling is the fact that the very basis for the outline of Mark's Gospel, chapters 1-16, can be shown to follow the Torah readings throughout the year in Palestine. Looking at the chronological sequence from Chapter 1 through chapter 16 we see that each thematic teaching overlaps with the required Torah reading throughout the year. This simply means that we have before us the midrash of the Synagogue readings as told through the life of "the Christ" throughout the calendar year as enumerated between chapters 1-16 in the Gospel of Mark. This "Pattern" of worship is everywhere but seen by

few.

To recap even more startling is that it can be shown that even before Moses the Hebrew Scriptures teach us that non-Jews kept these same "appointed times" with God which sadly Gentile Christians are taught today belong and apply only to the Jews. We will see in our studies that in these "appointed times" with God that occur at the equinoxes and solstices is a hidden message of the "true salvation" of God as found in these Biblical Festivals. That should make you wonder if you have heard the right message of God in your antisemitic Christian Churches. Kind of makes you want to study does it not? Well the opportunity awaits you on this and our other websites at Bet Emet Ministries as the long hidden truths kept from you are revealed

Blessings...Craig Lyons M.Div.



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SO YOU THOUGHT YOU WERE A FOLLOWER OF JESUS.....YOU MIGHT NEED TO RECONSIDER

Let me begin with a quote from the New Testament...from an epistle written to non-Jews like most of our readers.

2 Cor. 13:5

Examine yourselves, whether ye be in the faith; prove your ownelves.....

I think that this is a very good idea to prove to ourselves that what we believe is true; in fact I have practiced self-examination of such religious beliefs in light of the facts regarding the “real historical Yeshua” for over a decade. Because of such self-examination in light of my discoveries as I combed through 2000 years of Biblical history, culture, as well as in-depth analysis of Biblical language, I have been forced to change much of my religious belief system along the way. It is my desire that this article challenge you to scrutinize your religious beliefs as I have been challenged over the years. May God witness truth to your soul.

Answer for yourself: Was Yeshua a Christian and would he ascribe today to the vast majority of doctrines taught in his name in churches which go by his name as well?

Well let us investigate. But first we need to set the stage for what is coming next. Try and be as honest with yourself as possible in answering these next questions.

TO WHICH RELIGION WOULD A PERSON BE A MEMBER IF HE DID THE FOLLOWING?

- **Was circumcised on the eighth day.**
- **Kept Sabbath from Friday sundown to Saturday sundown.**
- **Attended a synagogue regularly.**
- **Kept the Biblical Festivals such as Passover, Hag Ha Matzah (Unleavened Bread), Shavuot (Pentecost), Rosh HaShanah, Yom Kippur (Day of Atonement), Sukkoth (Tabernacles) and Hanukkah.**
- **Was a citizen and friend of Israel and believed Israel is the example for all non-Jewish people in the world**
- **His Bible contained the Torah, the Prophets and the Writings ONLY!**
- **Quoted passages as authoritative from the Mishnah (the Oral Law).**
- **Taught that Deuteronomy 6:4 was the most important commandment.**
- **Wore a tallith and phylacteries in religious services**
- **Did not eat unclean foods**
- **Taught the eternalness of God's Covenants and His Laws**

- **Taught that faith without works is no faith at all**
- **Taught that salvation is more concerned with events in the here and now than what occurs beyond the grave**

I suppose that most of you came up with the same answer.....you don't have to be a scholar to recognize that one that practiced such a faith does not practice Christianity.....he holds to the teachings of Judaism.

NOW, LET'S TAKE A LOOK AT ANOTHER PERSON. SEE IF YOU CAN IDENTIFY THE RELIGION OF THIS PERSON

- **Keeps the Sabbath on Sunday which is the legacy of Sun worship today.**
- **Attends a church which most likely rejects most things Jewish.**
- **Keeps Easter and Christmas which were pagan festivals made to look religious to those who don't know the difference.**
- **Carries a Bible containing an Old Testament and a New Testament which ironically contradicts the Old.**
- **Stresses a person's beliefs over his actions.**
- **Teaches that people had to be "saved" by acknowledging a creed or an established set of beliefs in order to go to heaven.**
- **Teaches that they are not under the law and that the Law has passed away and they are under grace.**
- **Teaches that the church had replaced Israel as God's people and sees itself as the fulfillment of prophecies given to Israel.**
- **Teaches that you can eat anything...even Biblically unclean foods**
- **Attaches no special significance to circumcision**

I bet you got the right answer again – a Christian.

GOING DEEPER THAN YOU POSSIBLY HAVE EVEN GONE BEFORE

Now let's take this discussion one more step by answering this question.

Answer for yourself: If a Jew wanted to become a member of a Christian religion could he continue practicing Judaism in the church?

The answer is so simple. You would only have to ask your Pastor that one question to get the answer. Probably in the 99.9% of the cases the answer would be - NO!

TURN ABOUT IS FAIR PLAY

Answer for yourself: If a Christian wanted to become a convert to Judaism could he continue practicing Christianity and the items listed above? Again the answer is rather obvious.

Now, the percentage moves upwards, probably in 100% of the cases the answer would be - NO!

It is very apparent that not only are Judaism and Christianity different religions, they are exclusive in many ways. This reveals an amazing fact which can be seen by asking one very simple question –

WHICH RELIGION DID YESHUA BELONG TO...CHRISTIANITY OR

JUDAISM?

- Was circumcised on the eighth day.
- Kept Sabbath from Friday sundown to Saturday sundown.
- Attended a synagogue regularly.
- Kept the Biblical Festivals such as Passover, Hag Ha Matzah (Unleavened Bread), Shavuot (Pentecost), Rosh HaShanah, Yom Kippur (Day of Atonement), Sukkoth (Tabernacles) and Hanukkah.
- Was a citizen and friend of Israel and believed Israel is the example for all non-Jewish people in the world
- His Bible contained the Torah, the Prophets and the Writings ONLY!
- Quoted passages as authoritative from the Mishnah (the Oral Law).
- Taught that Deuteronomy 6:4 was the most important commandment.
- Wore a tallith and phylacteries in religious services
- Did not eat unclean foods
- Taught the eternalness of God's Covenants and His Laws
- Taught that faith without works is no faith at all
- Taught that salvation is more concerned with events in the here and now than what occurs beyond the grave

Now for the easy part. The answer to the above question is a matter of historical record which is easily attested to by the New Testament itself-- Yeshua was a Jew, not a Christian and he was certainly not both. It is clear that Yeshua was a practicing Jew who lived a very observant Jewish life-style.

In fact we cannot find any instance whatsoever where Yeshua ever: Kept the Sabbath on Sunday, attended or affiliated with any group which rejected things Jewish, kept the pagan festival of Ishtar/Easter or the sun god's birthday (Saturnalia...December 25th....Christmas) which were pagan festivals made to look religious to us today, ever taught anything that contradicted the Old Testament as does much in the New Testament, ever stressed a person's beliefs over his actions, ever taught that people had to be "saved" by acknowledging a creed or an established set of beliefs in order to go to heaven, ever taught that people are not under the law or that the Law had passed away and they were under grace alone, ever taught that the church had replaced Israel as God's people, and ever taught that you can eat anything...even Biblically unclean foods.

YESHUA NEVER RENOUNCED JUDAISM OR QUIT BEING A JEW

An amazing discovery for any Christian is the fact that there is simply no evidence that Yeshua ever renounced Judaism and quit being a Jew. Also, his teachings do not indicate that he ever wanted any Jew to renounce their Judaism and join a new religion. If this revelation every breaks into your conscious mind then you will have to confront Gentile Christianity for what it has actually become despite Yeshua's wishes or example set for us.

Answer for yourself: How then, did Yeshua get credited with the distinct label that he was the person responsible for creating a new religion?

Answer for yourself: How did Yeshua get credit for creating another religion which opposed the religion and way of life he continued to live...even up to his death?

Let us try to answer questions raised by such an assumption:

LOOKING THROUGH THE EYES OF A JEWISH RABBI NAMED YESHUA

Answer for yourself: Would a rabbi prohibit circumcision or downplay its significance?

Answer for yourself: Would a rabbi change the Sabbath to another day...let alone to the day set aside for sun worship by the pagans?

Answer for yourself: Would a rabbi create a replacement for the synagogue?

Answer for yourself: Would a rabbi substitute a pagan feast which was clearly idolatrous, Ishtar (Easter), for Passover?

Answer for yourself: Would a rabbi want his followers to celebrate the birth of a Roman god (Saturnalia -- December 25)?

Answer for yourself: Would a rabbi teach his students to not keep the biblical commandments or that they no longer applied when God already said they were forever?

Answer for yourself: Would a rabbi teach Gentiles to hate Jews?

Answer for yourself: Would a rabbi add books to the Torah in spite of the warning in Deuteronomy forbidding the changing or adding to the Word of God?

Answer for yourself: Would a rabbi replace Deuteronomy 6:4 as the most important commandment?

Answer for yourself: Would a rabbi teach Gentiles that it is permissible to eat unclean food when Noah, himself a non-Jew separated animals based on the principle of clean/unclean long before there were any Jews?

The answer to all the above questions is that a rabbi wouldn't, and that includes a rabbi named Yeshua!

TOUGH - THOUGHT PROVOKING QUESTIONS YOU NEED TO ANSWER FOR YOURSELF

Answer for yourself: If Yeshua didn't create a new anti-Jewish religion, who did?

Answer for yourself: Who is responsible and what were their motives in replacing the faith of Yeshua with a faith about Yeshua?

Answer for yourself: Was it the men who acquired leadership after Yeshua's departure and the death of the Apostles who did such a thing?

Answer for yourself: Were those responsible for changing the faith of Yeshua actually Jews or Non-Jews and were their motives in changing Jewish doctrines consistent with anti-Semitism?

Answer for yourself: Did they continue teaching Yeshua's message and his gospel or did they change Yeshua's message in places, and are you, at the present not yet aware of it at your present level of knowledge?

THE BOOK OF ACTS PAINTS US A PICTURE WE WOULD DO WELL TO EXAMINE CLOSELY

The book of Acts provides us with some very valuable information too long overlooked by most Christians. Acts 21:17-25 records Paul's return to Jerusalem and his meeting with the leaders of the "church." Keep in mind that these were the men who had been personally taught by and lived with Yeshua. Their words provide us with

some very enlightening information. The translation given below is based on a cultural and historical methodology. Your translation most probably reflects the doctrines of the Roman church and therefore may differ.

"You see, brother (referring to the Apostle Paul), how many thousands of Jews have become faithful (observant). All of them are zealous for the Torah (Law). They have been informed that you have taught the Jews of the Diaspora to not keep the Torah, that they should not circumcise their children or live according to the Jewish religion.... Take these men and do the following... so that everybody will know that there is no truth in these reports about your teachings, but that you yourself are living an observant life-style and keeping the Torah."

REMEMBERING THAT THIS IS A PICTURE OF JESUS' CHURCH.....

A quick summary provides us with some very significant information. Understanding that this passage reflects events which occurred long after Yeshua's death then I ask you to be truthful to the text as well as yourself in asking yourself this: Is your church producing the same results?

- Jews who believe in Yeshua are becoming more faithful (observant to the Law) because of the message taught by Yeshua's followers.
- The message of Yeshua's church caused adherents to become zealous for the Torah (Law).
- The members of Yeshua's church kept the Laws of Moses (the Torah).
- The members of Yeshua's church circumcised their children.
- The members of Yeshua's church lived according to the traditions of the elders of Judaism (the Jewish religion).

Notice that Paul did as he was requested - Paul example, at least while he was in Jerusalem under the watchful eyes of the Apostles, wasn't teaching the Jews to abandon their religion. On the contrary, Paul's behavior and example was one as "under the law" and as one who lived an observant Jewish life-style.

Answer for yourself: How then could he have been the author of a doctrine that advocated rejecting the law as is ascribed to him by most Christians today?

Answer for yourself: Not meaning to over-stress this point, but are you really getting the importance of this message as taught by Yeshua's church in Palestine?

IS YOUR CHURCH PREACHING THE SAME GOSPEL AND MESSAGE AS YESHUA'S CHURCH?

Again looking at Acts 21 for our information.....let us examine what we are taught by this New Testament picture:

- The message of the apostles caused Jews to repent and become observant Jews who practiced Judaism faithfully.
- The apostles were causing Jews to become eager for the Torah and to pursue it with fervor. It is

clear that they were not teaching them that "they were under grace and no longer under the law" or that "the law has passed away after Yeshua's death" as we have been told today. This one point is in complete opposition to most fundamental teaching of every modern Christian doctrine.

- The Jewish members of the early church continued to circumcise their children. In other words, they continued to see themselves as participant's in the Abrahamic Covenant, just as every practicing Jew does today. Their children were Jews, not members of some new mystical religion that replaced Judaism.
- The Jewish members of the early church continued to practice Judaism. They did not switch to a new religion.

HOW ARE WE TO INTERPRET PAUL'S ACTIONS?

When we look at Paul's actions, after being ordered by James to take several men with him to the Temple, thereby paying for their animal sacrifices in order to prove that he was an observant Jew by bringing blood sacrifices and sin offerings necessary in finishing his Nazarite vow, we are faced with two possibilities: (A) Paul intentionally deceived the apostles and the Jews in Jerusalem; or, (B) Paul's image and/or the teachings attributed Paul may have been altered by the Roman Church a hundred or more years later.

Answer for yourself: Did Paul intentionally deceive the apostles by faking his true beliefs when bringing sacrifices in the Temple after Yeshua's death?

Answer for yourself: If Paul did deceive them, could you put much confidence in his teachings at other places in the New Testament? Remember he already has said that he can become anything to anyone to prove his argument and accomplish his goals.

Answer for yourself: On the other hand, if Paul's words were changed by the Roman Church could we base our foundational beliefs on forged documents?

Christianity, almost universally, requires a Jew to convert to Christianity before he can become a member of the church or be saved. This conversion process forces the Jew to renounce his or her Judaism and terminate or redefine many Biblical and Jewish practices.

Having read this article so far, please think deeply while answering these next questions:

Answer for yourself: Would your church require a Jew to renounce or stop practicing Judaism if he or she wanted to become a member?

Answer for yourself: How many circumcisions have you attended for the children of Jewish members of your church?

Answer for yourself: How many of your church's members are Jewish and are zealous for the Torah and are pursuing it with fervor?

Answer for yourself: Does your church conduct at least one Torah study per week?

Answer for yourself: How many of your church's Jewish members are observant Jews?

Answer for yourself: When was the last time you attended a Passover Seder, or a Rosh HaShanah or Yom Kippur service at your church?

Answer for yourself: Do you have a rabbi or a minister well educated in the Hebraic Roots of Christianity leading your church?

Your answers to the above questions are probably -- Yes, None, None, No, None, Never and Minister.

I want you take some time to think about the next question before you answer it.

Answer for yourself: What would your church require a rabbi to do if he applied for membership?

Answer for yourself: Would they allow him to continue to be a rabbi, practice Judaism, teach the Torah, wear his prayer shawl, observe all the Jewish festivals and teach the members that they were under the Law?

Answer for yourself: *What if that rabbi was Yeshua?*

Are you beginning to see the truth?

Without a great deal of effort it becomes glaringly apparent that neither Rabbi Yeshua, the apostles nor the Paul of Acts 21, would be allowed to join a Christian Church the likes of which we see today. On the other hand, it is also clear that Rabbi Yeshua would not participate in any religion that not only opposes, but is actively dedicated to destroying his Father's religion!

Gentile Christianity has for centuries felt it was given a mandate from God to "save the world." This is the goal and stated mission of Christianity.

THE SILENT SLAUGHTER OF TRUTH

Answer for yourself: How is this mission to "save the world" to be accomplished?

Just ask the Southern Baptist Convention who just last year vowed to win every Jew to Yeshua by the year 2000. To put it very simply, the goal is to convert every Jew (non-Christian) to Christianity. The Jewish convert must renounce his Judaism (or any non-Christian religion he may hold), agree to accept the doctrines of Gentile Christianity and oppose any religion that opposes Gentile Christianity.

Instead of a physical holy war (Jihad), Gentile Christianity has engaged in a doctrinal holy war. As I stated above, Christianity is an exclusive religion. Christians are not allowed to simultaneously practice Islam, Buddhism, Judaism or any other religion. Therefore, if Christianity was to attain its goal of "getting every person on the face of the earth to believe in Yeshua," including all the Jews, Judaism would be totally destroyed and cease to exist. If this were ever to happen, and I pray it does not, then Christianity would have the dubious honor which Hitler in vain tried to achieve; namely the eradication of not only the Jewish people from the face of this planet, but the total destruction of the true faith of Yeshua...Biblical Judaism.

This would accomplish something that the crusaders, the inquisition, Hitler and a number of others have failed to accomplish.

Answer for yourself: How do you think a Jewish Yeshua would react to the idea that such a mission was being carried out in his name?

This really gets weird when you think about it! Christians base their proof for their ultimate salvation on a Jewish rabbi named Yeshua (Jesus), who was an observant Jew who faithfully practiced Judaism. On the one hand, his religion would most probably not allow him to practice modern Christianity. On the other hand, modern Christianity would not allow him to practice its religion without first renouncing his religion -- Judaism!

This should present a very important challenge to every Christian:

If a Jewish Yeshua could not, and would not, practice a religion dedicated to

destroying his religion, how can anyone who bases their salvation on Rabbi Yeshua participate in and perpetuate it?

Answer for yourself: Would Rabbi Yeshua agree with the church's salvation message which is based on such a system? Are you getting the drift of this discussion?

Answer for yourself: How did the religion that Rabbi Yeshua and his followers practice evolve into what it is today? To begin to unravel this problem lets ask how a religion whose foundational position focused on teaching its members "to keep the Law" became a religion whose main message was that "members are no longer under the Law."

Early Christian writers taught that the Law had been fulfilled with the coming of Yeshua. Fulfilled, as they defined it, meant that it had been canceled and therefore was of no importance to Christians. However, to Rabbi Yeshua, "fulfilled" meant (1) to keep the Law; and (2) to correctly interpret the teachings of the Bible. There is absolutely nothing said by Rabbi Yeshua that would support modern Christianity's doctrine of grace.

Next, the Roman Christian leaders focused on the story of God's unconditional and unending support. However, they claimed that this was something new and was created when God made a new covenant of grace. Again, this was unknown to Rabbi Yeshua and his apostles. Early Gentile Christian leaders and theologians continued to develop their new doctrines from the mid-second century on through the seventh century. As they refined their arguments they became much more antagonistic toward Judaism.

This Gentile anti-Judaic movement spanned almost all of Christianity -- from the Roman African communities represented by Tertullian (160-220 C.E.), to the Iranian monk Aphrahat (300-350 C.E.) of the eastern Syriac Christian tradition, and to Bishop John Chrysostom (349-400 C.E.) in Antioch.

Studies have clearly shown the extent to which leaders of the early church attacked Judaism for its position on the law, calling Jews "slavish adherents to the letter of the law." They claimed that Judaism was allowed to continue to exist primarily as an example of degradation.

Answer for yourself: What do you think that rabbi Yeshua would have thought about that position?

Origin, the third-century leader of the Christian community in Caesarea, summed up the difference between Judaism's and Roman Christianity's approaches to Scripture:

"It seems necessary also to explain how certain people by failing to read or understand Scripture correctly have given themselves up to a great many errors, since the way one ought to approach the understanding of divine letters is unknown to a great many people. And so, the Jews, through the hardness of their heart and because they wish to seem wise in themselves, have not believed in our Lord and Savior...."

Now the reason that those we have just mentioned [Jews and heretical Christians] have a false understanding of these matters is quite simply that they understand Scripture not according to the spiritual meaning but according to the sound of the letter...."

[But] a person ought to describe threefold in his soul the meaning of divine

letters, that is, so that the simple may be edified by, so to speak, the body of the Scriptures; for that is what we call the ordinary and narrative meaning.

But if any have begun to make some progress and can contemplate something more fully, they should be edified by the soul of Scripture. And those who are perfect... should be edified by that spiritual Law (Rom. 7:14) which has a shadow of the good things to come (Heb. 10:1), edified by the spirit of Scripture. Thus, just as a human being is said to be made up of body, soul, and spirit, so also is sacred Scripture, which has been granted by God's gracious dispensation for man's salvation."

This new scheme for reading Scripture, and the charge that Jews miss all but the literal meaning, made for powerful arguments. Origin's dichotomy between "letter" and "spirit," or in other words, between reading biblical materials either at their face value for norms of behavior and as a more generalized stance toward the world, set the stage throughout history for Christians to increase the fervor of the charge of legalism. Legalism became synonymous with Jewish, and therefore was viewed in a negative light. However, the word "legalism" simply means someone that "lives in accordance with or adheres to a legal system."

Answer for yourself: What would you call someone who "did not adhere to or live in accordance with a legal system" -- a Christian? The products of this anti-Jewish tradition still shapes the thoughts of over 1.6 billion Christians regarding Judaic law.

I am challenging every Christian to make a decision to return to the religion, teachings and life-style expounded by Rabbi Yeshua. Don't misunderstand what I am saying; I am not advocating adopting and accepting the current "theology or faith" about Yeshua; rather, return to the real faith of Yeshua and the place within it for the Gentile Godfearer. As I stated above, according to the book of Acts, your conversion experience to the faith of the Apostolic church of Yeshua as seen in Acts 21 should have made you zealous for the Torah and brought you back to an observant Biblical life-style as defined by the commandments of God.

Answer for yourself: Has it?

Becoming a member of Rabbi Yeshua's movement should have caused you to become a serious student of the Torah. You should be teaching the Torah to others, especially the flood of Gentiles who are coming to you to be taught.

Answer for yourself: Has it?

Answer for yourself: Is there any other way for you to be a "light to the Gentiles?"

If you are a Gentile, you will also need to take a very close look at Acts 15. Gentiles who were coming to the movement originated by Rabbi Yeshua were given very special instructions. First they were to place themselves under specific laws. For all practical purposes those laws were the Ten Commandments. Of special importance was their keeping the Jewish Sabbath and studying the Torah at the synagogue with the Jews.

Keeping the Jewish Sabbath is something that you can do immediately, however; many of you may find it difficult to locate a synagogue where you will be allowed to study the Torah. For very good reasons, after thousands of years of persecutions, the Jewish community is very cautious. I believe that as Christian Jews return to the synagogue, because of the teachings of Rabbi Yeshua, the doors will be opened wider to Gentiles desiring to know the God of Rabbi Yeshua.

Two things must be kept in mind as both Jews and Gentile Christians choose to return to the teachings of rabbi

Yeshua. First, almost two thousand years of conflict between Judaism and Christianity has left many scars. Both religions have developed reactionary doctrines and theologies. A reactionary doctrine created as a reaction to the another religion's actions or doctrines.

An example would be the Jewish position concerning kneeling for prayer. Because Christians knelt for prayer, the Jews took the position that they should no longer kneel but stand for prayers. Judaism altered its form of worship because of this practice of Christianity. There have been many reactionary doctrines created both between and within both religions. This is an area of research that deserves much attention. I would challenge my readers to consider such a research project.

It must be kept in mind that the Judaism of Yeshua is not exactly the same as the Judaism of today. Also, the movement attributed to Yeshua is not the same as modern Christianity. Obviously, many things have taken place since the time of Yeshua which resulted in the separation and numerous differences between the two religions.

It is of the utmost importance for both Christians and Jews to understand these changes. You must know when the changes were made, identify the people who were responsible for making the changes, and discover why they made them. You must come to an understanding which changes were motivated by inspiration, which were produced by the hunger for power and wealth and which were the results of human frailties such as anger, rejection, fear and hatred.

As you embark on this journey you will quickly come to realize that you have stumbled upon the greatest cover-ups in history.

As you become more acquainted with the truth upon your study you will realize two very important things:

- **Leaders, especially scholars, have always been aware of this information and have deliberately chosen to ignore it.**
- **This information has been virtually within the grasp of every American. In many cases it is as close as an encyclopedia or attainable today through the Internet.**

Today, there are over 2.5 billion Christians on the face of the earth – the vast majority who believe in their heart they are true followers of Yeshua, but as I have shown you, are practicing a different religion from which Yeshua practiced. If they all returned to the teachings and life-style taught in Acts, we would see a moral and ethical revolution that would literally rock the foundations of the world and no longer would America, touted to be the most Christian nation in the world, be recognized as the world's most violent and law-breaking nation of the world. That should make you wonder what it would be like if Christians really followed the faith of Yeshua and if your church would really allow you to be like Yeshua.

If you would like more articles and information on topics such as these, please contact us at:

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BET EMET MINISTRIES.....OUR VARIOUS WEBSITES FOR YOUR STUDY

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If one undertakes the study of Bet Emet's Websites, and understand it is a life's work, then one is prepared to understand what has happened to Christianity down through the centuries and how Divine Truths, once expressed through allegory, metaphor, and simile by the Ancients who first received the Revelations of God, has been suppressed, altered, and tragically lost today through the "literalization" of such revelations given to us by the Ancients. This is a tragic story to say the least and renders us as "believers" and "followers of the New Testament Jesus" as idolators and we never know it because our Bibles inherited from Rome are "forged" in key "theological places". If you are diligent to study and learn from what is shared on these multiple sites then over time you will understand how it is possible to follow the "New Testament Jesus" in one way which ends with idolatry and in another way which ends in holiness and righteousness. The key to all of this rest in the true identity of "the Christ," "the Logos", and "Christ Jesus". We are all familiar with these terms but we will see hopefully there is a big difference between what we have been taught about them today and what they meant to the original Christians. Rome's has played a key role in the loss of these Divine truths and the substitution of falsehoods as you will come to see. "Surely that is not possible I hear you say" but I only wish it were so. For your study and thought are these websites developed and revised over the years as Bet Emet Ministries' studies have progressed and deepened and more parts of the "theological puzzle" of Christianity became apparent to myself and others associated with Bet Emet.

These websites are intended to be "a step by step" process in your pilgrimage of learning. We begin by looking at the surface of the texts and then moving deeper as the websites progress we look often at the hidden and esoteric meanings that lie beneath these same texts. In other words we begin our websites with a "literal-historical" interpretation of "the Christ" and "Jesus Christ" and move later to the "Mystical Christ" and finally to the "Mythical Jesus Christ". As alluded previously we begin by looking at the "literal historical Jesus" and the texts and explain them "literally" as we have been taught since growing up most like since childhood in the Christian faith we inherited. In so doing it is my intent to show you and separate for you a Jewish Messiah and Judaism's truth from a non-Jewish Messiah and untruths given us by Rome. As your studies progress it is my hope that you will come to see the depiction of this "Jesus" in the New Testament in a deeper light; not as a historical-literal person but the "personification of Divine truth" that was entrusted to the Jewish nation for the Gentile world. As the websites progress you will come to see just whom this "Divine Christ within" really is and how this concept has tragically be changed by Rome and given a literal-historical life of its own. It is a real shame that the only Jew to ever came to you and me was this New Testament Jesus dressed up like Constantine and bearing

literalized sunworship concepts which simply are not true in their "literal sense" since they bring idolatry with them. Over time you will come to see the Divine Truth within them however when they remain as allegories as they were intended for it is then and only then can they express the Divine truths as originally intended and as understood by the ancients who gave them to mankind in the first place. Rome changes them and never tells us in the book we inherited; the Roman Bible.

In closing it is my intent as a yet ordained Pastor who desired to serve the Creator and help His children do the same that once this information came to light over the years of my studies I realized that someone has to share and tell others of this deception in order that our worship of the Creator be in "Spirit and in Truth. Bet Emet, Hebrew for "House Of Truth", has done as best it can to present these truths in hopes that your love for and worship of God be likewise.

The order of our study is very important. If you start from the beginning and work your way through these websites as if you are reading the "best of many books" (which you are) then you will end your study with few unanswered questions and you will have arrived at the truth you sought and have a very clear picture of whom God is and what He requires of you, the non-Jewish believer in Christianity today. Sure the trip is hard, long, and time consuming and filled with both tears and joy as you deal with what has happened at the hands of men who served themselves rather than God. But the goal must be kept squarely before you....to come to the Truth once known about God by these Ancients who framed many of the very same religious doctrines that sadly have come down to us altered today and sadly cover the pages of our Bibles. You will come to see that there is a very big difference from the Jewish Bible and the corrupted Gentile Christian Bible we inherited from Rome. This is Rome's doing! All of this is dealt with on our websites and you will get to it in time if you are diligent in your study.

Let us end with one passage from the Hebrew Scriptures:

14 Then the LORD said unto me: 'The prophets prophesy lies in My name; I sent them not, neither have I commanded them, neither spoke I unto them; they prophesy unto you a lying vision, and divination, and a thing of nought, and the deceit of their own heart.'

It is time that we do diligent study in order to overcome these "lies" which we have inherited from Rome and others and repent of such error if it be in our life. It is time we search out and return to the faith of our Fathers who carry the Ancients traditions and truths with them. Today we find that in Judaism, the legacy of Egypt. Few know this because of lack of study but the beginning study has been done for you. **It is time you accept the mantle of study which in first century Israel was "the highest form of worship".**

Lev 20:77 Sanctify yourselves therefore, and be ye holy; for I am the LORD your God (the Jewish Tanakh)

PRESENTING THE "JESUS STORY" THROUGH THE 4 WAYS OF RABBINICAL TEACHING

The Websites and our spiritual pilgrimage follow but I must say that what I uncovered when getting to the bottom of the origin of the "Jesus Story" is that **the "New Testament Jesus" can be understood in many different ways** and in so doing yet communicate Divine Truth to the reader. I have discovered through my 20 years of study that we basically have 3 different ways to understand "the Christ" and the "Jesus Story" as I and others see it. We at Bet Emet Ministries have covered all 3 different understandings and presentations of "Jesus Christ" through the totality of our websites. Taken in order our Websites take the student through these

3 different understanding of "the Christ" in systematic order.

- **Historically**...(myth taught through the medium of a presumed historical person; although not accurate to the existence of a historical person yet important in that it serves as an example to be emulated by all mankind)
- **Mythically**...(personification of the Sun and its path through the Zodiac and the 4 seasons of the year; the equinoxes and solstices)
- **Mystically**...(expressing a hidden teaching, a secret doctrine, given under strict and exacting conditions to approved candidates by the Masters of Wisdom regarding the descent of the Logos into matter, ie., mankind). Paul speaks of this:

Col 1:27 27 To whom God would make known what is the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles; which is Christ in you, the hope of glory: (KJV)

Answer for yourself: Are all three methods of presenting Jesus Christ equally accurate to truth? No they are not and our Websites will provide the evidence you need to not only see this for yourself but make adjustments in your religious belief system when needed. Our focus needs to be on correctly interpreting the Mystical and Mythical Christ and then dealing with the erroneously interpreted "Historical Jesus...the Christ with flesh".

It goes without saying that we all begin to read and study the Bible from a "literal" perspective assuming that it is the vehicle for "literal truth" about Jesus Christ, never realizing that often these stories were written to be understood as allegories by the original writers let alone ever realizing that our "Jesus Story" can be found in identical form all the way back to pre-dynastic Egypt over 13,000 years ago. Bet Emet Ministries began several years ago to present websites dealing with Christianity which at first adopted this "Literal Interpretation" of Jesus in the "Jesus Story" since the "literal" approach toward Jesus in the New Testament is taught today by almost all of Christianity as they assume that Jesus Christ was a historical person. We all grow up in the Western Hemisphere assuming that the "Jesus Story" is a historical reality; that is until we do the serious study of our faith required to get to the bottom of the "Jesus Story" and the religious synthesis within it. Only with the study of Gnostic Christianity did I come to clearly see the Mystical Christ. Many of our websites, especially the early ones from years ago, begin by approaching the "Jesus Story" from this historical -grammatical method of interpretation because this is how we grow up and first get acquainted with the "Jesus Story". This I felt was necessary to get the reader and student started in order to reveal the greater Spiritual Truths that lay within Biblical Judaism that does not come with the added baggage of idolatry which we find in Gentile Christianity. As a pastor I realized that it takes time for a "seed to grow" and if I strike out and were to say "everything you believe about Jesus is wrong" I would lose any hope of reaching people with the fruits of my studies. So the beginning study of the Jewish Roots of Christianity follows the Rabbinical Methods of teaching and I applied them to Bet Emet's presentation of the "Jesus Story" and the totality of our Websites. There are 4 levels of Rabbinical teaching.

PASHAT

The first level of understanding is PASHAT (simple). The Pashat is the literal meaning. It is similar to what Protestant hermeneutics calls "Grammatical Historical Exegesis" and also similar to what Protestant Hermeneutics calls "The Literal Principle." The PASHAT is the plain, simple meaning of the text; understanding scripture in its natural, normal sense using the customary meanings of the words being used, in accordance with the primary exegetical rule in the Talmud that no passage loses its PASHAT (b.Shab. 63a; b.Yeb. 24a). While there is figurative language (like Ps. 36:7) symbolism (like Rom. 5:14); allegory (like Gal. 4:19-31) and hidden meanings (like Rev. 13:18; 1Cor. 2:7) in the Scriptures, the first thing to look for is the literal meaning or PASHAT. This is how and why I developed the first websites and in so doing try to reveal the beauty of Biblical Judaism to the Christian student desiring the truth of his Jewish Roots. For it is in Biblical Judaism do we find our links with Egypt in their purest form thus preserving better than any these Ancient

understandings of God and the Cosmos and man's responsibilities to the Creator. **These following websites approaches "the Christ" as an assumed "historical person" yet never telling the reader that behind this motif of a "historical Jesus" lies the greatest deception know to mankind.**

- **RETURNING TO THE JEWISH ROOTS OF CHRISTIANITY...THE FAITH OF JESUS/YESHUA**
 - <http://returntofaithofjesus.netfirms.com>
 - <http://returningtofaithofyeshua.freesevers.com>
 - <http://www.geocities.com/returningtofaithofjesus>
 - (The examination of the Jewish and Hebrew Roots of the Christian Faith as taken from a **literal perspective**. In so doing we expose many of the errors in doctrine and practice of today's Gentile Christianity with special emphasis upon the non-Jewish believer and his Divine place within the Israel of God instead of enmeshed in replacement religion as exists today in Gentile Christianity. We pay no attention in this site to the many problems concerning the Historical Jesus and approach the study from the normal assumption that the historical Jesus is true since that is how most of us grew up believing in the first place...in later sites we look at this problem in greater detail).
- **THE COVENANT OF NOAH & THE LAWS OF NOAH AND THEIR RELATIONSHIP TO THE CHRISTIAN CHURCH**
 - <http://covenantofnoah.netfirms.com>
 - <http://www.geocities.com/covtnoah>
 - (**Now we look in depth to the non-Jewish believer and how he fits into true Biblical Faith.** This is very important information and necessary for every Christian to read and study in detail. This is a very revealing study of the Covenants of God with special emphasis upon the Covenants concerning the non-Jew which are called today the Covenant of Noah comprising the 66 commandments of Noah; included in this site are OT references to this covenant as well and revealing exposition of this same covenant in the NT as taught to the non-Jews in fulfillment of the Great Commission before Rome would change everything in the 4th century; see how the Pattern of Worship was the same for the Jew and non-Jew and how denominational Christianity has missed the mark throughout history due to it's anti-semitic background and dogmas inherited by Rome).
- **THE BIBLICAL "PATTERN" OF WORSHIP & THE GENTILE GOD-FEARER IN THE FIRST CENTURY SYNAGOGUE-"CHURCH"**
 - <http://jewishrootscx.netfirms.com>
 - (Having learned all of this knowledge from the above websites and fully convinced that repentance is needed in my "Christian religious belief system" then the question that should be asked is this one as I see it: ***"If I, as a non-Jew, who had not converted to Judaism, had lived in the first century in Israel and had come into contact with the Messianic Movement within Israel as we find it in Acts 15 for example, then what would I have been taught about how a non-Jew is to "worship" the Creator"? Is there a "Pattern of Worship" of God that I need to know about?*** Other questions come to mind: What was I to do having learned these truths about the early Gentile inclusion into the Israel of God? How was I to worship in contrast as to how I learned from Roman Christianity? How can I bring this understanding into my life today? How can I worship the Creator in "Spirit and in Truth" in light of what I have learned in the above websites that has shown me that I have been badly taught and so badly misguided by my spiritual leaders in Christianity today? If you want those answers then this website is for you. My apologies that it is not finished but under "construction" but better to begin to learn what we can when we can than waste any more time. I trust that in time the website will be finished.

REMEZ

The next level of understanding is called in Hebrew REMEZ (hinting at a prior truth or a hidden truth that goes beyond the current text). Peculiarities and contradictions in the Biblical texts are treated and presented to the reader as hinting at a deeper truth than that conveyed by its PASHAT. The fun of discovering our Jewish

Roots, Sabbaths, and Biblical Festivals is over and it is time for serious investigation of our inherited faith. **Our Websites get more challenging as I begin using the principle of Remez to hint that there are problems with the "Jesus Story" and begin to question many of the teachings of Christianity and their presentation of Jesus as the Jewish Messiah.** We still approach these issues as if "historical" but as your studies progress you begin to slowly get the picture that there is severe problems with what Christianity teaches about "the Christ" and its presentation of Jesus as the Jewish Messiah. It bears saying again that we approach this information yet as if "historical" but as our websites progress we will soon move to the "Mythical" and the "Mystical" presentations of Jesus Christ. You might say we are in the process of cracking the egg shell regarding the "Jesus Story".

• **RETURNING TO THE BIBLICAL FAITH OF JESUS/YESHUA BY EXAMINING CLOSELY OUR BIBLES**

- <http://www.faithofyeshua.faithweb.com>
- <http://geocities.com/thefaithofjesus>
- (We move on and begin to look at our New Testaments since it is within them that we have the core of the problems concerning this Jewish Messiah portrayed as Jesus. Here we encounter examples of such textual and scriptural falsifications in our Christian Bibles, both Old and New Testaments as mentioned in the previous sites.. hundreds of examples where the facts and truths that once existed in the Jewish Masoretic Old Testament texts were purposefully changed in the Greek translation of the Jewish Scriptures by the Essenes and later incorporated into almost all Christian Old Testaments and the implication of such purposeful alterations by not only the Jews of Alexandria (the Essenes), but the later changing and altering of this solar-mythology by the Gentile Church in their final production.. the New Testament. Here we encounter the change of these Divine Concepts as they become altered and reinterpreted and attached to the life of the New Testament Jesus. So it is necessary that we become very familiar with the document called the New Testament which has incorporated such religious agendas over time)

• **AN UNBIASED LOOK INTO THE HISTORY OF THE NEW TESTAMENT...AND THE ROLE OF THE HOLY SPIRIT IN ITS CANONIZATION?**

- <http://historyofformationofnewtestament.netfirms.com>
- <http://geocities.com/faithofyeshua>
- (Now we must understand how we actually got this New Testament in the first place. This study is as best as possible an unbiased and intense study into the New Testament, its origins, its canonization, the disagreements of the early Church Fathers as seen for hundreds of years in the conflicts and disagreements concerning it, its falsification and purposeful mistranslation of the Jewish Masoretic text, the role of the Essenes in the falsification of the Jewish Old Testament and its impact of the later developing New Testament, and the determination of the role of the Holy Spirit in the production of the New Testament...if any)

• **PAUL...THE TRUE FOLLOWER OF JESUS...OR...SUBVERTER OF THE FAITH OF JESUS AND FOUNDER OF A NEW RELIGION?**

- <http://paulproblem.netfirms.com>
- <http://paulproblem.faithweb.com>
- <http://geocities.com/paulproblem>
- (Now we move to the Paul Problem. Let it be said that I am hard on Paul since he has been presented to us on the pages of this New Testament in a particular way and reinforced by 2000 years of Church Tradition. I must say that I deal with Paul "literally" as this is the way he has again been presented to us on the pages of the New Testament and in so doing I spare no ink in pointing out the problems this presents regarding a Jewish interpretation of "the Christ". Understand that this is a very challenging website which exposes the deception behind the New Testament's presentation of the Apostle Paul...it reveals the truth behind the purposeful manipulation of history and facts to cover up the truth about Paul who was understood by all in the first century to be an enemy of the Jerusalem church and remained so his whole life...I expose what the true religious belief system of Paul really is and show you how it is a synthesis of Gnosticism, Mystery Religions, and

Judaism...along with this I reveal his and later pro-Pauline writers purposeful misuse of the Jewish Scriptures by Pauline writers in their presentation to the non-Jewish world of a new religion and how they made it seem as if Jesus was the cause for it...this is strong stuff and not for the faint-hearted. We will look at Paul in a different light when he is later put into his Gnostic setting which is historically accurate then then we can say "kind things" about Paul then...so hold on...we need to find the "real Paul" and we don't have it yet since Rome forged all but 7 authentic epistles which he wrote and put his name on them...so we have to be hard on Paul since Christians believe that he taught all the things that carry his name. We will see as we study that he did not and the blame for this deception is again laid on the lying pens of Rome....so we deal on this site as "if" Paul was responsible for these writings since we are taught he wrote them all by tradition)

• THE JEWISH CONCEPT OF "THE" MESSIAH....WHY CAN'T THE JEWS AND THE CHRISTIANS AGREE?

- <http://jewishmessiah.netfirms.com>
- <http://www.geocities.com/bennoah1messiah>
- (Now we enter the beauty of Judaism and the truths they taught about their own Messiah and once knowing this then it is easy to contrast them with what we have been taught as Christians that come from our forged Christian Bibles. Ever wonder why the Jews and Gentile Christianity cannot agree on the Jewish Messiah? At last the unbiased truth concerning the Jewish Messiah and with it many explanations as to how the Christian theology concerning the Messiah deviates so drastically from the Jewish Messianic concepts as well as emphasis on the corruption of the Gentile's religious texts (OT and NT) which culminates in the creation of a Messiah which was never prophesied by the Jewish prophets.....the answers for the Gentile Christian are not always comforting but if you want the truth it is here for the interested and unbiased student and true seeker of truth. This is a selective summary of what went before on the other sites where I pull together pertinent information concerning one topic and one topic only: THE MESSIAH. If your desire is to study what the Jewish Scriptures taught about the Jewish Messiah before they were altered and changed as they were purposefully mistranslated into the Greek and later carried over in their corrupted forms into the Christian's Old Testament and New Testament texts, then this material is for you. Along with this site is the examination of text after text not only in it's Hebraic original form but as it was altered and changed thereby causing New Testament believers to ignorantly accept and cherish beliefs about Yeshua/Jesus which not only are incorrect but which render them idolators before God).

• A TRUTHFUL ANALYSIS OF MESSIANIC PROPHECIES IN THE HEBREW BIBLE AS CONTRASTED WITH THE CHRISTIAN TRANSLATIONS...DID JESUS FULFILL THEM?

- <http://messianicprophecy.netfirms.com>
- <http://www.geocities.com/bennoah1>
- (A very detailed examination of the Hebrew Scriptures and how they were later altered when translated into the Greek, Latin, and English versions of Christian Bibles. We trace the corruption of the Jewish Scriptures from the Hebrew in which they were originally written and show how these Jewish Scriptures were later purposefully mistranslated, misquoted, misapplied, and even invented in order to alter the human messiah into a "cosmic Godman" by the Essenes of Alexandria, Egypt. Later these very same altered passages will become forced "fulfillments" when applied to Jesus in later Latin and English versions taken from the Greek forgeries of the Jewish Scriptures. We show repeatedly how the Greek translations were forged in order to include the Essene concept of their "angel messiah" and "cosmic Godman" and later how this concept would be further adulterated when applied to Jesus some two hundred years later through the further forgery of other Hebrew Scriptures by the Roman Gentile Church. In other words we show beyond any doubt how the Holy Word of God has been corrupted today. No wonder the Jewish people don't believe in the Christian Jesus; their Jewish Scriptures read completely different than those of the Christian Church in "key" messianic places)

• DANIEL 9:17-27: THE SEVENTY WEEKS OF YEARS AS TAKEN FROM THE HEBREW

SCRIPTURES

- <http://seventyweeksdaniel.netfirms.com>
- <http://geocities.com/bennoah3>
- <http://daniel70wks.faithweb.com>
- (We now look at a very problematic piece of prophecy. Of all the Old Testament scriptures translated and quoted (or purposely mistranslated or misquoted) by Christian evangelicals in hopes of finding validation to most of their Gentile Christian doctrines, Daniel 9:17-27 and Isaiah 53 are perhaps the two most popular. In both cases, Christianity relies on a claim that the only reasonable interpretation of those scriptures is theirs. But is this true? Have our Christian Bibles been forged to force fulfillments as applied to Jesus when the true Hebrew Scriptures read differently than our Christian Bibles? Well...it is time to see the truth for yourself concerning Daniel's 70 weeks and then you decide who is right....Judaism or Christianity)

• THE ESSENE CHRISTIAN FAITH AND ITS LEGACY OF SUN WORSHIP

- <http://essenechristianfaith.netfirms.com>
- <http://essene.freewebsites.com/>
- <http://geocities.com/essenecx>
- (As stated earlier Divine allegory of the ancients has been "literalized by Rome" and presented to us in our Christian Bibles. We begin to see this through a comprehensive and challenging investigation into the true origins of the Essene-Christian faith as we begin in Egypt and it's worship of God. In so doing we spend some time understanding Egyptian Sun-worship where astral-theology and solar-worship was **personified** into "savior Godmen"...Osiris being both the first and the **"pattern" of all that followed**; tracing such solar beliefs through successive Gentile nations and making note of similarities as well as differences, until we come to the Essene/Qumran cult, who, in rejection of Biblical Judaism because of their inability to assume the Priesthood following the Maccabee war, evolved away from Biblical Judaism and adopted these astral-theological religious ideas which had more in common with Egypt, Persian, Zoroastrianism, Buddhism, Pythagoreanism, etc., than with Judaism, until we end up with a "corrupted Judaism" which is more commonly known today as Christianity. **What we find is that the Essenes "literalized" these prior Divine Allegories concerning Divine Truths expressed by the Ancients through the medium of myths and symbols.** It is in the hands of these apostate Essenes where these Divine concepts were "literalized" and were purposefully included in a falsified translation of the Jewish Old Testament called the Greek Septuagint. In so doing these Divine Concepts lose their original meaning and these reinterpreted doctrines become parts of the Greek Old Testament for the Greek speaking world and for all later Christians and the Christian Church; thus providing the substrate for all later quotes of the New Testament. The bottom line being that personified Sun-worship was applied to the life of the Jewish Messiah as recorded in the New Testament and it is we, not knowing that these concepts were only to be taken allegorically, have been misled to see in them a "literal" understanding when they never were originally intended to be taught as such. In so doing we spend a lot of time with the texts in order to see how this was done and how extensive this misrepresentation is in our Bibles).

• THE PAGANIZATION OF THE FAITH OF YESHUA ...AND THE BIRTH OF "GENTILE CHRISTIANITY"

- <http://paganizingfaithofyeshua.netfirms.com>
- <http://www.paganizingfaithofyeshua.freewebsites.com>
- (We move on now to look at more "literalization" of Sun-Worship as it was applied to the Jesus of the New Testament by the writers of the this New Testament. This is a very, very challenging study and expose of how Sun-Worship today as masqueraded as "orthodoxy" in Christianity...the subject is diverse and will require adequate reading on your part but well worth the price as you learn of the origin of the Sun Myths which were later personified by the Indo-Germanic nations and later written into the translation of the Greek translation of the Jewish Scriptures by the Essenes of Alexandria, Egypt. These accounts would be later embellished by the Gentile Church as they applied them to the life of the Jewish Messiah as represented through this Jesus as they build it off the falsifications of the Greek Old Testament as altered by the Essenes of Alexandria, Egypt; this site

exposes the false theology connected with Jesus which lines almost every page in the New Testament in one way or another...a through understanding of this site, as well as the others of Bet Emet Ministry, exposes beyond any doubt the lies and idolatry that has been foisted upon unsuspecting Gentiles who are yet today pawns of this theological deception and antisemitism of Rome)

This approach, teaching God's higher Divine truths through the vehicle of a godly example, the "assumed historical Jesus of the New Testament", works well up to a point because in doing so we are presented with a "Godly" example of a life to be emulated as found in the Jesus of the New Testament (for the most part). A life patterned after the Jesus of the "Jesus Story" will hopefully issue forth in one bearing the fruit of morality and ethics and one lived in the Fruit of the Spirit. This is the reason why Israel does not evangelize today because Christianity has accomplished for them their task as God's Priesthood. As a pastor I wish they could have accomplished this without the masked idolatry connected with the "Jesus Story". The non-Jew has learned of the God of Israel and has learned how to live in peace and harmony through the teachings of Christianity. Sadly in all of this the main character, the Jewish Messiah, has been so badly misrepresented in the character of Jesus who, for example, is made to cleanse all foods and abolish the kosher laws in Mark 7:14. This is rather strange for a Jew who is obligated to observe Kosher. Hopefully you see the problems of what I speak. Again through our websites the student is made aware of the problems inherent in places in this New Testament's depiction of the New Testament Jesus. Yet, in such a presentation then Jesus is the non-Jew's "pattern" for he, real or not, is the only Jew to ever witnessed to us and came knocking on the doors of our lives as non-Jews. Sadly the Jewish community is closed to the non-Jew for the most part due to the tragic treatment of their people by the Christian Church these last 2000 yrs. As I say often it is sad that when we answered the door of our lives as we heard the "knock" of this New Testament Rabbi named Jesus that we did not possess, at that time, enough knowledge of the truth about "the Christ" and the true "Jewish Messiah" that we could not recognize that this Jew named Jesus, as God's "light to the Gentile world", came dressed like the idolator Constantine teaching a replacement religion. Lacking this knowledge which Bet Emet's Websites provide the student unsuspectingly we bought into the Roman counterfeit and no wonder the Jews cannot accept this Roman Jesus as their Messiah. Good for them! But hopefully as your studies mature you begin to see that there are other ways to understand the "Jesus Story" but surely understanding the "Jesus Story" as a historical truth concerning a literal person who lived 2000 years ago and who embodied the historical Jewish Messiah is not one of them.

DRASH

Another level of Jewish hermeneutic and understanding the Scriptures is called in Hebrew "drash" meaning "search", this is the allegorical, typological or homiletical application of the text. Creativity is used to search the text in relation to the rest of the Scriptures, other literature, or life itself in order to develop an allegorical, typological or homiletical application of the text. This process involves eisegesis (reading of the text) of the text. Ironically as I found this expression or interpretation of the texts reflected most accurately the type of "belief" of the earliest Christians who were not only looking for a historical Jewish Messiah to be revealed but at the same time understood that the "logos" or "the Christ/Sophia/Egyptian Karast" lived within all mankind. This understanding of "the Christ" reflects Paul and his 7 authentic epistles where he teaches the "Christ within".

As you might expect a few years later, as time allowed, Bet Emet provided a website dealing with the Mystical Interpretation of the "Jesus Story" and "the Christ" as we showed that the religious beliefs of the earliest "believers" who were called the first "Christians", long before Rome emerged to dominate the Christian faith, did not accept a historical Jesus at all but rather understood "the Christ" as a Divine Concept that lives within every man and woman and is not exclusive to just one person as is portrayed today by "literalistic Roman Christianity. It is in this site that we restore the earliest Gnostic Christian understanding of the "the Christ" as it existed for almost 5 centuries before being utterly destroyed by Rome with its replacement religion we have today which I call "Literal Christianity".

• **MARCION AND THE "FIRST" NEW TESTAMENT...WHO WERE THE ORIGINAL CHRISTIANS AND WHAT DID THEY BELIEVE ABOUT "THE CHRIST"?**

- <http://firstnewtestament.netfirms.com>
- (Now we put all the pieces together and the whole picture comes into focus. **We now look at the true Paul, a Gnostic which never taught a human Jesus Christ but rather "the Christ within" in his 7 authentic epistles.** We trace in this website how the earliest "Christian" believed in the "Christ within" and not "a Christ without". We see how the ancient religious allegories were understood not only by these ancients who were given them but by the Gnostic Jews and Gentiles in the earliest centuries of the church as well long before Rome will come an "literalize" all of it and give it a fictitious historical timeline in creating a "historical Jesus". In so doing we will see how the earliest New Testament expressing these allegorical Divine truths is butchered by Rome and destroyed and how we end up with the forgery we have today. Never let it be said that archeology and hard study are not our friends.

An unbiased study of History will show you that there is not a shred of legitimate historical evidence anywhere that the Jesus Story originated as the biography of a man named Jesus, and quite a lot of evidence that it did not. An unbiased through study of Comparative Religion will reveal to you that the basic plot of the Jesus Story, from beginning to end, including the motif of a crucified savior, already existed in many other religions thousands of years prior to the alleged time of Jesus and if you continue such dedicated studies into Astronomy and Solar Mythology you will find that beyond any doubt the "Jesus Story" is nothing more than an allegory for what would naturally be the oldest and most important story humans would notice and write down, that of the annual passage of the seasons of the year and the path of the Sun through the celestial sphere and the 12 Houses of the Zodiac during the year. Personification of the Sun through the sky as found in the story of ancient solar and lunar gods follow in chronological procession through the year the exact chronology of the "Jesus Story" when personified from Matthew chapter 1 through then end of the book.

This website will be a lot different from anything you most likely have ever studied. Growing up in the Western Hemisphere we are traditionally taught a "literalistic" and not an "allegorical" or "symbolic" understanding of Christianity. This "literalistic" interpretation of "Jesus" and "the Christ" is based upon the inherited religious documents we received from Rome which we were taught to accept as infallible and inerrant without every questioning them. However great advances in Biblical Studies and archeology have been made in the last two hundred years and one in particular in the last 50 years has made a startling impact upon Christianity and few know of this. I am referring to the discoveries of the Nag Hammadi Library along with the Essene's Dead Sea Scrolls in the last 50 years which has turned our traditional Roman understanding of Christianity upside down and basically taught us that almost everything we had through we had "known" from Roman Christianity up to now concerning "Jesus" and "the Christ" was most likely wrong. That is simply because when we discover from study of these archeological finds and see for ourselves that the First New Testament written and given to us by the earliest Gnostic Christians like Marcion and Paul did not teach a "human Jesus Christ" but rather an allegorical and symbolic "Christ" as the Logos within each of God's children. This explains why there were no genealogies, birth or infancy narratives, or the 4 traditional Gospels in the earliest Gnostic Gospels. It is this "allegorical Christ" and "allegorical Joshua-Jesus Christ" [pattern] that the earliest New Testament and the authentic Pauline epistles taught but few know this today since Rome's efforts to destroy all of this literature as well as murder the Gnostics until few remained to safeguard this Revelation which can be traced to the beginning of mankind. In this website I reveal these truths concerning the "allegorical Christ" of the earliest Christians. Along with this we tackle the difficult problem of Christian forgeries of later Pauline Epistles and Gospels in their attempt to create a "historical Jesus" and a "historical Christ" in order to mimic their Godman-Emperor. This information goes a long way not only in explaining the lack of credible and unforged evidences of a historical Jesus but show how a Second New Testament was latter forged in Paul's name, who was long dead, along with the names of long dead Apostles in Rome's attempt to **place a historical Jesus within an appropriate timeline.** By comparison of what was written and contained within the First New Testament with what was later written later by Irenaeus and others in Rome's attempt to refute the Gnostic Christ and the Gnostic Joshua-Jesus we can easily now come to terms with this creative theology of Rome which was little more than a synthesis of "literalized" Sun Worship as exposed on our other sites. What should strike you as you study these materials is that the concept of the "Logos" and the "allegorical Christ" goes all

the way back to the beginning of mankind where God gave Revelation of Himself and His plan to the Ancient Egyptians who first wrote of the Karast/Christ.)

SOD

The 4th and final level of understanding the Scriptures is called in Hebrew "Sod" meaning "hidden". **It is here that I reveal the hidden links to Egypt and Astronomy which they "allegorized" to capture for all time the Divine Concepts that they witnessed written in the sky and Heavens above them.** God, writing on the blackboard of the sky and Heavens, expressed to these Ancients sages and Priest eternal principles that were later captured in "myths" and "legends" to preserve for all time these Godly truths that would last through all time and yet today survive in spite of the destruction of Egypt by Alexander the Great and later Rome. These Laws of the Cosmos were expressed in allegorical myths that were reaffirmed by the same Laws witnessed operating in Nature. Ancient man, understanding that these same Laws operated within himself and his body saw therefore that "he was created in the image of God "; the image he witnessed operating above and around him when noticing the same Laws and Cycles in the Heavens and in Nature operating within his physical body as well. This is truly beautiful when you see it as it brought tears to my eyes to see and comprehend Gods' earliest message to me and you that has not been changed or adulterated by the agendas of men down through history. It is so simple when you see it. That is the way God intended it to be in the beginning but we strain at a nat and swallow a camel today with our highly developed and evolved theologies down through Christian history.

It has been a hard and long process for me to accomplish but my task is about through when I complete this **last website on the "Mythical Jesus Christ" as seen in the stars.**

Now it is time to devote this website to the comprehensive understanding of the **"Mythical Christ"**. In so doing we will prove that the "Jesus Story" is actually an allegory for the path of the Sun "personified" as it travels through the 12 Houses of the Zodiac and through the 4 seasons of the years (the Spring Equinox, the Summer Solstice, the Autumn Equinox, and the Winter Solstice). You will come to see that this is the oldest and most important story humans ever knew as it also is full of Divine Truths that are to be understood "allegorically" and not "literally" as we have erroneously been taught today by a literalized Christianity of Rome's making. We owe a great debt to Ancient Egyptians and their great wisdom and their foresight in preserving for the the world this earliest understanding of God.

• **THE EGYPTIAN RELIGION AND ITS RELATIONSHIP TO JUDAISM AND CHRISTIANITY**

- <http://www.egyptcx.netfirms.com>
- We have all heard that "all roads lead to Rome" but in reality all roads lead to Egypt. This is especially true when one studies Christianity and Judaism and finds that these sister-faiths are nothing more than evolutionary developments of the Egyptian Religion. Understand from the beginning that Judaism is a much more faithful picture of this Planet's original understanding of the Divine than Christianity. Judaism comes in a close second. As a Pastor I am amazed where my studies have taken me and the things I have learned over these last twenty years in my pursuit of Jewish Roots of the Christian Faith. Never did I expect to find what I have uncovered and consider myself fortunate to live in an age where archeology and other such disciplines are giving back to mankind what Rome destroyed, covered up, and took from us over the last two thousand years. The study of error is often a little less important than the study of truth. The history of the human mind, in its progress from ignorance towards knowledge should tell us the mistakes into which it has sometimes wandered, as well as its steps in the right path. This is the goal of this website: to re-examine Gentile Christianity as to its earliest roots and determine if what is considered "Christian orthodoxy" today is a faithful representation of the earliest understanding of God by the Ancients since it is they who coined the religious concepts which we are told that we adhere to today in the primarily Christian Western Hemisphere.
- There is much to say about the knowledge contained in this Website but let me be brief. This website will reveal to you how the Ancients understood the message of God and His revelation to

them from their critical observations about the Heavens and the sky as well as Nature. The Egyptians Priests and scholars understood that God was revealing His Laws and intentions in the operations of the Divine Laws that governed the Cosmos. These Ancients holy men saw that these same Laws operated within their own bodies as well and that they were "created in the image of God" as what God was doing "above them" and "around them" He also was doing "within them". These Ancients sought out God and His way like no other nation has ever done on the face of the earth and tragically this knowledge was lost to us until only recently with the discoveries of archeology. We must understand that when allegory, metaphor, simile, and myth which expressed both the identity and actions of the Creator as understood by the Ancients in grasping for understanding of God and His workings in the Cosmos, was altered and stripped of its symbolism and rendered for all time as if "literal" by those who will come later through "conquest" and destroy Egypt and their understanding of God, then not only is Divine Truth lost forever but it plunges its recipients into abject idolatry. Such is the plight of the primarily Christian Western Hemisphere as these allegories and metaphors that once expressed Divine Truth were altered by Rome and "literalized" and applied to men's lives; in this case Jesus. If you have been diligent to study the website referenced just above this one then you saw for yourself this tragic loss of Divine Truth by Rome's "literalization" of such Egyptian Ancient truths concerning the "Logos" and "the Christ".

• **ASTROTHEOLOGY AND THE "JESUS STORY" OF THE NEW TESTAMENT: DOES IT ORIGINATE WITH THE STARS?**

◦ <http://jesusaastrotheology.netfirms.com>

◦ ***This website is presently under construction.*** This will be the last website for Bet Emet Ministries and in so doing we will go where few have gone. In this website we will show beyond any doubt from Astronomical examples of the Sun, Moon, Stars, and Constellations, that the Ancients preserved what they witnessed in the stars and Heavens seen in the cycles, patterns and paths and movements of these Heavenly orbs in "allegories" and in "myths" and "legends" not only concerning physical movements of these Celestial orbs as taken from their observations but expressed within these "solar myths" and "lunar myths" deeper Divine Truths of a Mystical Nature. These hidden deeper Divine Revelations from God to mankind dealing with the Spiritual Nature of mankind and his expected Spiritual maturation were again saved for all time through the agency of Myth which was never to be interpreted "literally" but rather were to function as "allegories" and "symbols" only that were but vehicles for transmission of higher truths from God. From these celestial patterns the Ancients extrapolated the Laws, Ordinances, Commandments, and Covenants of the Creator and gave them to mankind as a "blueprint" for our existence. These myths held the message of God to mankind. Later these myths were told through lives of personified man-gods like Osiris, Dionysus, Attis, Amon, Mithra, and Jesus. Since we include Jesus in the same sentence with other astral myths then this will be a hard study for as you examine the evidence presented you will see without a doubt that an unbiased study of History shows that there is not a shred of legitimate historical evidence anywhere that the "Jesus Story" originated as the biography of a real historical man named Jesus. In fact the evidence, or should I say the lack of it, and the forgery of all that does exist outside this one New Testament, is hard to deny and makes a belief in a historical Jesus almost impossible when knowing from the above studies the hundreds of forgeries in the religious texts of the Christian Bible. Nowhere outside of this one forged book by Rome can we find this "historical Jesus". As if that was not enough an unbiased and through study of Comparative Religion reveals to the reader as seen in the above studies and sites that the basic plot of the "Jesus Story", from beginning to end, including the motif of a crucified savior, already existed in many other religions thousands of years prior to the alleged time of Jesus and if you continue such dedicated studies into Astronomy and Solar Mythology you will find that beyond any doubt the "Jesus Story" is nothing more than an allegory for what would naturally be the oldest and most important story humans would notice and write down, that of the annual passage of the seasons of the year and the path of the Sun through the celestial sphere and the 12 Houses of the Zodiac during the year. What is most startling is when you see for yourself that the personification of the Sun and its path through the sky as found in the story of ancient solar and lunar gods follow in chronological procession through the

year the exact chronology of the "Jesus Story" when personified from Matthew chapter 1 through then end of the book. The Synoptic gospels follow the path of the Sun in its travels through the sky from beginning to end. Most may have no idea of what I am saying I can only tell you to hold on and read the articles on this site and you will quickly come to see of what I spoke. Let it be said when you see this and that all the other "Jesus Stories" are but Ancient allegories of the Heavens and the Sun and its path through the Zodiac which was later "literalized" then without a doubt there is no more room for idolatry connected with any Jesus of any kind. Then we can follow in the footsteps of Moses and quit worshipping a false "god-man" and return to worshipping our Creator in Spirit and in Truth. You come to see that the "Jesus Story" is nothing but a retelling of the "Osiris Story" and the "Horus Story". It is from these two Ancient Egyptian stories that all other "saviors" have come.

Orthodox Christians, since they are committed to a belief in the literal truth of the Bible, hold that after the flood men became even more evil than they were before, so that 4,000 years after the creation of the world, god sent his only begotten son to suffer and die for the salvation of the human race. **This ministry of Jesus, the Christ, was supposed to be a unique event in human history but as we show it is anything but that. This opinion is no longer tenable among those who accept reason as the criterion of truth.**

If you are diligent to study and read these websites then you have it all. There is little that exists that is not covered in one way or the other or has somehow escaped my attention over these almost 20 years of study. There is nothing I would trade for my years of study and the truths that I have gathered and although it has been challenging to my very core I fully am aware that because of such serious studies my walk with God, the true God, is closer than ever. It is truly well with my soul because **"I KNOW THE TRUTH ABOUT HIM SEPARATED FROM ALL THE FICTION"** that men have written down through history to promote their own religion and political agendas.

So we began our study with the question:

Matt 16:13 13 When Jesus came into the coasts of Caesarea Philippi, he asked his disciples, saying, Whom do men say that I the Son of man am? (KJV)

Now you have you answers! ?The rest is up to you to study to show yourselves approved..needing not be ashamed when you meet this Creator face to face when you cross your Nile/Jordan...(the same)

IN CLOSING

As stated earlier we begin our study with Bet Emet Websites with a "historical" assumption and present studies to show the beauty of Judaism over the dishonesty in Christian theological dogma and do so by using the depiction of the New Testament Jesus as if "historical" because he provides a vehicle for the teaching of Jewish theology, monotheism, morals, values, ethics, etc. It is not my purpose to reveal the weaknesses behind such a historical presentation of Jesus at this time as it will be developed and proven at a later time as one's studies progress through the Mystical Jesus and the Mythical Jesus as detailed on the above websites.

Of concern for us of course is the "Jesus Story" as depicted in the New Testament and its reliability as understood "literally" since it is being taught as a literal truth today about a historical man who lived 2000 years ago. You will come to see in time as you study that the Ancients as far back as Egypt understood this "Karast/Christ" entirely different from how we have been taught today under the direction of Roman and Protestant Christianity. Here are some big questions for you to ponder in light that most Christians trust in this Jesus Christ for their Eternal Salvation.

- **Answer for yourself:** Who or what is truly behind the name "Jesus Christ"? Can it be proven that the "Jesus Story" is nothing but the personification of the Sun and its passage through the various houses of the Zodiac as it passes through the 4 seasons and the equinoxes and solstices? If so then what do you do

now?

- **Answer for yourself:** Are the infancy narratives and later depictions of the life and ministry of Jesus Christ in the New Testament nothing more than solar stories told as allegories which were later "literalized" and subsequently written into Rome's New Testament and depicted as a literalized historical Jesus Christ when in fact they were understood by the Ancients as astrological myths taken from astronomy?
- **Answer for yourself:** Did Rome destroy the Gnostic Christ of the earliest "Christians" which had existed since the beginning of time over the first 5 centuries of the early Church and replace it one of their own making? What are you to do when you see this from your studies on our Websites?
- **Answer for yourself:** If I study the Websites and find that the "Jesus Story" follows chronologically the Gospel of Matthew from chapter one through the end of chapter 28 and see for myself that the "Jesus Story" presented there parallels identically the personification of the Sun in its path through the Zodiac then what should this mean to me regarding my belief in Jesus as the historical Christ and him being the Jewish Messiah?
- **Answer for yourself:** Have we as Christians and followers of the "the Christ" been deceived by Rome and spent a good part of our lives worshipping a man as God as Rome has declared in their New Testament since the Nicean Council (325 A.D.) when in fact we should have been worshipping the one true Creator as the Pharaoh Moses (Akhenaton) instructed when he stood up to the religious establishment of Egypt **when some** were straying from the truth in their worship of the "godman" similarity to what we have done today with Rome's historical Jesus? Are we guilty of idolatry as Christians because we have believed a fable no more real than Snow White and the seven dwarfs?

Well the following studies in the above websites is not for the weak of heart as I will present over and over again infallible proofs that the "Jesus Story" as depicted in the New Testament is but a hoax perpetrated upon us by Rome in their hatred of the Jewish faith and Jewish Gnosticism back in the first century. You will see, in the last website depicting the Mythical Christ, as we move chronologically from one sign of the Zodiac to the other, from month to month, from season to season, from Spring equinox to Summer solstice, from Autumn equinox to Winter solstice, and repeating again this cycle, along with the study of selected events from the depiction of the life of Jesus in Rome's New Testament, that if you study with us and finish the studies on this website, that the "Jesus Story" as depicted in the New Testament is nothing more than the literalization by Rome of the path of the Sun through the Zodiac along with other solar myths later incorporated into their "Jesus Story" as later literalized by Rome as well. In so doing you will see as I and many others have that we have not been taught the truth about "the Christ within" and how He is so integral to the proper worship of the Invisible God as Egypt and Moses taught. It would seem that Egypt got it right in the beginning but thanks to Hellenism and Romanism we lost these earliest and correct understanding of Divine Concepts witnessed in God's Heaven and Nature. In a way these were our classroom and where we were to be instructed by the Creator about our life and purpose in God's creation. We are truly blessed today to live in an age where archeology and the information age can bring these truths back to life for you and me.

As a "retired Pastor", and moved by what my studies revealed over the years, I feel moved to share this information and evidence from such studies with those interested in the truth behind the origin for "Jesus Story" which is taught to the world today as a historical reality when in fact it is not. In the websites that are delineated above such evidence is presented to the reader in hopes that the missing puzzle pieces concerning the "Jesus Story" will be plainly evident to him and he can, in the light of such knowledge, no longer be deceived by the astrological allegory of "the Christ" as found in the New Testament which is erroneously taught "literally" today. I make very few promises to our readers but I make this one now: If you do these studies, and read these articles on this website then you will be thoroughly convinced as I was that the "Jesus Story" was never meant to be understood "literally" as it has been taught to you and me. **Thus the worship of Jesus as a historical person or connecting this assumed historical person with God or believing him to be God is the most vulgar idolatry according to Moses and the Ten Commandments and a terrible affront to the Creator and constitutes blasphemy of the Name of God.**

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THE "PATTERN OF WORSHIP" AND THE NON-JEWISH BELIEVER...THE GODFEARER

It is my intention to demonstrate to the serious student of the Bible that there exists both in the Hebrew Scriptures (the Old Testament) as well as the New Testament a "Pattern of Worship" that includes both the Jew and the Non-Jew (the Godfearer). This "Pattern of Worship" was shared between both the first century Jew and non-Jewish believer as well.

Now one would expect that if a non-Jew converted to Judaism that he would be observant of the same Biblical Festivals and Sabbaths as was the Jew born into Judaism but what is startling is that there exists a overlap, if you will, between the "stranger", or the non-Jewish convert, and the Jew regarding not only these Holy Days and Sabbaths but a host of other commandment involved with the "Pattern of Worship" given to all of mankind. We will in this website begin to present the evidence and to trace this "Pattern of Worship" and the idea of this "common salvation" shared between the non-Jew and the Jew from the Hebrew Scriptures/Old Testament down through to the New Testament. In so doing we can get a better picture of what the non-Jew was commanded by God to observe and adhere to in his worship of the Creator according to his Covenant and see how this relates to what Commanded of the Jew as well. Let us begin at the beginning and see if a "pattern" develops and make the necessary applications to our lives as we go.

THE PATTERN OF WORSHIP IN THE BIBLE

- [The Task At Hand: Recovering The Pattern Of Worship Hidden In The New Testament \(Jewish Worship As Practiced By Non-Jews And Godfearers\)](#)
- [There Exists A Pattern Of Worship That God Gave To Both Jewish And Non-Jewish Believers](#)
- [Israel's Obligation To The Nations..Being God's Light To The Nations And Sharing "The Pattern Of Worship"](#)
- [The Problem Of Judaizing...But Is It Really A Problem...Or The Example?](#)
- [The Apostle's Doctrine \(The Pattern Of Worship\) Was Taught To The Godfearers And Non-Jews In The Synagogues Of The First Century](#)
- [Jerusalem, The Synagogue, And Jesus And The "Pattern Of Worship"](#)
- [Overview Of The Pattern Of Worship In The First Century Synagogue-Church & The Warning!](#)
- [But I Never Knew That There Was A Pattern Of Worship That God Gave The Jew And The Non-Jew](#)
- [Worshipping God In Spirit And In Truth: The Pattern For The Non-Jew](#)
- [Examining The Pattern Of Worship As Described By Justin Martyr In 150 A.D.](#)
- [Have You Followed God's Pattern Of Worship In Your Life?](#)
 - [Nadab And Abihu: Deviation From The Pattern Of Worship](#)
 - [Have We Followed God's Pattern Of Worship Or Have We Offered "Strange Fire" To God In Christian Churches And Our Worship?](#)
- [The Epistle Of Barnabas And The Loss Of The Pattern Of Worship](#)
- [Restoring The Pattern Of Worship And The Faith Once Given To The Saints](#)
- [Recovering God's Pattern Of Worship: Jewish Worship](#)
- [Maintaining The Unity Of The Faith By Returning To The Pattern Of Worship](#)
- [Till We All Come Into The Unity Of The Faith: Which Faith?](#)

RECOGNIZING THE NON-JEW IN THE HEBREW SCRIPTURES AS HE RELATES TO THE "PATTERN OF WORSHIP"

To be able to recognize the requirements of God laid upon the non-Jew in his worship of the Creator it is necessary that we begin at the "beginning" and learn to recognize the non-Jew in the Hebrew Scriptures with emphasis upon the context and any possible connections to descriptions and pictures of them relating to their worship of God as commanded in the Hebrew Scriptures. It is from these pictures that we can draw our conclusions especially as our study deepens and we trace any possible "pattern" we find later into the New Testament. Now let us look at the the examples of the non-Jew as relating to worship in the Hebrew Scriptures and let us never forget what we see as the God who changes not had not changed His mind on this; sadly other antisemites down through history have and extended great efforts to destroy and conceal this "Pattern of Worship of the Jews intended for all mankind.

- [Getting Acquainted With "The Gentile" As Pictured In The The Hebrew Scriptures](#)
- [The Non-Jew And His Return To God's Appointed Times And Holy Days](#)
- [Gentiles And Jewish Classification](#)
- [Conversion Of The Gentile](#)
 - [The Grafting Of The Gentile Into The Israel Of God #1](#)
 - [The Grafting Of The Gentile Into The Israel Of God #2](#)
 - [The Grafting Of The Gentile Into The Israel Of God #3](#)
 - [The Grafting Of The Gentile Into The Israel Of God #4](#)
 - [The Grafting Of The Gentile Into The Israel Of God #5](#)
 - [The Grafting Of The Gentile Into The Israel Of God #6](#)
 - [The Grafting Of The Gentile Into The Israel Of God And The Role Of Jesus' Death](#)
 - [Wild Olive Branches - Gentiles Grafted Into The Israel Of God: Do You "Look" Like Israel](#)

LET US BEGIN BY LOOKING AT "THE PATTERN" OF WORSHIP IN RELATIONSHIP TO "HOLY

DAYS" AND "APPOINTED TIMES" IN THE HEBREW SCRIPTURES.....AND WE THOUGHT THE BIBLICAL FESTIVALS AND FEASTS WERE JUST FOR THE JEWISH PEOPLE.....WELL EVIDENTLY THEY ARE NOT!!!

- [The Gentile Godfearer And The Different Levels Of Commitment To God](#)
- [Early Gentile Believers Read And Observed The Torah In The Old Testament](#)
- [Early Gentile Believers Observed Similar Laws As They Participated In The Sacrificial System](#)
- [Early Gentile Believers Were Called "Strangers" And Worshipped God Alongside The Jews](#)
- [Early Gentile Believers Observed And Kept The Sabbath](#)
- [Early Gentile Believers Observed And Celebrated The Festival Of Passover In The Old Testament](#)
 - [Abraham's Example: Circumcision Required For Gentile Believers To Participate Fully In The Passover And Festivals Of The Lord](#)
- [Early Gentile Believers Observed And Celebrated The Festival Of Shavuot \(Pentecost\) In The Old Testament](#)
- [Early Gentile Believers Observed And Celebrated The Day Of Atonement \(Yom Kippur\) In The Old Testament](#)
- [Early Gentile Believers Observed And Celebrated The Festival Of Tabernacles In The Old Testament](#)
- [Restoring "The Pattern Of Worship" And The Faith Once Given To The Saints](#)

THE IMPORTANCE OF THE ACTS 15 COUNCIL AND THE IMPLICATIONS FOR THE NON-JEW'S INCLUSION INTO THE ISRAEL OF GOD WITHOUT REQUIRED CONVERSION (OLIVE TREE THEOLOGY)

Having noticed how the non-Jews were observing the same "appointed times" of God along with the Jews in the Hebrew Scriptures now let us focus on the very important ruling of James in Acts 15 whereby we see many things; one of the most important is that the non-Jews were being incorporated into the "Israel of God" through full conversion and we find these non-Jews attending the synagogues with the Jews. Yet this was to change as the Acts 15 ruling will begin a movement of total acceptance of non-circumcised non-Jews as a "non-covert" into the Israel of God providing certain *"necessary things which seemed good to James and the Church as well as the Holy Spirit"* ([Acts 15:28](#)) were done. Let us go deeper. This is "Olive Tree Theology" as its best!

- [The Acts 15 Council And Its Importance For The Godfearer](#)
 - [The Laws Of Noah: Not Eating The Limb Of A Living Animals As Given The Non-Jew #1](#)
 - [The Laws Of Noah: Not Eating The Limb Of A Living Animals As Given The Non-Jew #2](#)
 - [Further Comments On Not Eating The Limb Of A Living Animal](#)
- [The Antioch Problem And How It Related To Table Fellowship Between Jews And Non-Jews In The Early Synagogue-Church](#)
 - [Paul's Rebuke Of Peter...Has The New Testament Misrepresented The Truth Behind The Incident At Antioch #1](#)
 - [Paul's Rebuke Of Peter...Has The New Testament Misrepresented The Truth Behind The Incident At Antioch #2](#)
 - [Paul's Rebuke Of Peter...Has The New Testament Misrepresented The Truth Behind The Incident At Antioch #3](#)
 - [Paul's Rebuke Of Peter...Has The New Testament Misrepresented The Truth Behind The Incident At Antioch #4](#)
 - [Paul's Rebuke Of Peter...Has The New Testament Misrepresented The Truth Behind The Incident At Antioch #5](#)

- [Paul's Rebuke Of Peter...Has The New Testament Misrepresented The Truth Behind The Incident At Antioch #6](#)
- [Paul's Rebuke Of Peter...Has The New Testament Misrepresented The Truth Behind The Incident At Antioch #7](#)
- [Paul's Rebuke Of Peter...Has The New Testament Misrepresented The Truth Behind The Incident At Antioch #8](#)
- [Paul's Rebuke Of Peter...Has The New Testament Misrepresented The Truth Behind The Incident At Antioch #9](#)
- [Paul's Rebuke Of Peter...Has The New Testament Misrepresented The Truth Behind The Incident At Antioch #10](#)
- [Paul's Rebuke Of Peter...Has The New Testament Misrepresented The Truth Behind The Incident At Antioch #11](#)
- [Paul's Rebuke Of Peter...Has The New Testament Misrepresented The Truth Behind The Incident At Antioch #12](#)
- [Acts 15: The First Church Council And Aftermath: Is This Your Christian Experience?](#)
- [The Controversy At Jerusalem: Law Or Grace? You Will Be Surprised!](#)

THE "GODFEARER": THE PATTERN FOR GENTILE PARTICIPATION IN THE ISRAEL OF GOD WITHOUT REQUIRED CONVERSION

- [Godfearers: The Pattern For Gentile Participation In The Israel Of God #1](#)
- [Godfearers: The Pattern For Gentile Participation In The Israel Of God #2](#)
- [Godfearers: The Pattern For Gentile Participation In The Israel Of God #3](#)
- [Godfearers: The Pattern For Gentile Participation In The Israel Of God #4](#)
- [Godfearers: The Pattern For Gentile Participation In The Israel Of God #5](#)
- [Godfearers: The Pattern For Gentile Participation In The Israel Of God #6](#)

THE GODFEARER AND GOD'S SABBATHS, HOLY DAYS, FESTIVALS & FEASTS...GETTING TO THE HEART OF THE ISSUE



This page and articles are under construction at present and will be added and completed throughout the coming year as we approach these holy days so please be patient as I am working every spare minute to complete this task. Thanks you. Craig Lyons M.Div.

We have seen and examined thoroughly in the above articles not only the issue of "full conversion" of the non-Jew to Judaism but also how the non-Jew was historically accepted within Judaism without "full conversion". Having understood these facts now it is time to see just how this "acceptance" of the non-Jew without full conversion was accomplished and how it related to worship and his participation in the Sabbaths of God.

We now will focus on just how the "non-Jewish" believer in God, the "Godfearer" related to each of the "appointed times" of God and the Biblical Sabbaths, Feasts, and Festivals. It is our quest to see if we can amass enough evident to prove beyond a shadow of a doubt that non-Jewish believers in the God of Israel were observing and keeping the Sabbaths, Feasts, Fasts, and Festivals of God along side the Jew. When you see this

for yourself and remember what you have learned on this website how Constantine forbid these "Sabbaths" of the non-Jew and changed them all then this should make you want to repent and set at the feet of the Jews and learn the message of God in His "Holy Days" for you. Blessings...Craig Lyons M.Div.

- [God's Plan Of Salvation As Taught In His Sabbaths, Holy Days, And Festivals](#)
- [The Sabbaths And Feast Days Were Ordained At Creation](#)
- [How We As Non-Jews Lost "The Faith" of Jesus: The Faith Once Given To The Saints](#)
- [Restoring The Faith Once Given The Saints](#)
- [Does Paul Tell The Collosian Gentile Church To Keep The Festivals?](#)

GODFEARERS: THE SABBATH

- [The Origin Of The Sabbath](#)
- [Egypt Kept The Sabbath Before The Jews](#)
- [Early Gentile Believers Kept And Observed The Sabbath In The Old Testament](#)
- [The Observance Of The Sabbath By Jews And Non-Jews In The First Century](#)
- [The Sabbath: What The Non-Jewish Believer Needs To Know](#)
 - [The Ten Commandments And The Sabbath: Mentioned Twice?](#)
- [The Non-Jew And His Return To God's Sabbaths Which Constantine Outlawed](#)
 - [A Personal Guide To The Sabbath: Getting Started With Shabbath](#)
 - [The Sabbath Observance For The Non-Jew](#)
 - [The Non-Jews Preparation For The Sabbath](#)
 - [Experiencing Shabbat On Friday Nights](#)
 - [Experiencing Shabbat On Saturday Mornings And Afternoons](#)
 - [Bet Emet Guide To The Sabbath: Observing The Sabbath At Home](#)
 - [Bet Emet Order Of Shabbat Service \(Intended For Small Groups And Bible Studies\)](#)

GODFEARERS: HAVDALAH SERVICE & THE CONCLUSION OF THE SABBATH

- [Did Paul Teach The Non-Jews To Keep The Sabbath And The Havdalah Service?](#)
- [Has Your Pastor Led You In A Havdalah Service?](#)
- [Concluding The Sabbath With The Havdalah Service: Havdalah With Explanations](#)
- [Bet Emet Guide To The Havdalah: The Home Havdalah Service](#)

GODFEARERS AND THE PASSOVER...NECESSARY HISTORICAL INFORMATION

- [A Deeper Look Into The Ancient Passover](#)
 - [The Passover And The Historical Evidence](#)
 - [The Post-Exodus Passover](#)
 - [The Passover As Observed In Babylon](#)
 - [The Passover Before The Fall Of Jerusalem](#)
 - [The Passover After The Fall Of Jerusalem](#)
 - [The Passover Down Through The Middle Ages Until Today](#)
- [The Jewish Encyclopedia On The Passover: What Can The Gentile Learn?](#)
- [Looking At The Passover In New Testament Texts](#)
 - [What Did Christianity Fail To Teach Us About Jewish Atonement?-The Series](#)
 - [Can We Find Atonement In The Passover?](#)
 - [Is There A Relationship Between Jesus And The "Afikomen" In The Passover?](#)
- [Early Gentile Believers Kept The Passover For Over Two Centuries](#)
 - [The Rise Of Constantine #1](#)
 - [The Rise Of Constantine #2](#)
 - [The Rise Of Constantine #3](#)
 - [The Rise Of Constantine And Nicea Council And The Loss Of The Faith Of Jesus #4](#)

- [The Rise Of Constantine: How The West Was Won And How The East Was Lost #5](#)
- [Historical Evidence That The Gentiles Kept The Passover In Spite Of Constantine #6](#)
- [Constantine' Easter Letter And The Loss Of The Faith Once Given The Saints](#)
- [The Substitution Of Easter For The Passover: A Historical Evaluation](#)
 - [Looking At The Conflicting Accounts Of Jesus And The Passover In The New Testament: The Passion Of The Christ #1](#)
 - [Looking At The Conflicting Accounts Of Jesus And The Passover In The New Testament: The Passion Of The Christ #2](#)
 - [Looking At The Conflicting Accounts Of Jesus And The Passover In The New Testament: The Passion Of The Christ #3](#)
 - [Looking At The Conflicting Accounts Of Jesus And The Passover In The New Testament: The Passion Of The Christ #4](#)

GODFEARERS AND THE PASSOVER...PREPARING FOR AND OBSERVING THE PASSOVER

- [The Passover: What Does It Mean?](#)
- [The Passover: Lessons Of Hope For The Future](#)
- [The Personal Significance Of The Passover](#)
- [Getting Familiar With The Passover And Its Elements: The Haggadah](#)
- [Becoming Familiar With The Passover And The Elements In The Passover Seder](#)
- [Observing The Passover: Keys To Success](#)
- [The 15 Steps Of The Passover Seder With Explanation](#)
- [Bet Emet Ministries: Introduction To The Home Passover Seder As Adapted For The Non-Jewish Believer](#)
- [Bet Emet Ministries: The Home Passover Seder For The Godfearer - The Non-Jewish Believer](#)

THE GODFEARER AND THE FESTIVAL OF UNLEAVENED BREAD

- [Did The Gentile Believer Observe The Festival Of Unleavened Bread?](#)

THE GODFEARER AND THE FESTIVAL OF PENTECOST

- [The Origins Of The Festival Of Shavuot - Pentecost And The Role Of The Gentile](#)
- [Was The Festival Of Shavuot - Pentecost Observed In The Gentile Churches Of Asia Minor?](#)

THE GODFEARER AND THE FESTIVAL OF ROSH HA-SHANNAH

THE GODFEARER AND THE FESTIVAL OF YOM KIPPUR

THE GODFEARER AND THE FESTIVAL OF TABERNACLES

THE GODFEARER AND PRAYER AND THE PATTERN OF WORSHIP

- [The Earliest Accounts Of The Prayers Of Mankind](#)
 - [Prayer As Worship](#)
 - [Before There Was A Jewish Prayer Book...There Was A Pattern To Prayer](#)
 - [What Is The Jewish Prayer Book And Why A Christian Should Use It?](#)
 - [Thoughts On The Jewish Prayer Book And The Pattern Of Worship](#)
-

The Lord's Prayer: Is It But A Shortened Version Of The Shemoneh Esreh - Amidah?

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THE PLAN OF GOD'S SALVATION AS TAUGHT IN THE BIBLICAL FESTIVALS

As a Seminary graduate and ordained Pastor I like you grew up in Western Christianity learning about the "Roman Road to Salvation." Sadly after years of scholarly research dealing heavily in areas like original Biblical languages, Biblical culture, Biblical history, chronological tracing of manuscript forgery and manipulation for theological agendas by the Essenes and the Gentile Church, chronicling the innumerable purposefully mistranslations, misquotations, and lifting of Hebrew Scriptures out of context again for "theological agendas," and finally many years of comparative religious studies I realized that this highly touted "Roman Road to Salvation" is nothing more than the replaying of pagan Sun Worship following the "Osiris Pattern" of Egypt.

But not all is bad news for within the Hebrew Tanakh is the true plan for mankind's salvation given by God Himself. **Having said that, then let me explain the plan of salvation as seen in the Biblical Festivals as the Bible Yeshua used teaches them.**

Christianity gets some of this right; but sadly gets a lot wrong. Let me explain.

GOD'S PLAN OF SALVATION AS SEEN IN THE EXAMPLE OF ISRAEL...THE LIGHT OF GOD'S SALVATION TO THE WORLD

God makes His salvation available through faith and this foundational concept is pictured in the physical salvation of Israel from Egypt. Faith is not just a "mental assent" but an alive response to a religious beliefs. Saving faith is not dead but alive and responds. The key is responding in "obedience." This response can be called appropriately "works" for such actions as one's fruit of one's faith accompany such beliefs for if the Israelites had not **responded accurately & obediently** to their faith in God and failed to apply the blood to their door then they would likewise had died. So we learn that faith that responds in obedience "saves."

What we need to notice is that this "saving faith" was seen at the Passover. Salvation of God delivers the believer from death and this salvation is "imputed" to us yet the reality of its fullness yet awaits us. You might say we have an "earnest" of our salvation today but not the whole ball of wax; at least not yet. Passover serves as the starting place for one's faith in God and His saving Word. It is one's obedient faith to the Words of God that produces this "saving faith" and the Passover was the perfect example for demonstration of one's faith in the God of Israel and in so doing then God's judgment of sin "passes over the believer" due to his obedient faith. Of course for us such obedience [Israel responded in saving faith by applying the blood of a lamb to their doorposts] is seen in obeying the various Commandments of God involved in our unique Covenants with God; both for the Jewish people and the non-Jews as well.

Once we are saved by our faith in God with obedience unto Him at our personal Passover one comes to the next Festival of YHWH where we learn of the purpose of the Festival of Unleavened Bread. The Festival of Unleavened Bread follows "faith in God and his Word" where obedience really comes to the forefront. It is time

to get the "leaven" (picture of sin in the Bible) or sin out of our lives. Since sin is the transgression of the Law then getting this "breaking of God's Commandments" out of lives means that we must grow in our understanding of God's Torah and Laws which frame our respective Covenants; both Jewish and non-Jewish [for the Christian the Covenant and Laws of Noah]. This is a sanctification whereby we make ourselves through repentance and obedience to the Word of God acceptable vessels for God's Spirit to inhabit.

Once we grow as worthy vessels for God's spirit to inhabit through repentance and a heightened obedience then God's Spirit comes to such a one in the fulfillment of Pentecost. We have just personally experienced our own Passover where God's judgment passes over us because of our faith in Him and obedience to His word. As our obedience grows then God comes to dwell within us to the degree that we are worthy vessels. As we find in Israel we find in our own lives. These first three Festivals are called the Spring Festivals and they are observed during the first rainy season in Israel.

It helps to understand that Israel had two rainy seasons a year separated by a long dry period. We find the same example in our lives. We all get excited when we come to God, turn from sin, and are filled with His Spirit. But over time the day to day drudgery of life wears us down. We like Israel experience our own dry period as symbolized by a life-time of temptation and drudgery. We are confronted daily of living lives that overcome or lives that fail. Once we are saved, cleansed, and filled with God's Spirit, we are equipped to live out our lives where we must deal with the good and the bad as we encounter them in life. Sometimes life is hard as seen in the dry season following Pentecost; yet we have the Spirit of HaShem to comfort and sustain us throughout the middle and autumn years of our lives.

After the dry season of Israel and our lives we come to the next Festival which is Rosh HaShannah which symbolizes our death at the end of our life. Rosh HaShannah is the resurrection and judgment. It is appointed for man to once die and then the judgment which is also a second part of Rosh HaShannah. After the resurrection at Rosh HaShannah and the judgment and reward for believers as well as non-believers, then one awaits final atonement at Yom Kippur. The only thing lacking is the eternal dwelling of the Spirit of God with mankind at the Festival of Tabernacles. This is the eternal Sabbath where God and man are one. This is only a summary to say the least of what the Biblical Festivals reveal...the Plan of Salvation of God.

And if you noticed, this plan is very understandable to the Jew and non-Jew without trying to "force" Yeshua to fulfill passages that yet remain unfulfilled.

It is these Biblical Festivals, correctly understood as given above, which will further enable the Jew and the non-Jew to become one in expectation of the coming of the Messiah.

As you see the cycle of observance of the Biblical Festivals, called a "moed," in Hebrew, literally means a "rehearsal." What God intends is that all His Children, both Jew and non-Jew, keep and observe these rehearsals in order that they learn God's true plan of salvation and in so doing make their calling and election certain in order that they be the "bride" and not find themselves excluded. God repeated His salvation message to His people year after year in order that no one get it wrong. With Rome's help...we did!

Matt 22:9-14 9 Go ye therefore into the highways, and as many as ye shall find, **bid to the marriage.** 10 So those servants went out into the highways, and gathered together all as many as they found, both bad and good: and the wedding was furnished with guests. 11 And when the king came in to see the guests, he saw there a man which **had not on a wedding garment:** 12 And he saith unto him, Friend, how camest thou in hither not having a wedding garment? And he was speechless. 13 Then said the king to the servants, **Bind him hand and foot, and take him away, and cast him into outer darkness; there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.** 14 **For many are called, but few are chosen. (KJV)**

2 Pet 1:10 10 Wherefore the rather, brethren, give diligence to make your calling and election sure: for if ye do these things, ye shall never fall: (KJV)



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THE PURSUIT OF EXCELLENCE IN MINISTRY

Greetings from Pastor Craig Lyons of Bet Emet Ministries.

I want you to know that when I began studying the Bible and the languages in which the Bible was written over fifteen years ago I never expected to find what I did nor was I prepared for the extent of what I would uncover in serious study of the Jewish Roots of Christianity. It is important for you to know at the outset that I was raised in a traditional “fundamentalist Baptist” home and would later, in answering the call of God in my life, attend some twenty years after obtaining a Pharmacy degree for the University of Texas, in Austin, Texas, Southwest Baptist Seminary in Ft. Worth, Texas, where I received an excellent Bible education (from a Protestant perspective). Let me tell you that while there a terrible mistake occurredthey taught me Greek and Hebrew which only propelled me into looking deeper into the Jewish Roots of the Christian Faith. My parallel studies along with my Seminary training only intensified and enlarged the many unanswered questions which I would spend years following graduation in pursuit of answers. I was not prepared to find what I would and my whole life would change in the process.

After graduating Seminary with a Masters Degree in Divinity, instead of pastoring a traditional Baptist church where Sunday School lessons and Sermons are often prepared for you in advance, I became a staff pastor at a rather large nondenominational church in the Dallas-Ft.Worth metroplex where preformed curriculum was not provided and I studied the Bible to get the truths from the text of Scripture which I would teach and preach. Was I surprised when the original languages of the Bible taught me so differently from which my Baptist Seminary and previous religious traditions had taught me. One thing is for certain: the original ideas from the Hebrew are meant to be faithfully transmitted into the Greek and again faithfully transmitted into the English. Surprisingly I found out they had not been! This is where the problem begins; namely, with the purposeful forgery, mistranslation, misquotation and outright deception in the translation of the Hebrew Bible into the Greek. Following this is the sad fact that every English Old Testament is based off this forged Greek Old Testament and every resultant quote in the New Testament comes from this forged Christian Old Testament itself. The problem lies in that the reader of the Christian Bible, not knowing Hebrew, is at a loss to discern which of these English passages in his Christian Old Testament and quotes in the New Testament are faithful translations of the Hebrew and which are not. This means that replacement religion goes unnoticed by most of the 2.5 billion Christians in the world today. This revelation cut the legs out from under me and the soon clear understanding that I have been fed a bill of good and a bunch of untruth regarding the Jewish Messiah and the Salvation message of YHWH became critically apparent. I was devastated and in tears and could not believe that this could have happened to me, for after all, I had graduated Seminary and nobody had alluded to this sad fact to me at any time while I was there. In fact they touted the Greek over and over again and little prestige was given the Hebrew and now I understand why. Antisemitism, both explicit and inherent, permeate Christian dogmas and doctrines and there is no going back to the truth without a full repentance in one's Christian religious belief system. This would mean for many that they would have to close down the Seminaries and get a real job.

Answer for yourself: Who was right...the Jewish Bible interpreted in the original language with Biblical history and Biblical culture as verification of truth, or my Greek Bible and English translations with its traditions inherited from my Christian pastors and parents?

With the aid of a Bible computer, I used the skills shared with me in Greek and Hebrew while in Seminary to research thousands of verbs and nouns in both the Old Testament and New Testament over the next years. I read hundreds of books on related topics over these years in search for these hidden truths. My home today has two rooms devoted as personal libraries alone. You must understand, that if you only read the Bible in English, then, more often than not, you will lean upon your own understanding which is influenced by your own experience in interpreting the Bible, instead of understanding the concepts connected to the original language in which the Bible was written. Such guarantees error in interpretation.

Answer for yourself: How does living as a Gentile in the USA help me understand a Hebrew Book? **In other words, if you do not study the Bible in the original languages, along with knowledge of the culture in which it was written coupled with the history of the time in which it was written, then you cannot be assured you have the accurate meaning God intended for you, and more often than not you won't!**

Most Christians are relegated to reading the Bible only in English without any background of what they are reading, and more often than not, can be shown to have a erroneous belief system and corresponding obedience before God and their fellow man because of such inadequacies. Sadly, to few pastors and teachers in Christianity today have the necessary skills to "rightly divide the Word" or, if they were taught them at one time in their life, many fail to put them to use in their ministry. Sadly, their congregations are deprived of necessary truths which will have an eternal impact after we die.

Having such skills, I endeavored to be a light in a dark place when affiliated with churches in the metroplex. After several years of trying to bring repentance and share the many truths I discovered which corrected my then held religious beliefs in many areas, and would yours if only you knew, I finally realized that too many pastors in high positions considered themselves infallible, uncorrectable, and unteachable. Repentance was not in their vocabulary. I have one particularly famous pastor tell me, when shown truths from the Bible which corrected his position on tithing: ***"What do you want us to say to the people...that we have been wrong?"*** Well, that's a start! Blinded by the false notion that a big church means God's favor, most would not heed sound doctrine and correction from the Word of God. Sadly, there was only one thing left for me and my wife to do, resign and begin to teach the truths of God's Word unhindered and uncorrupted, free from the compromise of man's traditions and doctrine. Things that I discovered, and hopefully you will allow me to share with you, is that Gentile believers and followers of the Jesus in the New Testament and "the Christ" were expected and commanded by God to observe His Sabbaths, Biblical Feasts and Festivals instead of the paganized calendars we have in most churches today. We will see that we are not only expected but commanded to adhere to **"the Pattern of Worship"** given all mankind, both Jew and non-Jew, in hopes that as "the" one people of God that we will both, together, keep and observe the Saturday Sabbath and not the Sunday substitute, as well as the other of God's High Sabbaths and worship Him in Spirit and Truth by giving our tithes and offerings in "the" specific places designated by Scripture [poor, sick, lamb, blind, deaf, handicapped, uneducated, etc., along with financing the keeping of the Biblical Feasts and Sabbaths] and no longer allowing our gifts and offerings to be used by pastors for their personal visions and ambitions and church budgets which are to be financed with funds other than the tithe]. **I realized, and I hope you will as well, that just because we have been taught to do it a certain way does not assure it is the correct way commanded by God or that it is even pleasing to Him in the first place.**

It is to this pursuit that Mary and I have devoted our lives. We feel compelled to share with you these truths for your evaluation and instruction. Please understand, much of what I will share will be different from what you have heard, but understand that does not mean it is untrue. Most of you have not been told the truth by your spiritual leaders. We call upon you to judge the facts for yourself, for without them you cannot hope to make an intelligent decision on the matter.

Lastly, we at Bet Emet Ministries are devoted to understanding the Scriptures as God intended: from both a linguistical, cultural, historical, and cultural perspective. From this, and only this, can you and your family be assured you have not worshipped God in vain. Shalom.

- Pastor Craig Lyons M.Div.

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AS A GENTILE CHRISTIAN DO YOU KNOW WHAT COVENANT YOU ARE UNDER?

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- [Does The Christian Know Which Covenant He Is Under #3](#)
- [Does The Christian Know Which Covenant He Is Under #4](#)
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THE TASK AT HAND: RECOVERING GOD'S PATTERN OF WORSHIP...JEWISH WORSHIP FROM THE NEW TESTAMENT

It may be surprising to many of you, but the New Testament, that is, the collection of Christian writings that came into existence in the second half of the first century as well as the next two centuries as well, bears abundant witness to the existence of a "Pattern of Worship" which can be traced backwards to Abraham (a non-Jew) and even beyond. For simplicity sake we will often refer to this as "Jewish liturgy" as we can see this "Pattern of Worship" apply not only to the Jewish Messianic congregations but the Gentile Messianic congregations as well which we will later see emerge in Asia Minor!

LET ME PREPARE YOU FOR WHAT YOU WILL SEE IF YOU STUDY THIS "PATTERN OF WORSHIP" AS REVEALED TO THE ANCIENTS

We at Bet Emet Ministries often get E-Mails asking *"how do we find a place to worship today which follows the examples we read about in the Book of Acts?"*. Sadly there is no good answer for this since traditional-mainline Christianity does **NOT** follow the "Pattern of Worship" revealed in the Jewish Bible nor really in the New Testament as you will come to see as you study beyond the surface of the stories that we read in the New Testament. You will also come to see that neither does Gentile Christianity follow this "Pattern of Worship" as taught in the true "Apostle's Doctrines" which we should all desire to adopt in our personal lives and worship of God. As you study more into this area of knowledge you can begin to discern a very marked "Pattern of Worship" which you will see reflected by the Jews of the first century which has "roots" that go as far back as Egypt and Sumer. This "Pattern of Worship not only involves special "appointed times of the Creator" but revolve around the equinoxes and solstices; each of which carry special " messages from the Creator which sadly Christianity today has totally lost.

The parallels between Jewish Worship and this "Ancient Pattern" (once you see it) will be startling as Ancient Divine Revelation from God concerning how He is to be loved and worshiped will be revealed for the simplicity which it possessed which tragically today has been lost to most. As you have seen if you have studied in detail our [Egyptian-Christian Website](#) then you have seen for yourself the undeniable link between the Jewish nation as the descendants of the Egyptian people. That being so then one should expect that the "roots" of "Jewish Worship" should go back to their Egyptian forefathers as well and we should likewise expect Biblical Judaism to express this same "Pattern of Worship" which likewise their forefathers possessed from the earliest Revelations of God to mankind. You will not be disappointed when you both discern and search for this "Pattern of Worship" and its links to the earliest Revelation given to mankind on this plant as it is there for all discerning readers to behold. What should concern us however is if we can locate this same "Ancient

Pattern of Worship" not only in the earliest understanding and worship of mankind of the Creator but if this "Pattern of Worship" can be traced down through history and if this "Pattern" can be found in Biblical Judaism as well as later when the non-Jews were taught throughout the world by men like the Apostles and Paul as we see in the both the "first" and "second Great Commissions. If we can find this same "Ancient Pattern or Worship" taught to the non-Jews, lets say in second century in various "churches" throughout Asia Minor. then the implications for us today are startling in light of the fact that mainline Gentile Christianity has little in common with this "Revealed Pattern of Worship" today. That should give you cause to think if we are not contemporary "Nabads and Abhihus" in our worship of God.

This is a startling revelation in light of our experience today as contemporary Christians whose worship is patterned after little, if any, Jewish liturgy as was our counterparts in the first three-four centuries! Roman Christianity has changed not only the Sabbath but the Biblical Holy Days as well and we as Christians and followers of "the Christ" has been given a completely different religious calendar filled with "rituals" totally foreign to this "Ancient Pattern of Worship". The witness in the New Testament of Jewish liturgy is unfortunately not descriptive. In other words, it tells us that in the time of Jesus and beyond as seen in the Book of Acts, that certain prayers, holy days, observances, rituals, and ceremonies existed, but it does not tell us in detail their composition, true meaning, or how they were practiced. **But that does not meant that we cannot know this information today as Judaism as preserved this "Pattern of Worship" for all of mankind today.** The New Testament tells us little about the content, structure, and dynamics of such liturgy and that was done on purpose. For example the Greek word for "Passover" (Pecach) is used 30 times in the New Testament and 29 times it is translated the same and we read "Passover" as we should. But in the Book of Acts, the book which expressed the example of the emerging Gentile Christian Church from Biblical Judaism it is not translated as it has been done 29 times before. Instead of "Passover" we find it purposely mistranslated as "Easter" in order to maintain the sun-worship of the Gentiles and their fertility cults. So on purpose we don't see an accurate picture of the Gentile Church observing the Passover historically as we today know they did but instead get a false picture of the Gentile and his worship of God which sadly has survived for over 1900 years at present. This is only the tip of the iceberg when one truly gets involved in such a study.

If you wanted to learn what the realities that are behind the terms, prayers, rituals, observances, and ceremonies recorded in the Hebrew Scriptures and other Jewish writings let alone hinted at in the New Testament then you have only one recourse open to you: you must study hard in order to learn but also to draw your own conclusions as you see this information as yourself. Only by your own study of this "Pattern of Worship" will you be convinced and thereby be fully persuaded that what lies ahead for you is your repentance of the false worship we inherited from antisemitic Rome and your own experience through your own direct participation in such liturgies and observances which is lacking in Christianity today. I encourage you to consult a variety of sources where you can read about the various liturgical rites and texts used in the Jewish worship of God as they follow the "Pattern of Worship" that they have inherited that has its roots in the earliest Revelation of God to mankind that archeologist have found today. But let me caution you and prepare you for such a study. In doing this type of study we stumble at the beginning because we link the words we read to our very own inaccurate personal experiences and the realities that are a part of our very own cultural world, instead of their intended meaning when spoken in their original setting. ***We must be on our toes to remember our quest is to recover "the faith once given to the Saints".***

The apostles and the first readers of the Christian scriptures were in a privileged hermeneutical position: when they read of the synagogue and Sabbath and Passover, they were brought in contact with realities they knew and were familiar with; for example it can be shown that non-Jews, Gentiles, observed "the Passover " long before Moses. Did you catch that? Why? What did they know that you don't? They did it because God has commanded it and later this command is recorded for us in the later Hebrew Scriptures but we miss it since being falsely programmed to think that such things are "Jewish" and does not pertain to the Gentile and non-Jew. It is time to study hard and look for this "Pattern of Worship", not only practiced by the Jews but non-Jews in the Hebrew Scriptures as well. **It is time that things we find observed in the Bible which are labeled "Jewish" be re-labeled as they should have been all along and that word is "Biblical".** We must be modern day detectives of the Hebrew Scriptures as well as the New Testament in order to find the

"nuggets of truth" which sadly today have been obscured by Rome's redaction and forgery of our Christian Old and New Testaments. We must become competent "detectives" of the Bible we inherited in order to discern that the Holy Scriptures instructs us to celebrate and observe certain "appointed times with God" and realize that even if such newly discerned observances are foreign and strange to us that that does not mean we cannot repent and return to God in repentance for only in so doing can we be **ASSURED** that we are worshiping the Father in Spirit and in Truth.

*John 4:24 24 God is a Spirit: and they that worship him **must** worship him in spirit and in truth. (KJV)*

Instead of Passover the Gentile church adopted Easter which was totally foreign to the Jewish believers in the first century let alone by them considered an idolatrous expression of pagan worship. The same can be said sadly for the Biblical Feasts and Festivals, rituals and prayers, fasts, etc. And it goes even deeper when we see the wholesale replacement of the religious doctrines cherished by Ancients become little more than "literalized Sun Worship" when Rome gets their hands on it. It is called appropriately Replacement Religion and we know it not today in our Churches thinking our "Book" and our experiences is as it should be and accepted by God. One only needs to think of Nadab and Abihu who were killed by God in their false worship of Him. This is our lesson to learn which few ever hear.

Present-day readers (and those of centuries past) of the Christian scriptures find themselves in the opposite hermeneutical situation: a situation of uneasiness and danger. Uneasiness, because they keep encountering terms now outside their cultural horizon; danger, **because they are easily tempted to fill the Jewish words with a content alien to them, a context often 180 degrees opposite their original intended meaning!** Such a failure in correct interpretation of the words of our Bibles have lead Christians to mistakenly believe when reading the New Testament that the Jesus described in the New Testament came to replace Jewish worship with a new variant of Christian worship! This phenomena is extremely important because it shows clearly that the New Testament writings can be approached with different and opposite understandings which may be in harmony or out of harmony with those of the religion of Jesus (Judaism). If they are in harmony, the writings reveal hidden yet luminous meanings which those without the proper understanding of the Hebrew behind the English overlook. **Such conditions result in one reading the New Testament with a mistaken understanding, thus arriving at the erroneous conclusion of seeing Jesus and his followers replace the faith and religion given to them by God with one that denies the eternal truths and precepts enumerated at Sinai and before.**

If then, we are to avoid misinterpreting the liturgical information provided in the New Testament literature, we must have recourse to other sources that are more directly and explicitly Jewish that explain in detail what is only alluded to in the New Testament. This statement explains the series of publications that Bet Emet has recently begun in order to cite some of the many New Testament passages that attest to the existence of Jewish liturgy in early Christianity before changed by Roman paganism. We must reconstruct this Jewish revelation which was taken to Gentile lands in the first through fourth centuries before Constantine at Nicea destroys almost all traces of it. Our studies will contain important documentation concerning implications for the Gentile worshiper of God concerning the liturgy in the Temple and synagogues, the liturgy as seen in the Sabbath, and the liturgy as seen in the celebration and observance of Passover, Pentecost, Tabernacles, Hanukkah, and Yom Kippur. Next we will examine "the prayer" (Shema), and the Lord's prayer. Lastly we will conclude with sources from the Mishnah, the Talmud, and the prayer book (Siddur). **Let us not forget that our inquiry is to ascertain and confirm not only the presence of Jewish worship in the early Christian communities in Asia, Minor, both Jewish and Gentile, but to come to an understanding of the worship service as it existed "THEN" in order to model our lives in such worship that was both THEN and can be NOW "in spirit and in truth."**

Shalom and Blessings

Craig Lyons M.Div.

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THERE EXISTS A PATTERN OF WORSHIP THAT GOD GAVE TO BOTH JEWISH AND NON-JEWISH BELIEVERS

Answer for yourself: Are you aware that within the Hebrew Scriptures that there exists a "Pattern of Worship" given by God that was followed by both Jews and non-Jewish believers in God both in the Old Testament and New Testament times?

Answer for yourself: Are you aware that both historically and archeologically we can attest that this "Pattern of Worship" continued until early in the 4th-5th Century A.D. when Rome for all practical purposes changed it for everyone and today we seldom if ever stumble onto this prior existing pattern that God had intended that all His children, both Jew and non-Jew, observe in their worship of Him?

Answer for yourself: Are you aware that the tabernacle was built according to the divine blueprint given to Moses by the Lord that followed this "Pattern" that exists in Heaven (Ex. 25:8-9)?

Ex. 25: 8 And let them make Me a sanctuary, that I may dwell among them. 9 According to all that I show thee, the pattern of the tabernacle, and the pattern of all the furniture thereof, even so shall ye make it (Tanakh, 1917).

LETS LOOK AT THE EVIDENCE THAT A PATTERN EXISTS

When attempting to understand the higher or Spiritual meaning in the Bible, the patterns of the Bible must be observed, marked and understood. If our beliefs go against the patterns in scripture we are in error. It is from Moses and the subsequent oral tradition that we have received the first five books of the Bible. When you read these books you see patterns occurring again and again. For example, again and again, you see the pattern of six periods of work, one of rest, which is the sabbath. We begin to see a cycle of repeating "appointed times with God" that exist not only in this world but the Spiritual World as well. At Bet Emet Ministries we try to point out these patterns along with their original intended meanings before so much of them were distorted by aberrant theology down through history. Not only in the books of Moses do you see these patterns, but in all the books of the Bible.

Answer for yourself: How did Moses, a Pharaoh no less, learn of these "Patterns of Worship of God"? Why did Moses and others write down these patterns? It is because God directed this to be done. In Moses' case, Moses was directed to make the tabernacle and all its furniture by the pattern shown to him on the mountain:

- **Let them construct a sanctuary for Me, that I may dwell among them.. According to all that I am going to show you, as the pattern [type or image] of the tabernacle and the pattern [type or image] of all its furniture, just so you shall construct it. (Exod 25:8-9)**

Exodus 25 8 And let them make me a sanctuary; that I may dwell among them. 9 According to all that I shew thee, after the pattern of the tabernacle, and the pattern of all the instruments thereof, even so shall ye make it.

- See that you make them after the pattern [type or image] for them, which was shown to you on the mountain. (Exod 25:40)

Exodus 25 40 And look that thou make them after their pattern, which was shewed thee in the mount.

- Then you shall erect the tabernacle according to its plan which you have been shown in the mountain. (Exod 26:30)

Exodus 26 30 And thou shalt rear up the tabernacle according to the fashion thereof which was shewed thee in the mount.

- Now this was the workmanship of the lampstand [candlestick], hammered work of gold; from its base to its flowers it was hammered work; according to the pattern [type or image] which the LORD had showed Moses, so he made the lampstand. (Num 8:4)

Numbers 8 4 And this work of the candlestick was of beaten gold, unto the shaft thereof, unto the flowers thereof, was beaten work: according unto the pattern which the LORD had shewed Moses, so he made the candlestick.

- Our fathers had the tabernacle of testimony in the wilderness, just as He who spoke to Moses directed him to make it according to the pattern which he had seen. (Acts 7:44)

Acts 7 44 Our fathers had the tabernacle of witness in the wilderness, as he had appointed, speaking unto Moses, that he should make it according to the fashion that he had seen.

- [Priests] who serve a copy and shadow of the heavenly things, just as Moses was warned by God when he was about to erect the tabernacle; for, see, He says, that you make all things according to the pattern which was shown you on the mountain. (Heb 8:5)

Hebrews 8 5 Who serve unto the example and shadow of heavenly things, as Moses was admonished of God when he was about to make the tabernacle: for, See, saith he, that thou make all things according to the pattern shewed to thee in the mount.

- For the Law, since it has only a shadow of the good things to come and not the very form of things, can never, by the same sacrifices which they offer continually year by year, make perfect those who draw near. (Heb 10:1)

Hebrews 10 1 For the law having a shadow of good things to come, and not the very image of the things, can never with those sacrifices which they offered year by year continually make the comers thereunto perfect.

- Now these things [in O.T.] happened as examples for us, so that we would not crave evil things as they also craved. (1Cor 10:6)

1 Corinthians 10 6 Now these things were our examples, to the intent we should not lust after evil things, as they also lusted.

In fact there was a "law of the burnt offering, the grain offering and the sin offering and the guilt offering and the ordination offering and the sacrifice of peace offerings, which the LORD commanded Moses at Mount Sinai in the day that He commanded the sons of Israel to present their offerings to the LORD in the wilderness of Sinai." (Lev 7:37-38) **These laws were a shadow of things to come (Heb 10:1).**

Hebrews 10 1 For the law having a shadow of good things to come, and not the very image of the things, can never with those sacrifices which they offered year by year continually make the comers thereunto perfect.

IMPORTANCE OF LEVITICUS 23

In **Leviticus, chapter 23**, it describes the **appointed times ("feasts") of God**: "*And the Lord spoke to Moses, saying, Speak unto the children of Israel, and say to them, Concerning the appointed times of the Lord, which you shall proclaim to be holy convocations, even these are my appointed times*" (Lev 23:2).

Paul will later go on to state that these "appointed times with God" were types that revealed the whole plan of God to mankind including God's true salvation. The examples of blessing and punishment to Israel as well as their obedience unto God and His appointed times were examples whereby not only first century Israel but all of God's children were intended to learn from by God's Holy Nation and Royal Priesthood revealing them and their Divine messages to the non-Jewish world.

1 Corinthians 10 6 Now these things were our examples, to the intent we should not lust after evil things, as they also lusted.

1 Corinthians 10:11 11 Now all these things happened unto them for examples: and they are written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the world are come.

The Old Testament festivals and Sabbaths were typical representations of things that not only had valid meanings to those alive in the first century but to others who would come afterwards. We will explain these appointed times and show their higher meanings as we go through this website. We will see that the appointed times or seasons pictured in the special times with God reveal God's overall plan for mankind and his salvation to both the Jew as well as the non-Jew. **These Divine Messages in these appointed times with God is the true salvation message of God.**

THE LESSON OF KING DAVID...HOW DID WE MISS IT?

Answer for yourself: Are you aware that Aaron and his sons were consecrated to their priestly vocation according to a "Divine Pattern" as well, and they offered the prescribed sacrifices unto God according to this same "Divine pattern"?

Answer for yourself: Are you aware that King David was given the same pattern when told to build the Temple, set aside the Priests, and oversee the **work of the service (worship)** within the Temple (I Chron. 28:13)?

WHAT WAS KING DAVID REALLY TOLD BY GOD?

1 Chr 28:10-15 10 Take heed now; for the LORD hath chosen thee to build an house for the sanctuary: be strong, and do it. 11 Then David gave to Solomon his son the pattern of the porch, and of the houses thereof, and of the treasuries thereof, and of the upper chambers thereof, and of

the inner parlours thereof, and of the place of the mercy seat, 12 And the pattern of all that he had by the spirit, of the courts of the house of the LORD, and of all the chambers round about, of the treasuries of the house of God, and of the treasuries of the dedicated things: 13 Also for the courses of the priests and the Levites, and for all the work of the service of the house of the LORD, and for all the vessels of service in the house of the LORD.

Let us look and examine the the Hebrew word for :service and see what we find hidden in the Hebrew:

Strong's Concordance:

5656 `abodah (ab-o-daw'); or `abowdah (ab-o-daw'); from 5647; work of any kind: KJV-- act, bondage, + bondservant, effect, labour, ministering (-try), office, service (-ile, -itude), tillage, use, work, X wrought.

Brown-Driver-Briggs' Hebrew Lexicon:

5656 `abodah or `abowdah- labor, service

- a) labor, work
- b) labor (of a servant or a slave)
- c) labor, service (of captives or subjects)
- d) service (of God)

Now let us look a little deeper into the root word for the Hebrew word "service":

5647 `abad (aw-bad'); a primitive root; to work (in any sense); by implication, to serve, till, (causatively) enslave, etc.: KJV-- X be, keep in bondage, be bondmen, bond-service, compel, do, dress, ear, execute, + husbandman, keep, labour (-ing man, bring to pass, (cause to, make to) serve (-ingself,)), (be, become) servant (-s), do (use) service, till (-er), transgress [from margin], (set a) work, be wrought, worshipper,

What we see from these words is that there is a "MINISTRY" and "SERVICE OF OR UNTO God" and a "worship of God" that was given by the Spirit of God according to a "PATTERN" that as bondservants of the Most High we are compelled to follow

Answer for yourself: Did you see the picture emerging from the above passages as these Hebrew words were explained in depth to you?

Now we see that there does for certain exist a "Pattern" of "service" or a "Pattern of ministry" of or unto God in the Hebrew Scriptures in the Old Testament but for our purposes we need to know if there exists such a "Pattern of service" or "Pattern of Worship" in the New Testament.

Answer for yourself: Can we find references to this same "Pattern of service" or "Pattern of Worship" in the New Testament? We sure can!

Heb 8:5 5 Who serve unto the example and shadow of heavenly things, as Moses was admonished of God when he was about to make the tabernacle: for, See, saith he, that thou make all things according to the pattern shewed to thee in the mount. (KJV)

Answer for yourself: Did you notice that we find a similar reference to the word "service" as we did before in 1

Chron. 28:10-15? I hope so for the same reference to "service" unto God is in the New Testament as well.

The root word for "service" is very important in this context:

Strong's Concordance reveals to us the hidden meanings behind the word "service" in the above verse:

3000 latreuo (lat-ryoo'-o); from latris (a hired menial); to minister (to God), i.e. render, religious homage: KJV-- serve, do the service, worship (-per).

Now let us look at what the Thayer's Greek Lexicon has to say about this same Greek word we read translated as "service" in the above passage in Heb. 8:5:

3000 latreuo- 1) to serve for hire 2) to serve, to minister to, either to the gods or men and used alike of slaves and freemen a) in the New Testament, to render religious service or homage, to worship b) to perform sacred services, to offer gifts, to worship God in the observance of the rites instituted for his worship; used of priests, to officiate, to discharge the sacred office

Answer for yourself: Now have we see from passages taken from both the Hebrew Scriptures as well as New Testament examples that teach us that there is for certain a "Pattern of Worship" given to mankind which we are compelled to follow in our service or and worship of God? There certainly seems to be as these texts and the original meanings of the words and concepts reveal to us that this "Pattern of Worship" exists.

The very issue to which we speak is the WORSHIP OF GOD and this is connected to a "Pattern" which God intends be followed

Now it is for us to understand that there exists, whether we know it or not, a "Pattern of ministry" and a "Pattern of Worship" that exists both in the Old Testament and New Testament which is "the pattern of intended service and worship of God given to all mankind. This is called "ministry" according to the Hebrew word. I know that the term "ministry" is so overworked today but it is for us to try to discern what "this ministry" unto God is to entail:

- Can this "pattern" of service to, ministry to, and worship of God be discerned from the Jewish Scriptures as well as various New Testament texts?
- Can this "pattern" of service and worship of God be shown from examples in the Hebrew Scriptures and the Old Testament to have existed both before and after the time of Moses at Sinai and can it be shown that these examples of worship the same for both the Jew and non-Jew as well in many places?
- Can this "pattern" of service to, ministry to, and worship of God not only be found to exist both before and after Moses in the Hebrew texts but can we find examples of this "same" pattern in the New Testament both before and after the references to Jesus' death?
- Can this "pattern" of service and worship of God can be shown from examples in the Old Testament and New Testament texts to have existed not only before Jesus' death but also existed "unchanged" after Jesus' crucifixion and can we trace this same "pattern" into Asia Minor and see its incorporation through the efforts of Paul as well as other Apostles in their outreach to the non-Jew?
- If this "pattern" of service and worship of God can be shown to have been quite similar if not the same in many instances as practiced and observed by both Jews and non-Jews both before and after Jesus' crucifixion as well as being found existing in non-Jewish congregations for several centuries in Asia Minor through the efforts of the Great Commission then do I have this same "Pattern of Worship" taught to me today and do I follow this same "Pattern of Worship" of God in my life today and if not then why not?

These are powerful questions going right to the center of both our heads and hearts and the answers for them are available but only through hours of study as you personally find them for yourself. Only in this way can you be sure that no one will ever lie to you about these important matters any longer in your life.

If this answers to the above questions can be discerned from both Old and New Testament examples and if they give us evidence that these modes of worship overlap as applying "unchanged" in many regards for both the Jew and the non-Jewish believer who came to God through the ministry of Yeshua's disciples and apostles then we need then only ask if our experience as Christians and followers of Yeshua is yet today according to this "pattern of ministry" or if our experience is different and if so we must ask ourselves "why?" If we find that our experiences in our worship of God are not according to this "Pattern of Worship" handed down for thousands of years but one which deviates drastically from this "Pattern of Worship" then we have to honestly ask if we have let Israel and their Spiritual message be a light unto us (Israel is a light unto the nations/Gentiles). We have got to be ruthless in such an evaluation in order to determine if we have been misled by our spiritual authorities and ask ourselves if we have "worshiped God in vain".

Matt 15:9 9 But in vain they do worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men. (KJV)

In the articles that follow we will present evidence from both the Hebrew Scriptures and the New Testament which proves beyond any doubt that there does exist not only a "Pattern of Worship" as observed by both the Jew and non-Jew before Moses and Sinai but likewise observed and adhered to as well both before and after the New Testament's account of Jesus' crucifixion which indicates that nothing was changed by Jesus' death. One has to look to the official adoption of the Jesus Movement by the state of Rome in the early centuries A.D. in which "Christianity" became the state religion of Rome in order to see the organized changes made to this "Pattern of worship" as a Replacement Religion and Replacement "Pattern of Worship" emerges which has more in common with Sun Worship than with Heavenly Revelation from God. Today few if any know that ever happened and that we have departed from the "pattern" of worship given by God in His Holy Texts.

Most of us don't know much concerning this "Pattern of Worship" nor that one even exists today. The question that stares you right in the face after just an article of two is if you desire to want to see how as a Christian you have been taught the "deviation" from this "Divine Pattern of Worship" as well as if you, finally having seen this for yourself, can find the desire to repent and return to this "Divine Pattern of Worship of God" which was once given to the Saints.

Jude 1:3 3 Beloved, when I gave all diligence to write unto you of the common salvation, it was needful for me to write unto you, and exhort you that ye should earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints. (KJV)

The "Pattern of Worship" of which I speak is alluded to by Jude in the above passage. This "Pattern of Worship" has been given to all of mankind **"ONCE"** and it is up to us to **"earnestly contend"** for **"THE"** faith that only once spoken to Man by God. Lost for centuries we live in an awesome age where we have the ability today to not only discover this long lost "Pattern of Worship" but recover it for our lives in order to assure that our worship of God is in Spirit and Truth; for many it will be the first time in their lives that they

there exists a pattern of worship god gave to both jewish and non-jewish believers

can say this.

Blessings

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ISRAEL'S OBLIGATION TO THE GENTILES: BEING GOD'S LIGHT TO THE NATIONS & SHARING "THE PATTERN OF WORSHIP"

The Jewish people have the obligation to be Ohr leGoyim (a Light unto the Nations). Israel as a nation is required to teach the non-Jews the Seven Laws of Noah, which are seven Universal categories of Law/Ethics based upon a belief in God.

Yet we as non-Jews are not without obligations to Israel ourselves. B'nei Noach has the obligation to encourage the Jews to perform this mitzvah along with the 613 mitzvot they are obligated to observe since their acceptance of the Torah at haSinai (Mount Sinai). But once you are educated and recover the truth concerning Acts 15 and the Covenant of Noah along with it's Covenant Stipulations called "Laws" then as an educated Gentile Christians or follower of Jesus then you have an even bigger responsibility before God. Study of these Covenant Laws detail often commandments and laws regarding your worship of God. Not knowing these we often fall into false worship and vain worship of God not knowing. Israel, as God's Priest and Holy Nation, was commissioned at Sinai to be a light to all non-Jewish nations whereby we might be instructed in the "Pattern of Worship" of God which He commanded himself.

As an "INFORMED BELIEVER" then you now also have the obligation of interfering with and stopping the missionary efforts of the "messianic" Jews and their fellow Christians which try to infect the Jewish people with their paganized form of Biblical faith which not only opposes "the Pattern of Worship" but debases it by replacing it with various forms of idolatry which is passed off as "worship" today to the unsuspecting and unknowing Gentiles. Apostasy into a man-made gentile religion is forbidden to the Jew - the Jew has an Eternal and Everlasting Relationship with God and within this Covenant is a place for the non-Jew worshiping along side the Jew according to "the Pattern" he examples to the wide world.

B'nei Yisrael (the Children of Israel [the Jewish people] have the Covenant of Faith (the Abrahamic Covenant of Circumcision - bris milah) and the Covenant of Moses (the Wedding Ceremony under the chuppah at Mount Sinai and the acceptance of the wedding ketubah, [contract]) - the Torah of God.

Yisrael has a special relationship with God, and a special responsibility.

Exod 19:6 6 And ye shall be unto me a kingdom of priests, and an holy nation. These are the words which thou shalt speak unto the children of Israel. (KJV)

B'nei Yisrael [the Sons of Israel] are the Priests of Humanity unto God, and the non-Jews are the Laymen of Humanity unto God. Being the Chosen of God includes a greater responsibility - and for the Jew it is the way of

life ordained by God. Choseness implies responsibility, and the Jew has the responsibility to be Jewish - to accept and observe the entire of the Torah - the 248 positive commandments and the 365 negative prohibitions, taught in both the Written and Oral Law.

A WORD OF WARNING.....THIS IS NOT A GAME

On that note let me say that conversion to Judaism is a serious matter because violation of the Laws of God is sin. The misplaced desire and zealotry for God does not need to be channeled into conversion to Judaism by the non-Jew where he stands before his personal Sinai before God and say as the Israel of old **"I will do all that you say."** **I understand the desire and love for God that makes one yearn for God in such a way but failure to observe these other Commandments and mitzvot that are now required by God of the non-Jewish convert renders him now a greater sinner than before and that is not the goal of our love and desire of God.** God understood this desire in the heart of the non-Jew once he learns the truth about the God of Israel and allows the non-Jew to **approach Him in ways that go well beyond the Covenant of Noah (like keeping the Sabbath, observing the Festivals, putting up a mezuzah, keeping kosher, tithing correctly, etc.)** As non-Jews we are allowed and **encouraged by God to take upon ourselves more mitzvot and Commandments of God into our lives** and incorporate them into our lives as Godfearers and Ger Toshavs. The principle can be found all through the Jewish Scriptures as well as Isa. 56. I suggest that the proper response short of conversion of the "informed believer" and educated Christian is to adopt Isa. 56 as a life-style as one's studies show him other ways whereby he might please God by going beyond the minimum.

Unlike the other religions of the world, Judaism does not believe that everyone must become "Jewish"; it neither solicits converts, nor does it suggest that everyone must follow our ways in order to approach God. Quite to the contrary! Maimonides in the laws of Kings (8:10) says: Moshe Rabbeinu (Rabbi Moses) did not give the Torah and the Commandments to anyone but Israel, as the verse says, "The Inheritance of the Congregation of Jacob." [It was also given] to anyone from the other nations who desires to convert... but we do not force anyone who does not want [to accept them] to accept the Torah and the Commandments. **But even so, the Jewish religious nation is to be "a light unto the Nations" and in their siddur (prayer book) pray that the day will soon come when "all humanity will call upon Your Name... they will all accept upon themselves the yoke of your Kingship...."** Has God nothing to say to gentiles?

Answer for yourself: How is a non-Jew to come close to God, to do His will? The answer is that God gave seven laws (or more accurately, seven categories of legal obligations) which are incumbent upon all humanity and are the core and center of the Covenant of Noah given to all mankind long before there was "Jews"; and they include 7 categories of Commandments with subsets under each...the following are the 7 categories:

- 1) Not to eat a limb or meat that was severed from a live animal
- 2) Not to curse the name of God
- 3) Not to steal or rob
- 4) Not to worship idols
- 5) Not to commit adultery or have other forbidden sexual relationships
- 6) Not to murder a fellow man
- 7) To establish courts of justice, to pronounce and mete out decisions for all mankind, and to ensure observance of the previous laws.

And with this, concludes Maimonides (8:11):

Anyone who accepts these seven commandments, and is careful to do them, this person is one of the 'Pious of the Nations of the World' and has a share in the World to Come. This is provided that s/he accepts them and performs

them because they are God's command, part of His Torah, which the Rabbi Moses informed the Jewish people because they were commanded previously to the sons of Noah.

Shalom.



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THE PROBLEM OF JUDAIZING...BUT IS IT REALLY A PROBLEM...OR THE EXAMPLE?

Whenever people have attempted to restore the Jewish or Hebraic root of their faith, the cry of *Judaizing* is heard. The non-Jewish believers who have a heart felt and sincere call to return to the Jewishness of Yeshua [Jesus] should not be intimidated by Gentile Christians or traditional Jews who reject the notion that such a return is impossible. The authority for such a return to Hebrew centered faith is found in both the Tanakh and the New Testament documents. Gentiles who have come to believe in the God of Israel through faith through the ministry of Yeshua's disciples have been, by God, grafted into Israel, made partakers of the commonwealth of Israel, made heirs to the promises of the covenants, and sharers in the rich heritage and tradition of the Jewish people. Believers should be free to identify with Yeshua and celebrate their Olive Tree connection!

JUDAIZING THE BIBLICAL TEXT

The Biblical text has little to say about Judaizing. The only reference in the Tanakh [Old Testament] is found in Esther 8:17. Here the Hebrew verb, *yahad* is used of those Gentiles in Persia who adopted the Jewish way of life out of fear of Esther's decree which allowed the Jews to avenge themselves on their enemies (Esther 8:13). The Septuagint (Hebrew translation of the Old Testament into Greek) uses the Greek word *Ioudaizo* and adds to the verse that the Gentiles were circumcised and actually converted to Judaism. In the New Testament *Ioudaizo* is usually translated to live as the Jews and actually occurs only in Galatians 2:14. Here Sha'ul [Paul] opposed Judaizing only when it had the potential of distorting the Biblical and Hebraic view of salvation by God's grace (Galatians 2:21). Although the ritual and ceremonial aspects of Torah are not binding on Gentile believers for salvation, it is questionable that Gentiles can ever understand their faith and calling without the observation of them.

THE JEWISH HERITAGE OF THE GENTILE CHURCH

It is one thing for a Gentile to feel he is bound by *halachah* (to obey the commandments of the Bible concerning Festivals and Sabbath and other rituals, ceremonies and customs of the Jewish people because he is already "saved"), and another thing, for one to feel compelled as a necessary part of one's Christian experience, to observe Sabbath, eat kosher foods and participate in the Biblical Festivals in order "to be saved." However, the Jewish Messianic Community in Acts 15 NEVER imposed these Jewish practices on Gentiles as an obligation "FOR" Gentile salvation, but be not mistaken dear reader, the obligations to keep the festivals, customs, ordinances, holy days, and Sabbaths were definitely imposed by James, the Lord's brother and head-Pastor of Jesus' church as 'necessary' for Gentiles since they are becoming "saved." It is here we encounter James teaching us that adherence to the Laws of Noah (Noah Covenant with all Gentile mankind) is yet binding upon the Gentile who turns from idols to the God of Israel. James knew what few Christians seem to know today; namely that if you are grafted into Israel then you will look

like Israel. The Isa. 56 passages teaches us that non-Jews can go beyond the minimum and choose those things that please God and choose His Sabbaths. In this statement we see the binding together of the two olive branches: one Jewish and one Gentile. But not mistaken that the Jews are supposed to keep Gentile pagan holy days and holiday. The opposite is the case; after coming to the God of Israel the non-Jews were to be one with the Jewish people and observe with them God's appointed times and holy days as this pleases the L-rd. Besides that the Old Testament can shown on many occasions the non-Jews who came to the knowledge of God keeping the sabbaths and holy days and festivals of YHWH. Before we can continue, we must have a thorough understanding of the Laws of Noah as they pertain to the Gentile believer in Yeshua today in the Christian church.

THE SEVEN LAWS (MITZVOT) OF THE SONS OF NOAH

It is quite clear from the Bible that God has ordained a separate and unique covenant with all mankind as He has made a special and unique covenant with the Jewish people. The covenant that God has made with all Gentile nations is not to be found in the perverted misinterpretations of a Gentile Church which has rejected the teachings of the original church of Yeshua (a totally Jewish institution for it's first seventeen years and which continued in Jewish faith until 325 C.E.). It is this "Jewish church" which was built upon the foundation of the Apostles and Prophets which has become tragically today a church built upon Roman Catholicism, Reformation theology, and upon the Charismatic Gentile misinterpretations of Hebraic Scriptures. Such fallacy that believes that a "New" covenant was given to replace an "Old" covenant is a total perversion of Yeshua's own words as recorded for us in Matt. 5:17ff: *"Think not that I am come to destroy the Law, or the prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfill."* Remember, this is in the "red" of your Bibles. "New," as understood in "New Covenant," refers to a "RE-NEWED" prior covenant, not to a replacement of a prior covenant or a substitute for a previous covenant. To interpret any differently is a perversion of the Biblical text and creates new religion, and Jesus warns us that he has not come to destroy the Torah (Law), also known as the Old Covenant. These are such unfortunate terms that were chosen to express such a wonderful concept from God, but we have totally misunderstood the dynamics involved in the ministry of Yeshua.

What so many Gentiles fail to understand is that God's covenant with mankind started with Adam (himself a Gentile and not a Jew) in the Garden of Eden. According to Jewish tradition and Oral Law (called "Mishnah" and dating back prior to Moses), God had given to Adam, and later to Noah after the flood, certain basic laws of universal morality which were to be observed by all of Adam's (and later, Noah's) descendants.

These universal laws came to be known as the laws of the Benei Noah (i.e. children of Noah, since after the flood we are all Noah's children). Jews have, for the most part, never sought to covert Gentiles to Judaism, for there were never was a need to. Gentiles have their own covenant and path to God by faith in God and resultant obedience and observance of the commandments that God gave them. This was and still is the message of Yeshua in our Bibles. We should re-read our own Bibles and look for the "verbs" in Yeshua's discourses, and listen to what he tells and commands to be done, and quit listening to our 1500 different denominations tell us to do anything that is opposite to or in violation to what Yeshua says in the New Testament Scriptures.

This knowledge is nothing new. Even the original Christians knew this! It is we, the contemporary church of today, who have forgotten what the original Church of Jesus both believed and practiced for salvation. When I say "original" church I mean those Jews and Gentiles of the first two-three centuries, who came to faith in Yeshua (Jesus) as the Messiah of Second Temple Judaism and adopted and adhered to his message. The church of Yeshua (Jesus), as it exists today, as well as during it's long history, has, for the most part, rejected anything Jewish in nature. Thus, little study was done in Hebrew or very little effort expended to understand the Scriptures from a Hebraic perspective, both Old Testament and New Testament. We have forgotten that Yeshua (Jesus) is a Jew and he spoke Hebrew and taught

from a Jewish perspective. The fact that Jesus is a Jew seemed to have little bearing on his message to us today. How unfortunate for the church today because they have failed "to let Yeshua's mind be in them..which is a Jewish mind". This has been for well over 1700 years a tragic mistake, for which we still suffer the consequences today by observing a replacement faith and religion which has little in common with the faith of Jesus. We follow Paul and his "unique" gospel more than the true gospel as taught by Yeshua/Jesus.

JAMES-THE LEADER OF THE MESSIANIC COMMUNITY-JESUS' CHURCH WHICH HE WAS TO BUILD

James, the leader of the Yeshua Messianic Movement within Judaism at that time was asked regarding Gentiles who were listening to their "gospel", if these Gentiles who were accepting the message of Yeshua and his invitation had to convert to Judaism in order to be accepted as grafted into Israel. James rightly said to them (Acts 15) that all these Gentiles had to do was certain "essentials", and he proceeds to list a basic form of the laws of Benei Noach. Please notice also that James also says these "necessary things" also seemed good to the Holy Spirit as well (Acts 15:28)!

Answer for yourself: Did you catch that? The Laws of Noah seemed good to the head of the Messianic church as well as to the Holy Spirit as the answer as to how Gentiles were to become a part of believing Israel! Thus they were grafted into Israel and Paul would refer to this very thing later in the New Testament Scriptures.

An important fact we must understand is that "Christianity" at that time, while a "Messianic sect" within Judaism, and not apart from it, had not yet turned idolatrous as it has today. The Yeshua Messianic Movement, as it evolved and changed over the centuries under Gentile influence, began to claim that "it only" was the "true Israel". This new message ("another gospel" as was warned by Paul and as preached today), found its strength in Roman Catholicism and in the Reformation Protestant church. Such damnable doctrines surfaced as we confront today such as that pernicious error which teaches that the "church" is the "New Israel", and as "the church" has replaced natural Israel in the plan of God. This is blasphemous!

The message of such churches is the "inclusion of the Gentiles" into a "new" covenant with God, as if they did not possess one already. In ignorance, the Gentile Christian church has for centuries wanted to avoid any knowledge of the "Benei Noah" (sons of Noah) covenant that God has had with the Gentiles for thousands of years, even before there was a Jewish people. Such an ancient covenant would abrogate the Christian position of having to reach out to the Gentiles, claiming they (the Gentile) had no other avenue to God or relationship with God outside of the New Testament.

Dear Christian, God's Word is God's Word, regardless of Christian misinterpretations. The Word of God must be our authority, whether Jew or Gentile. This Word of God is the Bible that Jesus used; the Hebrew Scriptures and not the book created by pagan Rome some 400 years later called the New Testament! As Christians, we have failed to adhere to this cardinal principle when it comes to interpretation of our Bibles, and unfortunately let our Church's denomination and its doctrine stand above the Bible that Jesus used as our authority. As Christians we seldom read or thoroughly understand and know the Hebrew Scriptures. Shame on us! We must learn to study to find out the truth about the words of our Bibles; the Bible that Yeshua/Jesus read and loved...the Jewish Bible!

The Christian Church, to this day, holds itself to be the "replacement" for the Jewish people and therefore, the definer of right and wrong for the Gentile (and the Jew). The last time I read Matt. 23 I believe that Jesus says that the Pharisees (of whom he is one) are to sit in Moses's seat and not Gentiles. In the Greek the word "set" refers to "inherit a kingdom" and ironically Yeshua had just pronounced that the "kingdom" and rulership for God over the people of Israel had been taken from the pro-Roman Sadducees of his day and given to the Pharisees who would be the only group to survive the destruction of the Temple in 70 C.E. Though this "replacement" nonsense is clearly exposed in the Bible for the falsehood that it is, many sincere Gentile

believers are still deceived into believing it. It is to these sincere Gentiles first that we at Bet Emet, as well as other similar ministries, as well as the Jewish community, have an obligation by Torah (law, instruction, teaching of God) Law to educate them in what God truly (and not falsely) said and demands of them.

THE LAWS OF NOAH

The laws of the Benei Noah (sons of Noah), although originating with Adam, are conveniently recorded in the Talmud (Jewish commentary) and expounded upon in Maimonides's Mishneh Torah, the great codification of Jewish Law written in the 12th century. This is required learning for every Jew and needs to be for every Christian as well (those laws pertaining to him and his covenant with God). For as it is known, the children of Israel (Benei Yisrael) have the obligation to be a "nation of priests", this means to be teachers and educators. The children of Noah, Benei Noah (i.e. all Gentiles) have the obligation to learn these laws and practice them.

Only in this way does a Gentile draw close to God and fulfill his/her spiritual purpose here in this world. Faith in God with incorrect responses and obedience to God's commandments does not please God!

Answer for yourself: What level of spirituality can be achieved by the righteous children of Noah? To begin with, they are the ones who are called the "righteous Gentile." Of them, the prophet Elijah has said (Tana D'evi Eliyahu, Rabbah 9), **"Heaven and Earth will bare witness to me, be it a man or woman, Jew of Gentile...all can receive the Holy Spirit. It all depends upon one's actions."** For further elucidation on these commandments I recommend The path of the Righteous Gentile by Rabbi Haim Clorfene published by Targum Press (Feldheim) and The Seven Laws of Noah by Aaron Lichtenstein, published by Berman Books.

MAIMONIDES....MISHNEH TORAH

Maimonides, in his epic work Mishneh Torah, in the Laws of Kings 9:1, teaches us concerning the Laws of Noah:

"Six precepts were commanded to Adam:

- ***1. The prohibition against worship of false gods.***
- ***2. The prohibition against cursing God***
- ***3. The prohibition against murder***
- ***4. The prohibition against forbidden sexual relations.***
- ***5. The prohibition against theft***
- ***6. The command to establish laws and courts of justice.***

To Noah God added:

- ***7. The prohibition against eating the flesh from a living animal.***

Thus, there are seven Mitzvot" (commandments).

Again quoting from the Law of Kings 8:10 he states: ***"Our teacher Moshe (Moses) was commanded by God to compel all the peoples of the earth to accept upon themselves the laws given to the descendants of Noah."***

Again quoting: ***"This obligation, to teach all the peoples of the earth about the Laws of Noah, is incumbent upon every individual in every era. The Jews must serve as "a light to the nations" (Isa.***

42:6) teaching them (the Gentiles) the Seven Mitzvot (laws) and instructing them in proper behavior...Similarly, the Chatam Sofer (Choshen Mishpat, Responsum 85) writes that it is a mitzvah (commandment) to guide the Gentiles in the service of God."

For whatever reason, teaching Gentiles the universal laws of the children of Noah has not been practiced in earnest since the days of the Second Temple. During the long exile of the Jewish people among the Christians and the Moslems, who both falsely claim to be the legitimate heir to the title "the chosen people of God", the Jews experienced extreme persecution from both Christians and Moslems for observing the truth of their own Torah. Even more so would the Jews have suffered persecution if the Jews had hounded the Gentiles and shared with them the truth of the Torah which was, in reality, the responsibility of the Jew. Now that HaShem (God), in His mercy has returned the Jewish people to their homeland, *we again find the Jewish people have the strength to take on the Gentiles and compel them to give up their idol worship religions and purge Christianity of its paganism. This might not sound like the most liberal of "live and let live" philosophies. But nowhere does Torah teach us to "live and let live". The Jewish people, as well as Gentile "God-fearers" (Acts 10) who have come to the truth concerning the faith once given to the saints, have an obligation to "shine the light" of HaShem's (God's) truth on error and deception. If this means we have to expose the falsehoods of the world's religions, then we are obligated to do so.* At no time more so than in this generation are there so many Gentiles who have left their former religions and are seeking the real truth. Where will they turn? We, both Jews and Gentile "God-fearers" who have come to the faith of Yeshua (Jesus), instead of a faith-in Jesus, have been given this opportunity in our day and time to fulfill our obligation as teachers and "priests", to teach other Gentiles the experiential truth of the one and only God! This we do in preparation of the coming of Mashiah (Messiah). One of the groups leading this great effort are the world-wide sh'li'him (disciples) of Lubavitch. I support and applaud their endeavors.

Isaiah 42:6 calls God's people to be a light to the nations (Gentiles). Today, the Gentiles are embedded in deceit and false teachings in the majority of the Christian churches of our land. We, who understand and practice the faith of Yeshua (Jesus), both Jews and "God-fearers", must be a light to the nations of the world and the Christian church. This applies particularly to the present age, where there is far greater communication between Jews and Gentiles than every before. Many Jews and Rabbis are taking advantage of this phenomenon. We, as repentant, teachable, and enlightened Christians and [followers of Jesus](#), must observe our obligation and engage other Gentiles, in heated debate if necessary. Halachah (proper interpretation of the Torah-the teaching of God) demands that we go on the offensive and compel the Gentiles to abandon their idolatry. This is not an option; this is Halachah! Rather than be influenced by these paganized Gentiles that comprise the majority of contemporary Christian churches of today, we must utilize our freedom of communication to convince the Gentiles to accept their Seven Mitzvot (categories of commandments).

LET US LOOK AT THESE SEVEN MITZVOT

"The Seven Mitzvot are by no means a narrow field of study. Rabbi Meiri (Sanhedrin 59A) states that most elements of the Torah are included within them (Are you not surprised?). For example, in order to observe the prohibition against the worship of false gods correctly, one must become aware of God's unity. Accordingly, a number of contemporary Sages have suggested the translation of certain basic Chassidic and Kabbalistic texts into English with the intent that they be studied by Gentiles."

My own experience has taught me that when Christians are exposed to the true meanings of the words of our Bibles, as understood in their original language, original culture, and with a correct historical understanding, many quickly abandon their false beliefs and began to repent and "do" what the Bible really says and commands. It is a shame so few Christians study the Bible in the original languages today; the fruit of which is error, deception, false doctrine, idolatry, and the practice of robbery of God's people within the Churches that bear God's name no less!

SEFER MITZVAH HASHEM: (BOOK OF THE COMMANDMENTS OF GOD):

It is forbidden for a Jew to cause a Gentile to violate one of the seven commandments of the children of Noah, because it is written, "You shall not place a stumbling block before the blind" (Lev. 19:14) therefore it is appropriate for all Israel to be aware of them. This is good advice to the Christian Church as well. Therefore I am writing down the seven laws of the children of Noah. All of them are to be found in Sanhedrin 56, and in the Mishneh Torah, Laws of Kings, chapters 9-10.

Law #1:

The Gentile is warned not to practice idolatry. Maimonides clearly writes in the Laws of Idolatry, Chapter 9, Halachah 4 that **Trinitarian Christianity is idolatry**. This means that the Jews, as well as Monotheistic Christians (of whom there are too few!) have the obligation to go on the offense and (lovingly, if possible) guide the Christian population to recognize their hollow inheritance, the actual inception of this Gentile-Pagan idea into a Jewish faith, and the truths about the Council of Nicea where this idea gained acceptance in 325 C.E. in protests of the majority of "Christianity" at that time. It is time to come back to God in truth. In my personal opinion, I believe that most Christians have "their hearts in the right place," it is their heads that have been "tossed to and fro" by such false doctrines. We must not place a stumbling block before the blind and allow this to continue. We are commanded by Halachah to stand against such false teachings and reveal the truth to all nations.

Law #2:

The Gentile is warned not to curse God. If this is violated, one is guilty. This is true whether one cursed God using His Name or one of the terms used to refer to Him. According to the Holy Zohar (III, 273A), "HaShem (God), Torah, and Israel are one." In my opinion, the one who cursed the Torah, either the Oral Torah (Oral Law) or the Written Torah (Written Law) violates this commandment. **Many a Gentile, violates this commandment, and is not even aware of his sin. While alleging love for God, the majority of Gentiles in the Christian churches of today express great contempt towards the Talmud and Judaism. We fail to realize that the Talmud is the embodiment of the Oral Torah (Oral Law), given at Mt. Sinai and often spoken of by Jesus in the New Testament. Being that HaShem (God) and His Torah are one, therefore the Gentile who curses or otherwise maligns the Talmud and the Jewish religion is guilty of violating this commandment, the same as if he was cursing God. But even more damaging, if possible, is the sin and guilt incurred by the Gentile Christian who believes and espouses that the New Testament has replaced the Old Testament (Torah).** Never was such a more damnable doctrine devised than the one which denigrates the Old Testament, and teaches that the New Testament has replaced the Old Testament. Along with this evil Replacement Theology, as held by the majority of the Christian churches today, is the added guilt that we have violated the law of Noah in this regard, for God and Torah are one. How can we replace God with such a substitute? Therefore, the Christians who believes and espouses or maligns the Old Testament (the Bible Jesus used) is guilty, the same as if he was cursing God.

Law #3:

The Gentile is warned not to commit murder. If a Gentile kills another, **even a fetus** in its mother's womb, he is subject to capital punishment as far as God is concerned. Abortion is defined as murder by universal law. Therefore those who perform abortions have the legal definition as murderers.

Even more startling, the rabbis teach that if you **misuse the tithe, or fail to tithe, or incorrectly tithe, you are not only guilty of stealing from God and His people, but such sin is considered murder as well as it leads to the demise of God's people.** Understand that as a traditional Christian you are guilty of murder before God because you have never been taught the tithe correctly and have never given your tithes according

to the way the Hebrew Scriptures command it be done. Your Pastor has made you an accessory to murder according to traditional Jewish exegesis of these verses. Remember Jesus is a Jew and believed like other Jews. This is truly alarming when this understanding hits home in your heart and head. Are you your brother's keeper? God considers that you and I are!

Capital punishment for murder is a commandment of God. God may have ordained this as a deterrent or for some other reason. One thing however is clear, we cannot second guess God's Divine morality. Our courts today may not follow God's commandments in this area, and **we my interpret their leniency and grace as God's will, but to do so violates God's Word.** We have been lulled asleep for the most part as Christians today because of the lack of study of God's word, and we lean upon our own understanding in these areas. There is a way that seems right with man, but the end-result is not of God.

Law #4:

The Gentile is warned not to partake in forbidden sexual unions. These are forbidden relations that a Gentile is warned not to violate: one is forbidden to have a sexual affair with one's mother, the wife of one's father, a married woman, the sister of his mother, and a member of the same sex (homosexuality) and an animal. Specifically this means a man with another man. **Homosexuality is thus considered a crime against the universal laws of nature.** On an interesting note, lesbianism is not clearly pointed out in this regard. **Even in Jewish Law, whereas lesbianism is absolutely forbidden, its penalty is less than that for homosexuality.**

One would be guilty of this sin in relationships with one's mother even if she was raped by his father, or if his father had relations with her only once. Regardless, she is his mother. Regarding the wife of one's father, one is guilty even after the death of one's father. Regarding a married woman, one is not guilty until one has relations with her in the natural manner after she has been intimate with her husband. However, a woman who is engaged or who has performed a marriage ceremony but who has not yet been intimate with her husband, one is not guilty over, for it is written, "and she has been intimate with her husband." (Ber. 20:3). All this refers specifically to a male Gentile and a female Gentile.

If however a male Gentile has sexual relations with a female Jew, whether in the natural way or in an unnatural way, he is guilty. If the female Jewess was engaged, the Gentile (who has relations with her) is stoned to death as would be a Jew. If the Gentile was to have sexual relations with a Jewess after her wedding ceremony, but prior to her being intimate with her husband, he is executed by hanging as would be a Jew. If the Gentile has relations with any other Jewess who is not a virgin, the penalty is death by decapitation, as it would be if the Gentile violates a married Gentile woman. The Gentile who has relations with a member of the same sex or with an animal is guilty regardless if the act was performed with an adult or child.

Law #5:

The Gentile is warned not to commit theft. There is no difference between stealing from a Gentile or stealing from a Jew. **One who cheats or steals money, kidnaps someone (steals a life), does not pay due wages, or fails to pay due wages promptly, etc....even a worker who takes a lunch break when he should be working; all of these are guilty of violating this law of Noah.** All of these are to be included in the definition of a thief. One is guilty of even the slightest monetary amount. If a Gentile steals something of the least monetary value, and another Gentile comes along and steals that from him, they are both liable.

Law #6:

The Gentile is warned not to eat a limb from a living animal, whether it be domesticated or wild. When an animal is slaughtered, even after its wind pipe and jugular vein have been severed, all the while that animal kicks, its flesh and meat which has already been removed for "food" are forbidden to the Gentile as the "limb from a living animal". One is guilty for this whether it be a domesticated or wild animal, clean or unclean.

Law #7:

The children of Noah have been commanded regarding judges. Gentiles are required by God to place judges and magistrates in each and every town so as to make judgments regarding the six commandments listed above. These Gentile courts must warn the people. A Gentile who violates one of these laws is executed by the sword (decapitation). It is for this reason that all the inhabitants of Shechem were subject to the death penalty. Shechem stole Dinah from the House of Jacob. Everyone in town saw and knew what he did, yet no one judged him or held him accountable for his actions.

A Gentile can be executed on the word of one witness, one judge, without warning, and by evidence given by a relative. It is this section of Halachah that justifies Baruch Goldstein taking lives in the Hebron mosque. The Moslem population (Gentiles) of Hebron have continually expressed its hatred of Jews and the inhabitants of the town have committed and have been sympathetic to the committing of acts of violence against Jews. Since that town of Hebron has not established judges to punish the anti-Israeli perpetrators of violence and terrorism, the entire town therefore became collaborators in the guilt of the perpetrators. The entire population therefore become subject to collective punishment. Baurch Goldstein acted as the single witness to this fact. He judged by what he saw, and acted as an executioner and in total compliance to the letter of the Torah. As unpopular as it might be by modern Gentile moral standards that have replaced the Torah with "grace alone", Baruch Goldstein was acting in compliance with the written will of God in the Torah (negatively called today "the letter of the law"). Let us never forget we must have an authority, and such is the Torah; it sits in judgment upon us, we do not sit in judgment upon it by erroneously applying our emotions or our experience upon it! Goldstein executed righteous justice, based upon the Bible, on a guilty population. This is the correct view according to the Torah (Law of Moses) and the universal laws of Benei Noah and the covenant of Noah, no matter what man's courts may decide today which do not follow God's Torah!

I hope this article has stimulated your thinking and moved you closer to more in-depth study of your faith. Shalom.



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THE APOSTLE'S DOCTRINE (THE PATTERN OF WORSHIP) WAS TAUGHT IN THE SYNAGOGUES TO THE GOD-FEARERS & NON-JEWS

If you consider yourself a "Christian" today, either a Roman Catholic or a Protestant, then whether you realize it or not you are a member of the Church of Constantine. The Church of Constantine and its Religious Belief System is a far cry from what the Messianic Branch of Judaism taught in the first century. Such a radical departure from "the faith once given the Saints" as expressed by Jude 1:3 is termed today **"Replacement Religion"**. Let us dwell on the following New Testament passage and notice clearly that not only does Jude mention a **specific and particular "faith"** as designated by the definite article "the" but also mentions very interestingly a "common salvation".

Jude 1:3 3 Beloved, when I gave all diligence to write unto you of the common salvation, it was needful for me to write unto you, and exhort you that ye should earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints. (KJV)

We should be struck immediately by the notation of this writer that there exists in his day a "common" salvation which is connected to a particular faith, called **"the" FAITH**, which was once and for all given to all of mankind.

Answer for yourself: How are we to understand this?

It really is not that hard. We need to understand that within Judaism and the Covenant of Moses are 613 Commandments or Mitzvoth which is the foundation of the Jewish faith. **Digging deeper we find as well the basic 66 Commandments or Mitzvoth of the Covenant of Noah upon which the Covenant of Moses built upon.** These Laws and Commandments given to Noah were previously given to all of Gentile mankind.

Answer for yourself: What is the implication of all this?

Well get ready for the shock of your life. This means that the very basis of Judaism today is the foundational Covenants first given to the non-Jew. In other words there is a place within Judaism a prior "faith" for the non-Jew without requiring his conversion to Judaism. Now at times Judaism and bigoted Rabbis did not always teach this but at times they did. Rabbi Hillel stands out as one who taught this truth and there were many others in the history of Israel. We are possibly more acquainted with this ancient concept today when we hear sermons on being "grafted" into the Israel of God. We understand this simply as **"Olive Tree" theology where the two peoples, both Jews and non-Jews, represent the one people of God. What I want to draw your attention to is the fact that within in one Religion, Biblical Judaism, was a collection of Covenants; some for the Jews and some for the Non-Jews as well. And more to the point when one sees this "overlap" of Covenants whereby the 66 Laws of Noah are contained within the 613 Laws of Moses then one should expect that there would be an overlap of Worship within them both as pertaining to**

both the Jew and the Non-Jew.

We see that the Hebrew term for the word "common" in the Greek according to the Strong's Concordance # 2839 is "koinos" (koy-nos'); probably from 4862; common, i.e.; which literally can mean **"shared by all"**.

*Exod 12:49 49 **One law shall be to him that is homeborn, and unto the stranger (non-Jew) that sojourneth among you. (KJV)***

Answer for yourself: What should that teach us? We should see clearly that whether we were born Gentiles and non-Jews or Jewish by birth then together we as the one people of God share a common salvation and similar Covenants which overlap as consist of many of the same Laws and Commandments; many of which are identically the same, which reflect to each category of people their unique Covenant stipulations and personal requirements before God . Upon study we should see and become aware that **the Jewish Covenant, the Covenant of Moses, is clearly based off of the prior Covenant of Noah given to the non-Jew.**

Answer for yourself: So why is this of major importance to the Gentile Christian today? Simply because the New Testament records for us that the early Jerusalem Church as founded in Acts 15 lays down the requirement for the non-Jews to be accepted into the Israel of God without prior conversion to Judaism as had been expected up until that time. The importance of the prior sentence cannot be overstated. **The non-Jewish believers in God were NOT to practice a different religion from the Jew but share the same one and the same "pattern of worship" as given to the Jew was to be shared by the Non-Jew as well.** Understand that within this "common salvation" there were differences but the differences were few and we will look at those during our studies in this website. Two-thirds of the 613 Commandments given to Israel concerned the Priesthood only and within the remaining 200 or so let us not forget that 66 were identically the same as shared by the Non-Jew. Within the remaining 200 or so extra Commandments given Israel we see that 66 overlapped with the Laws of Noah given the non-Jew. There was much agreement between these Covenants first given the non-Jews and later reiterated and enlarged upon when given to the Jewish nation. **Likewise there is overlap in the worship commanded by God of both the Non-Jew and the Jew as well.**

THE SALVATION OF THE GENTILES...WHAT WERE THEY TAUGHT?

Most Christians are familiar with the account in the New Testament detailing that before Paul's salvation experience on the road to Damascus, he persecuted the early Jewish believers, searching for them in the synagogues (Acts 22:19; 26:11).

*Acts 22:19 19 **And I said, Lord, they know that I imprisoned and beat in every synagogue them that believed on thee: (KJV)***

*Acts 26:11 11 **And I punished them oft in every synagogue, and compelled them to blaspheme; and being exceedingly mad against them, I persecuted them even unto strange cities. (KJV)***

Answer for yourself: Understanding that Paul was the Apostle to the Gentiles then did you notice where it was that Paul found the Gentiles being taught about "the Christ" and the Jewish Messiah? What does this say to us about what they were being taught? **You really need to think on this as it is very important to recovering that "present truth" which we have lost that I referred about in previous articles.**

I have always desired to return to that unique time in the first century, sitting at James' feet or the feet of other Apostles, when I could have heard the **"present truth"** as taught by the Apostles and Disciples of "the Christ". Notice in the passage below the warning that there exists a **"present truth"** in the days of Peter which alternately means that not always will "this truth" possibly exist.

2Pet 1:12 12 Wherefore I will not be negligent to put you always in remembrance of these things, though ye know them, and be established in the present truth. (KJV)

Notice if you will that Peter mentioned that there was a "present truth" which he described in the first century which sadly I have discovered, along with other truth seekers, gets diluted, corrupted, and altered down through time due to many influences; none of which are positive. **The end result is that what we have inherited today in Western Christianity is anything but the reflection of that "present truth" as it existed in the first century.**

It is our task to return to this "present truth" before it would be altered beyond belief as we find it today. This means we have to look to men like James who made a startling announcement in Acts 15 which for all practical purposes today the Church overlooks entirely. James decreed in Acts 15, when the Jerusalem Council made its famous decree, the "necessary things" required of the Non-Jews in order to be "saved" and included in the Israel of God since no longer would the Gentiles be required to be circumcised and converted to Judaism in order to be accepted in the Israel of God.

Acts 15:19-21 19 Wherefore my sentence is, that we trouble not them, which from among the Gentiles are turned to God: 20 But that we write unto them, that they abstain from pollutions of idols, and from fornication, and from things strangled, and from blood. 21 For Moses of old time hath in every city them that preach him, being read in the synagogues every sabbath day. (KJV)

We should learn a lot from this above passage. **First of all we see that the non-Jews, both in Palestine and outside Palestine in Asia Minor, attended religious services on the Sabbath (Saturday) and not Sunday. This is part of the "Pattern of Worship" to which we are seeking to recognize let alone return. Also the teaching material of these Non-Jews were these same Covenant stipulations and responsibilities that I mentioned previously which are found in the Laws and Commandments which we find recorded in the Laws of Moses (the Torah). Both the Jews and Non-Jews Covenant stipulations in the forms of Commandments and Laws were taught at these times in order to equip men and women to draw closer to God in their personal lives. This is why as we will see that God commanded the Jews to read certain Torah passages on certain days throughout the year as well as this again is part of this "Pattern of Worship" in order that certain Divine Messages were given on certain special "appointed times" and days with God. God desires that all mankind, both Jews and non-Jews, learn to obey their respective Covenants with Him while at the same time adhering to this "Pattern or Worship" handed down to holy men of old for us today.**

Having this record besides the historical evidence from Judaism that attests to the non-Jewish participation in the Synagogues of the first century then we can conclude for certain that not only the early Messianic Jewish believers but the **non-Jewish Godfearers as well remained as a sect within Judaism worshipping in the synagogues not only in Israel but in Asia Minor as well where Paul and others ministered.**

The earliest Messianic believers were ethnically Jewish and culturally Hebraic. Examination of Acts chapters 1 –10 (which comprise 7-10 years of history) shows us that we don't see any efforts on the part of the Jews to evangelize Gentiles. There are reasons for this that border upon bigotry by the Jews and hostility toward the Gentiles for their harsh treatment toward the Jewish nation in past Jewish history. This is one of the reasons why the Jews enforced circumcision upon the Non-Jew for it was a deterrent to keep them at arms length since many died from such procedures as adults since no longer possessing the mothers's antibodies that guard against infection when a baby. Yet not all of Israel felt this way and there were exceptions but the ruling Rabbi at this time, Shammai, had a dislike of non-Jews to the point where such efforts to reach out to the non-Jew in the middle first century were all but discontinued. That being the case God had to use supernatural means (including angelic visitation, visions, and a sovereign outpouring of the Ruach-Holy Spirit) to show the disciples

that repentance had been granted unto the Gentiles also (Acts 10:1- 11:18). The Cornelius event in the New Testament is a very important turning point for Judaism as well and the non-Jewish world and we will examine this in detail shortly. This is a major turning point for the Messianic branch of Judaism but sadly mainline Judaism would not be concerned with this aspect of Gentile Salvation and continue to require full conversion of the non-Jew for inclusion in the Israel of God. Only after the evangelization of Cornelius's household was there a determined effort to evangelize non-Jewish people by the Messianic branch of Judaism which we see in Acts 11:19-21. But understand that in spite of this division within Judaism the non-Jew still attended the Synagogues and it was there he was exposed to the "pattern of worship" which was the same for the Jew and the non-Jew as handed down since the beginning of time as we shall see very soon in this website.

THE SALVATION OF THE GENTILES...ACCORDING TO ACTS 15

As alluded to previously Acts 15 records for us that Jewish as well as non-Jewish believers remained a sect within Judaism. The major difference was that now it would no longer be required for non-Jews to be circumcised and convert to Judaism to be recognized as "brothers" in the Israel of God. This chapter (Acts 15) recounts the Jerusalem council, which was established to answer the question, "How are gentiles saved?" Furthermore, they determined the minimum requirements for Gentiles to meet in order to be accepted within Messianic Biblical Judaism. Although Paul is called the apostle to the Gentiles, we must be careful not to think that he established Gentile Churches that met separately from the Messianic Jewish believers which gathered in the synagogue. Throughout the book of Acts we see that Paul's custom was to evangelize within the synagogue (Acts 13:5,14, 42, 44; 14:1; 17:1-2, 10, 17; 18:4, 8, 19; 19:8). At that time there were many Gentiles, known as Godfearers or proselytes at the gate (David Stern, Jewish New Testament Commentary, Jewish New Testament Publications, Inc., 1992, p 257), who met regularly within traditional Judaism throughout the world. They were the primary source of Gentile converts for Paul during his missionary journeys. (Acts 13:42-44; 14:1; 17:4, 12; 18:4; 19:10). Evangelization apart from the synagogue was more the exception than the rule (Acts 17:18-34). Thus, Paul, uniquely equipped to evangelize Gentiles, ministered mainly to those who would be most open to his message-Gentiles already meeting in the synagogue. Paul did not have the Gentile believers leave the synagogue and form "Churches." The non-Jews continued to meet in synagogues (except when persecution from non-Messianic Jews prevented them) as was the expression of the Messianic faction within Judaism both inside and outside Israel and in Asia Minor. This view is in harmony with the Pauline epistles where Paul sometimes appealed to the Jewish believers (Romans 2:17-29; 7:1) while at other times he appealed to the non-Jewish believers (Romans 11:13). In the book of Acts we learn that Paul established home congregations from Jewish and non-Jewish people who were already actively participating in the synagogue. Furthermore, they were believers who related to each other in Torah-based communities as one corporate expression (Acts 15:13-21; Ephesians 2:1 – 3:21).

So let us not forget the importance and role of the synagogue in the instruction of the non-Jew and his salvation experience and the types of teaching that he received there let alone the "Pattern of Worship" to which he was instructed and followed. It is here that he received what the Book of Acts calls "Apostle's Doctrine" and "fellowship".

Acts 2:42 42 And they continued stedfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers. (KJV)

In closing let us focus on the thought that it was through the Non-Jews continued attendance in the Synagogues of Israel as well as Asia, Minor, that the Non-Jew was to become acquainted with the "Pattern of Worship" given to the Jew from the time of David and beyond and it is through this "Pattern of Worship" that the Non-Jew was taught how to worship the Creator as had the Jews since receiving "the Pattern of Worship"

the apostles doctrine were taught in the synagogues to the non-jews

previously from God.



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JERUSALEM, THE SYNAGOGUE, AND JESUS AND "THE PATTERN OF WORSHIP"

The first corporate worship service recorded in any detail in the scriptures is the assembly of Israel at Mt Sinai in Exodus 19-24. Exodus 19-23 recounts the establishment of the covenant between God and his people, and Exodus 24 gives the worship service where Israel ratified the covenant. The basic pattern is very simple:

- Israel offered burnt offerings and peace offerings (Ex 24:4-6)
- Moses read the Book of the Covenant to the people (Ex 24:7a)
- The people responded with faith and obedience (Ex 24:7b-8)
- Israel (in this case through its representatives) partook of the peace offerings with God (Ex 24:9-11)

It would be useful to go into the details of the daily worship of the Old Testament but space does not allow for that here but let it be said that every biblical worship service described in scripture follows this basic pattern (no other pattern is ever substituted for it). The worship service that is presented in the greatest detail is the service at the dedication of the temple in 2 Chronicles 5-7. There is more detail in Solomon's service, but it follows the same pattern that Moses did:

- Solomon assembles Israel for worship (2 Chron 5:2-5)
- Sin is dealt with through burnt offerings (2 Chron 5:6)
- Israel enters God's presence through the priests (2 Chron 5:7-10)
- Psalm of praise (2 Chron 5:11-14)
- Word of God proclaimed by Solomon (2 Chron 6:1-11)
- Solomon's prayer of intercession (2 Chron 6:12-42)
- Fire consumes the sacrifices/glory fills the temple (2 Chron 7:1-2)
- Psalm of praise (2 Chron 7:3)
- Israel partakes of the peace offerings (2 Chron 7:4-9)
- Benediction (Israel departs in peace) (2 Chron 7:10)

So the Old Testament pattern of worship has a very clear theological shape:

- Worship is entrance into the presence of God, and you can only enter the presence of God if sin has been removed;
- God then speaks to his people through his Word, reminding them of what he has done for their redemption, and calling upon them to live as his people;
- God's people then respond to his word with faith and obedience, asking him to continue to do what he has promised;
- Worship concludes with the covenant meal, whereby the people of God partake of the benefits of the sacrifice and go forth in peace (for more detail on this, I direct your study to the sermons in Exodus 24 and 2 Chronicles 5-7).

After the first destruction of the Temple and the captivity of the Jews they were forced to adapt the "Pattern of Worship" that we see above and out of necessity comes the formation of the "Synagogue" to which we now

look.

DOES JESUS IN THE NEW TESTAMENT TELL US THAT "THE JEWS" HAVE THE "PATTERN OF WORSHIP" TO BE FOLLOWED?

There has been considerable debate regarding the relative influence of the temple and the synagogue in New Testament worship. A comparison between the two is useful:

Temple Worship (2 Chron 5-7)

- Assembling for Worship
- Burnt Offerings
- Enter God's Presence
- Psalm of Praise Psalms
- Word of God read and preached
- Benediction (if a priest was present)
- Prayer of the Covenant Community
- Fire consumes the sacrifices/glory fills the temple
- Psalm of Praise Psalms
- Peace Offerings
- Benediction

Synagogue Worship

- Assembling for Worship
- Psalms
- Prayer of the Covenant Community
- Benediction (if a priest was present)
- Word of God read and preached
- Psalms
- Closing Prayer

As you can see for yourself in the absence of the Temple the Synagogue follows again the basic "Pattern of Worship" minus the parts that would have applied to the Temple. **In the absence of the Temple today our focus must be the worship of the synagogue that was established during and after the Exile to teach the Israelites the Word of God along with the worship that was later transferred to one's home by the Rabbis which functioned as an allegory of the Temple sacrifices and offerings.** Since the Jews had been exiled from the Land because of their disobedience and idolatry, they began meeting weekly to learn how to avoid making the same mistakes again. Synagogue "worship," therefore, was not opposed to temple worship, but was designed to prepare people for temple worship.

THE SYNAGOGUE

The word "synagogue" means basically an "assembly house." In the New Testament the synagogue functioned as a community meeting place for Jews and was not only used for worship, but also for schools and other gatherings. Although not mentioned in the Old Testament since the Temple stood, synagogues originated during the exile in Bablyon as meetings of the people to hear the writings and to pray. By the time of Jesus, each community of Jews, anywhere in the Roman world, had its synagogue. The building was rectangular, and its doorway faced Jerusalem. Along the walls on the inside were benches. A board of elders supervised each synagogue, and there were other officers, such as the ruler. The services in a synagogue consisted of readings, a talk (or sermon), and prayers. The great annual feasts were still celebrated at the temple in Jerusalem, the only

place where sacrifices were made. Matt. 12:9; Mark 5:36; Luke 4:15; John 16:2; Acts 9:2; 18:4.

Technically the word "synagogue" is a Greek word meaning a 'gathering of things' or an 'assembly of people.' The Jewish synagogue is both a congregation of Jews who pray, read Scripture, and hear teaching and exhortation based on Scripture and the place where the congregation assembles. As the synagogue developed in rabbinic Judaism, it also became a place for study of the Bible, its commentaries, and Talmudic materials. The origin of the synagogue is obscure, but it certainly existed by the first century a.d. in both Palestine and the Diaspora. First-century a.d. synagogues in Palestine are attested by the Gospels. Jesus preached and discussed with Jewish leaders and congregations in synagogues (e.g., Matt. 4:23; 9:25; Mark 1:21; 3:1-6; Luke 4:16-28; 13:10). The synagogue was a place of prayer, reading of Scripture, preaching, and teaching. It is uncertain whether the many references to synagogues in the Gospels reflect the situation during Jesus' lifetime or the period after the destruction of the Temple (a.d. 70) when the Gospels were finally written but it would appear that they existed prior to the destruction of the Temple in Israel and had existed since Babylon's captivity.

Josephus, the Jewish historian of the late first century, speaks of a few synagogues in the north of the Holy Land in the first century so this testifies to their existence before the destruction of the Temple outside of Israel. Synagogues, it seems then, were certainly common in the Diaspora. Philo, the first-century Egyptian Jewish writer, attests to the presence of numerous synagogues in Alexandria. Inscriptions found at various places in the Roman Empire show that Jewish congregations were found in many places. Acts portrays Paul as teaching in synagogues wherever he goes (e.g., Acts 18:4; 19:8).

The origin of the "first" synagogue remains unknown, but the question has produced a number of theories. Many have suggested that the synagogue arose in the Babylonian exile as a response to the loss of the Temple as the center of Jewish religious life. Though the suggestion is reasonable, no direct evidence exists for its presence and the biblical passages cited (Ezek. 11:16; 14:1) are far from convincing. In addition, no mention of the synagogue is made in Ezra and Nehemiah, nor is any destruction of synagogues mentioned during the Maccabean revolt. The public reading of Torah is described in Nehemiah 8 and mentioned in 1 Macc. 3:48, but these assemblies are extraordinary public gatherings; we do not know whether these practices were regularly done. Some scholars suggest that the Hellenistic crisis during the second century b.c., in which there was a conflict among Jews over acculturation and fidelity to tradition, produced the synagogue as a mode of resistance to Hellenism, i.e., Greek culture and custom. Since the synagogue existed in developed form in the first century a.d., it is likely that it came into being in the two centuries preceding, but no direct evidence for it then exists. In the Diaspora, some Egyptian inscriptions from the third and second centuries b.c. mention a 'place of prayer' (Gk. proseuchē), but we do not know what went on in the houses of prayer and it is not certain that these refer to synagogues. A building has been found on the island of Delos in the Nile that has been identified as a Jewish synagogue, but the building has no clear Jewish symbols or characteristics to identify it unambiguously as a synagogue. It is likely that Jews often met in a large room in a house. A building set aside for special religious purposes had to await a certain level of material prosperity and community development. In only four recently dug sites in Palestine have rooms or buildings been identified as synagogues: Masada, Herodium, Magdala (Migdal, Tarichaeae), and Gamala. The results of these excavations are preliminary and the identifications are not certain in all cases, especially for Masada and Herodium. Existing structures were transformed into assembly halls, but that they were specifically synagogues is not certain. In all cases the buildings or rooms are relatively small and unadorned and vary greatly in plan.

Buildings that can be clearly identified as synagogues become plentiful both in Palestine and the Diaspora during the third century a.d. This is consistent with the development of rabbinic Judaism, which gradually asserted control over Judaism after the Temple was destroyed in a.d. 70 and which stressed synagogue- and school-centered prayer and study. Synagogue buildings were often decorated with mosaics and reliefs and were built in three styles, the basilica, the broadhouse, and the apsidal. The basilica was borrowed from Greco-Roman architecture and often had the entrance facing Jerusalem. The inside was rectangular and divided lengthwise by two rows of columns into nave and two side aisles. When the congregation faced Jerusalem to pray (part of their "Pattern of Worship") they had to face the entrance; consequently a permanent Torah

shrine, where the scrolls of Scripture were kept, and a bema (Gk., 'platform'; a raised platform where the leaders of the congregation stood or sat) were difficult to establish. Contemporaneously the broadhouse design developed, in which one of the long walls of the rectangle faced Jerusalem and so a permanent Torah shrine and bema were possible. Later the apsidal synagogue developed, in which the entrance was on the side away from Jerusalem and the side facing Jerusalem had an apse (a large semicircular niche) for the Torah shrine and bema. Synagogues in the Diaspora followed similar designs, though sometimes Jews took over buildings built earlier and adapted them to their purposes. In all cases, the floor plan, orientation, and architecture varied considerably. Some Diaspora synagogues are notable for their size or beauty, e.g., the ones in Sardis in Turkey, Dura in Syria, Stobi in Macedonia, and Ostia in Italy. Function: The function of the synagogue, how the congregation was organized, and what went on in the synagogue can only be surmised. In Palestine before the destruction of the Temple the synagogue would have been one of many indigenous organizations in Jewish villages and cities. People may have met to read Scripture and pray either in a house or outside, without any elaborate organization. In the Diaspora where Jews were a minority in the cities they inhabited, the synagogue probably functioned as the center of the community and its leaders may have been community leaders recognized by the civil authorities. Synagogues were used to teach the young, to house visitors, and for communal meals.

THE LITURGY AND THE "PATTERN OF WORSHIP"

The versions of Jewish prayers that have been transmitted in the tradition show that the synagogue liturgy did not have a fixed text but varied both in content and wording over time and from place to place. **But even with this variation over time we still detect a discernible "Pattern" to the worship of the synagogue.** It is certain that the **Hebrew Scripture was read**, though probably not according to the later three-year "pattern" in Babylon and the one-year fixed cycles of readings as in Palestine. **Primacy was given to the Pentateuch, but readings from the Prophets were also included.** The existence of many Targums (translation of the Hebrew Bible into the vernacular, Aramaic) and versions of the Septuagint (the Greek translation of the Bible) testifies to the importance of understanding the ancient text. Philo, Josephus, and the New Testament show that the **Hebrew Scriptures were interpreted to the people in the synagogues.** It is also likely that the **two most important prayers in Judaism were in use**, though not according to a fixed text.

The first is the Shema, consisting of three biblical passages (Deut. 6:4-9; 11:13-21; Num. 15:37-41) with attendant blessings. The second is **"the 'Prayer," also called the Amidah or Eighteen Benedictions.** This series of blessings has varied in text and number over time, but it is treated as very old in rabbinic tradition.

Indeed, it is recorded for us that Jesus and the apostles regularly attended both the temple and the synagogue. Recall what Jesus said to **the woman, a Samaritan, at the well in John 4** when she asked whether she should worship at Mt. Gerizim or Jerusalem: **"the hour is coming when neither on this mountain nor in Jerusalem will you worship the Father.**

We need to look at this text in more detail:

John 4:5-7 5 Then cometh he to a city of Samaria, which is called Sychar, near to the parcel of ground that Jacob gave to his son Joseph. 6 Now Jacob's well was there. Jesus therefore, being wearied with his journey, sat thus on the well: and it was about the sixth hour. 7 There cometh a woman of Samaria to draw water: Jesus saith unto her, Give me to drink. (KJV)

Answer for yourself: Who were these "Samaritans"?

The only detailed reference to the Samaritans is to be found in the **Second Book of Kings**. In the twenty fourth verse of chapter seventeen, we find that when the Assyrians conquered the Northern Kingdom of Israel and deported the Ten Tribes into exile in Halah and Habor by the River of Gozan in the cities of the Medes, that the King of Assyria replenished the depopulated territory of Israel with foreigners: **'And the King of**

Assyria brought men from Babylon, and from Cuthah, and from Ava and from Hamath and from Sepharvaim, and placed them in the cities of Samaria, instead of the children of Israel and they possessed Samaria and dwelt in the cities thereof'

Answer for yourself: What is described here? We see Non-Jews being imported into Israel and these would later inter-marry with those left behind and we end up with a half-breed Jewish people; a people who had already "lost their way" and who now only further drifts from the Eternal Truths of God. So for all practical purposes we should look at these people as Gentiles and draw the analogies to ourselves as Christians living in the Western Hemisphere today.

These people were heathen idolators with no fear of God; but, following attacks on their settlements by wild mountain lions (which they attributed to the anger of the God of the dispossessed Israelites), they petitioned the Assyrian monarch for help. His response was to send back one of the captive priests of Israel to teach them his laws and customs. Therefore we read: *'Then the King of Assyria commanded saying, Carry hither one of the priests whom ye brought from thence, and let them go and dwell there, and let them teach the manner of the God of the land. Then one of the priests whom they had carried away from Samaria came and dwelt in Bethel and taught them how they should fear the Lord' (II Kings 17:27, 28).*

Answer for yourself: Are we missing something here in the above verse? Yes.

When we consider that the Israelites had themselves gone into captivity for their idolatry and Sabbath breaking, that they worshipped Baal and Ashtaroah, and that the official priesthood since the days of Jeroboam had fostered the cult of the Golden Bulls at the shrines of Dan and Bethel, it is hardly surprising that the priest who returned to teach the Samaritans, succeeded only in joining a corrupted form of Israelite belief and worship to the customs which these people already held. Thus while they now paid lip service to the God of Israel, they continued to serve their own gods as well, according to the Biblical account.

Consequently there evolved a mongrelized people of various national and racial backgrounds, practicing a hybrid religion which bore certain outward similarities to the worship of the now exiled Israelites but was deviant from the accepted "Pattern of Worship" practiced by Israel proper. It was truly a multicultural, multi-faith society that had been created. Although called Samarkans, these people did not necessarily dwell in the area of the former Israelite capital of Samaria but tended to be found mostly in the area of Shechem; so much so that both in the Apocrypha and in the writings of Josephus they are referred to as Shechemites. They had developed into a distinctive people by the Hellenistic period, when Shechem was rebuilt after years of desolation.

It was, however, during this period of Hellenization carried out by Alexander the Great and his successors, which only further diluted the "Pattern of Worship", that a group of religious purists emerged in the Samaritan community, who decided to make a fresh start, and who erected the Samaritan Temple at Mount Gerezim. They developed their own distinctive religious system, including: the worship of the God of Israel, obedience to the Law of Moses, expectation of a coming Day of Judgment, belief in Mount Gerezim as the appointed place of sacrifice and in the return of Moses as the Taheb or the Restorer/Returning One.

From this point onward, there is a rapid deterioration in relations with those of Judah, Benjamin and Levi, who had returned to Palestine from exile in Babylon. They regarded the Samaritans as racially inferior interlopers, and their religion as a spurious counterfeit. At the time of the Maccabean Revolt the Samaritans sided with the Seleucid oppressors, and to placate Antiochus Epiphanes, they even allowed their temple to be dedicated to Zeus Xenious!

As you can see for yourself the Samaritans fell away from the "Pattern of Worship" although in many ways it might have looked externally "similar" but the core of it was deviant to the "Pattern of Worship" commanded by God.

Subsequently, in 128 B.C., they were conquered by the Hasmonean ruler John Hyrcanus (the conqueror and incorporator of Edom/Idumea), who destroyed their Temple on Mount Gerezim. At one particular Passover, between A.D. 6 and 9, the Samaritans defiled the Jerusalem Temple by scattering bones in it. **Pilgrims travelling south from Galilee to Jerusalem for the religious festivals were afraid to go through Samaritan territory, a fear which was to be justified by the subsequent massacre of Galilean pilgrims by Samaritans at En-gannim in A.D. 52.** The Samaritans rebelled against the Romans in A.D. 36. When a fanatic assembled them at Mount Gerezim, promising to reveal the sacred vessels which they had been taught were buried there by Moses, the rebels were ruthlessly massacred by order of Pontius Pilate. During the Jewish Revolt of A.D. 66-70, a group of Samaritans joined in the rebellion and were slaughtered by the Roman Commander Vettulenus Cerialis, once again at Mount Gerezim.

After almost two thousand years, only a tiny remnant of the descendants of the Samaritans remain. They have preserved their religion and culture, and are to be found to this day in Palestine, living in two small communities at Nablus and Holon, with their own scrolls and priesthood.

In spite of our Lord's instruction to His disciples: 'Into any city of the Samaritans enter ye not' (Matthew 10:5), and the incident when the disciples wanted to call down fire from heaven to destroy a Samaritan village which refused to receive them (Luke 9:52-54), Samaritans receive fairly favorable comment from the New Testament writers Luke and John. The one leper out of the ten who returned to Jesus to give thanks for his healing was a Samaritan (Luke 17:16). The Lord Jesus asked for water from, and subsequently ministered to, a woman of Samaria (John 4:4-30 & 39-40); while we read of a great spiritual revival accompanied by signs, wonders and miracles in Samaria (Acts 8:5-25).

Answer for yourself: What should that teach us? That these half-breed Gentiles who knew not the "Pattern of Worship" were often blessed by the "true faith" of Israel and at times made repentance unto it as seen in Acts 8:5-25.

Just as every Jew residing in the Roman Province of Judea, and practicing the Jewish religion at the time of Christ, was not necessarily a true Judahite, a similar situation existed in Samaria, also a Roman territory. Isaiah the prophet had made it clear that, even though the vast bulk of Ten-tribed Israel had been taken into captivity in Assyria, a tiny pathetic handful would survive the mass deportations. This is what he says: ***'Yet gleaning grapes shall be left in it as the shaking of an olive tree two or three berries in the top of the uppermost bough, four or five in the outmost branches thereof saith the God of Israel' (Isaiah 17:6).***

Some of them, like the leper, and the woman by the well of Sychar, while they were Samaritans by religion (worshipping at Mount Gerezim), and by provincial designation (living in the Roman province of Samaria), were clearly not descended from the mixed multitude who had been sent into the area some seven hundred years earlier, but rather from the little handful of true Israelites who had escaped deportation - the grapes and berries of Isaiah's prophecy.

In her discussion with the Lord Jesus, the woman of Samaria made her racial ancestry crystal clear, for she said to Jesus: ***'Art thou greater than our father Jacob which gave us the well...' (John 4:12).***

She actually claimed descent from Jacob-Israel. Furthermore, her own life was symbolic of the experience of the woman Israel, for the Lord Jesus said to her: ***'Thou hast had five husbands and he whom thou hast is not thy husband' (John 4: 18)***

Answer for yourself: Who, as a Samaritan, were her husbands? Is there a hidden message possibly here for us to learn?

Israel had indeed had five husbands; her first whom she married at Sinai was:

- **Almighty God (She then served the following succession of alien Empires spoken of in prophecy as her lovers in which all pulled her further away from the "Pattern of Worship" given Israel by God at Sinai).**
- **Assyria**
- **Babylon**
- **Medo-Persia**
- **Greece**
- **Pagan Rome...the sixth whom she served in the time of Jesus**

All of these above influences by Gentile nations and Gentile worship only further diluted the true Worship of God as once held by their Jewish captives. Said of captive Israel by the Prophet Hosea:

Hosea 2:6 6 Therefore, behold, I will hedge up thy way with thorns, and make a wall, that she shall not find her paths. (KJV)

Captive Israel would lose "the Pattern of Worship" over time due to the influences of these pagan nations and their idolatry. Truly Israel lost her "paths". As God, in punishment of the Northern Tribes for their idolatry and departing from the true Worship of God, had the Prophet Hosea pronounce judgment on the departing captives of the Northern Ten Tribes in saying that they would lose their way. History has borne this out as these peoples would fall further from the truth and the "faith once given the saints" and in these pagan nations would they further depart from the Worship of God as God has previously instructed. Yet God would later have mercy on those He judged and offered a return to these "paths" whereby their children would one day "return to the Lord thy God" in repentance and true Worship of God. **We see this today in the major return to the Jewish Roots of Christianity but the problem we have with this is that many, but not all who teach such a "return" to the Jewish Roots of Christianity are but another false hope as were the official priesthood that was sent by Jeroboam who only gave another pagan worship to the people that "looked" Jewish but the core of it was not the SAME "Pattern of Worship" as practiced by Judah! One the many of these current "returns to the Jewish Roots of Christianity" look Jewish but analysis of their doctrinal stances reveals little change from the compromised Sun Worship of their apostate "fathers". Looking Jewish, wearing a kippa or a tallith, and singing Jewish psalms and songs, and the use of banners is often a far cry from "True Worship of God done in Spirit and TRUTH".**

Jesus told these people, and even this woman at the well who had a compromised religious beliefs system since being heavily influenced by Samaritan religious beliefs:

You worship what you do not know; we (the Jews) worship what we know, for salvation is from the Jews. But the hour is coming, and is now here, when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth" (John 4:21-23).

Answer for yourself: Did you notice that Jesus told her, representative of her half-breed people, that they had a erroneous worship of God? Jesus tells her that she has a false worship of God; one that looks right in some areas but the core of it is rotten and unacceptable with God. Not let us forget that God does not accept all sacrifices nor does he accept false worship.

Answer for yourself: Did you notice that Jesus make clear that she knows that it is the Jewish race and nation

and religion who has the "true worship" of God? Does Jesus connect "salvation" with this "true worship of God? He sure does. That should give you great pause to think.

Answer for yourself: What does it mean to be "true" worshipper? Do you want to be one? Let us look at the word "true" used in the Greek of this passage:

Thayer's Greek Lexicon:

228 alethinos-

1) what has not only the name and resemblance, but the real nature corresponding to the name, **in every respect corresponding to the idea signified by the name, real, true genuine**

- a) opposite to what is fictitious, counterfeit, imaginary, simulated or pretended
- b) it contrasts realities with their semblances
- c) opposite to what is imperfect defective, frail, uncertain

2) true, veracious, sincere

Jesus warns us here that just to "reassemble" the "true" is not enough. We have to **"in EVERY RESPECT CORRESPOND"** to the original. **In this context Jesus was telling this Non-Jewish descendent, one who has lost her "paths" and her "ways" and her "Pattern of Worship" given to her forefathers before they departed from it, that NOW it is possible for her to return and repent and come home to the true worship of God; one not found in Samaria but down in Jerusalem.**

Jesus tells us "counterfeit" religion is worshipping God amiss. He tells us that we can look "Jewish" in our worship and sing Jewish songs and do Jewish dances, we can carry banners and even wear kippas and even say the blessing and wear a tallith in prayer but if our doctrines contain idolatry, as did those of the Samaritans, and as many Christian religious beliefs also do, then such Worship of God is defective and imperfect and unacceptable to God. This is a strong warning against idolatry that goes unnoticed by most in Christianity today under the guise of "Jesus is God" theology or various Trinitarian beliefs. Even praying in the name of Jesus is considered blasphemy by both the Laws of Noah and Moses. Improper use of the Tithe as most churches do is but another example of false worship of God. Singing song with idolatrous phrases is but another form of idolatry and unacceptable to God. Some songs in the church should NEVER be sung! Let us never forget that blasphemy of God and His Name is the "unforgivable sin" and most Christians carry this to their grave and never know it because their teachings which they inherited from Rome and Church tradition are so perverse and have strayed so far "from the original" true and "the faith once given to the Saints" due to the antisemitism of Rome which replaced many of them with those of their making. Most never heed these warnings and enter the hereafter full of hidden idolatry which they never knew they possessed because their study of their own faith, let alone "the Pattern of Worship" is absent or deficient in their lives.

Jesus did not say, "well, you could worship at any synagogue you like!" The analogy of this is startling as today this would be understood as: **"you cannot worship at just any church you like!"**

Jesus admitted that prior to his coming, there was only one place to worship truly--at Jerusalem which practiced "the Pattern of Worship" handed down by God since Sinai where a mixed multitude of Jews and Non-Jews both agreed as the bride of God to "do all they you say". They both entered into their covenant with God and both accepted "the Pattern of Worship" given to Moses. Israel, and only Israel of all the 70 nations of the world was given "the Pattern of Worship" and their task as God's Holy Nation and Royal Priesthood was to lead the world in the "true worship of God" through the teaching of this "Pattern of Worship" to all mankind and examples in the Old as well as the New Testament show us that they did exactly that!

Sadly we have departed so far from this today in contemporary Christianity.



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OVERVIEW OF THE PATTERN OF WORSHIP IN THE FIRST CENTURY CHURCH OR SYNAGOGUE...AND THE WARNING

In previous articles I have made plain to our readers that there exists a "pattern" of worship which was given by God and to which Jesus and his Apostles adhered. Not only that, this same pattern of worship can be shown to have been taught to the first non-Jews who came to the knowledge of God through Jesus and his Apostles's ministry. **Sadly, obedience to this pattern for worship has almost been totally replaced by the Gentile Church of the earliest centuries and few are aware of such tragic events.** I guess what gets to me the most is that when such information is made aware to Christians, instead of a spirit of repentance and brokenness at the realization of such events, most seem ambivalent to such an occurrence. **What escapes most sadly is the heart-felt realization that instead of loving God as He has instructed, we have brought "strange fire" before God and expect Him to accept it.** If God had not desired to be "loved" and "worshipped" in a certain ways He would not have instructed us to do so. But God did. We as Christians fall prey to the erroneous concept that what is happening today is what the Holy Spirit is doing in the world and what He sanctions. Such could not be further from the truth. Our experience is not a measure of truth. Only "the truth" can be called "TRUTH". **Unless our experience lines up with the Word of God, correctly interpreted, then we can be assured that our experience is not a guarantee of truth or that it is in reality pleasing to God.**

A Christian's religious belief system, when tested and exposed to contradictory facts from Biblical languages, Biblical history, Biblical culture, and archeology, must in the Spirit of Truth and Repentance, be flexible enough to change

Just ask Nadab and Abihu. Their deaths in worship before God tell us unmistakably that God does not tolerate nor accept "just any old worship". The message is startling in light of the fact that we have today over 2000 different denominations with little unity among them. As if that is not bad enough, unity in disobedience is not to be sought either. Obedience is better than any sacrifice. Again let me say, I am saddened to the deepest recesses of my heart and soul, when teaching such truths dug from years of intense study, only to be scoffed at by carnal believers who are basically Biblically uninformed, and who would rather rely on their experience instead of the Word of God as their measure of truth. Repentance in the face of disobedience is scarce today primarily because of an out-of-balance and distorted message of grace as espoused by mainline Christianity. Grace is not the antidote for disobedience in the light of truth. Repentance is. The very first words spoken by John the Baptist, Peter, as well as Jesus, as found in the New Testament is "repentance." Again sadly I have found as a Pastor that repentance is a doctrine only taught to beginner classes for new members in churches and not taught as a way of life. When shown that your experience is wrong and diametrically opposed to what the Scriptures say, the proper response is to rend our heart and turn to God in repentance. Anything thing less

is definitely not the loving response God desires. In fact, failure to repent in the light of such Biblical knowledge that corrects our sinful experience is the mark of apostasy. It seems that most would rather be in good standing with their pastors and churches than with God. Such is crazy, but I fear our consciences are so seared in contemporary Christianity today that few can hear the message of the prophets God yet sends who cry aloud "repent for the Kingdom of God is near."

With that as a back-drop, and having understood that there is a pattern of worship, let us examine the pattern as it has come down to us. We cannot find the pattern of worship in Christianity, and not even in Messianic Christianity. Messianic Christianity comes closer than traditional Christianity, but close counts only in horseshoes. If you want to find and follow the pattern of worship for the non-Jew you must look to Old Testament as well as the New Testament and read it with a Hebrew perspective as well as look to the synagogue to find the liturgy as practiced by Jesus and those who came to God in his name. It is to this pattern we now turn.

THE SYNAGOGUE AND THE WORSHIP SERVICE

Worship was celebrated in the synagogue in the mornings (shahrit service), the afternoons (minhah service), and the evenings (ma'ariv service). The basis for each of the three services was the recitation of the "shema" and "tefillah" ("the prayer" referring to the Amidah or the "standing prayer") and the reading of the Torah (qeri'at Torah) portion for that day. For reasons of time the Torah was read only in the mornings on Tuesday, Thursday, and the Sabbath. In addition to the three basic foundations for each service was the inclusion of "set" prayers as the following outline shows:

A. Shahrit (Morning Service)

- 1. Benedictions and introductory psalms.
- 2. Kaddish
- 3. Shema
- 4. Tefillah-Amidah
- 5. Alenu
- 6. Kaddish (mourners')
- 7. Final prayers

2. Minhah (Afternoon Service)

- Psalm
- Kaddish
- Tefillah-Amidah
- Alenu
- Kaddish

3. Ma'ariv (Evening Service)

- Short readings from the Psalms
- Shema
- Tefillah-Amidah
- Kaddish
- Alenu
- Kaddish (mourners')

Once one is familiar with such information as presented here, and has studied the materials for himself, then you will see for yourself what Bet Emet is teaching to be true. After coming to such conclusions based upon personal study your first question must be: Why was I not told this before?

It is the greatest tragedy in the world to have spent your whole life in church only to find out after you die that you have followed a neo-pagan form of worship of the God of Israel. Millions and millions of good Christians are dying and meeting God unprepared for what they will hear: "depart from me I never knew you." You may think that I flippantly used the above passage only to prove my point, but again what few realize is that the condition that elicits the above "departing from Jesus and God" is called iniquity in Matt. 7:21-23.

In conclusion let us look at the word in the Greek for "depart" as used in Matt. 7:21-23:

As Jesus said, "Not everyone who says to Me, 'Lord, Lord,' shall enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will of My Father in heaven. Many will say to Me in that day, 'Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in Your name, cast out demons in Your name, and done many wonders in Your name?'

Please pay attention the this next verse and the Greek word used for "iniquity:"

And <2532> then <5119> will I profess <3670> (5692) unto them <846>, <3754> I never <3763> knew <1097> (5627) you <5209>: depart <672> (5720) from <575> me <1700>, ye that work <2038> (5740) iniquity <458>.

Let me say it another way:

And then I will declare to them, 'I never knew you; depart from Me, you who practice LAWLESSNESS'" (Matt. 7:21-23)!

The Greek word for iniquity is as follows:

BDB/Thayers # 458 458 anomia {an-om-ee'-ah} from 459; TDNT - 4:1085,646; n f AV - iniquity 12, unrighteousness 1, transgress the law + 4060 1, transgression of the law 1; 15

- 1) the condition of being without the law
 - 1a) Because one is ignorant of it
 - 1b) Because of violating it
- 2) contempt and violation of law, iniquity, wickedness

Let us look at the root word used:

BDB/Thayers # 459 459 anomos {an'-om-os} from 1 (as a negative particle) and 3551; TDNT - 4:1086,646; adj AV - without law 4, transgressor 2, wicked 2, lawless 1, unlawful 1; 10

- 1) destitute of (the Mosaic) law
 - 1a) of the Gentiles*****
- 2) departing from the law, a violator of the law, lawless, wicked

Answer for yourself: Do you not see that Jesus is referring also to Gentiles who are ignorant of and who are destitute of the Mosaic Law?

Answer for yourself: Are you aware that these same laws and commandments contained in the Mosaic Law deal with non-Jews and how they are to worship according to the pattern I have telling you about? You are now!

Answer for yourself: Are you a violator of the Mosaic Law in areas such as worship by failing to observe the

Biblical Festivals or do you practice your church's pagan holidays which have been re-made to look religious by having Jesus' name attached to them?

Answer for yourself: Are you a violator of the pattern of worship in giving your tithe to organizations and churches who are using the money in ways contrary to how God said it was to be used?

Let us not be mistaken that giving of our finances to religious purposes and various churches is a form of worship, and again the pattern for giving is repeated several times in the Jewish Scriptures. Failure to comply with such pattern for giving makes you a robber of God. Giving your 10% to a church and letting them spend it any way they choose is not obedience to the pattern of worship as contained in your Bible. It might be your experience, but your experience is not accepted by God. Sadly almost all Christian Churches violate this giving commandment and do so by justifying that the money is still used for good purposes. Close but no cigar. Goodly purposes NEVER substitute for Godly purposes.

WHAT SHOULD YOU DO NOW THAT YOU KNOW THIS?

First of all don't believe anything I said. But let this information stimulate your own study in order for you to discover the same truths as I did. Then and only then can you be assured you are obeying God in such an important area as worship.

If God has opened your mind thus far to what I am saying, then I urge you to begin a genuine STUDY of the Holy Bible. You may wish to begin reading carefully and thoughtfully through every word of the New Testament. Look key words up in their original languages in which the Bible was written (Greek, Hebrew, and Aramaic). Only in this way will you find for yourself the hidden revelation and recover not only long lost spiritual truths but restore the "Pattern of Worship" for yourself and your family. If you need help call us at Bet Emet Ministries and we will teach you how to use the study aids available. Shalom.



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BUT I NEVER KNEW THAT THERE WAS A PATTERN OF WORSHIP THAT GOD GAVE TO BOTH THE JEWISH AND NON-JEWISH BELIEVERS

Answer for yourself: Are you aware that within the Jewish Scriptures we can find a "PATTERN OF WORSHIP" given by God that was followed by both Jews and non-Jewish believers in God both in the Old Testament and New Testament times?

Answer for yourself: Are you aware that both historically and archeologically we can attest that this "PATTERN OF WORSHIP" continued until early in the 4th Century A.D. when Rome for all practical purposes changed it for everyone and today we seldom if ever stumble onto the prior existing pattern that God had intended that all His children, both Jew and non-Jew, observe in their worship of Him?

Answer for yourself: Are you aware that the tabernacle was built according to the divine blueprint given to Moses by the Lord (Ex. 25:8-9)?

Answer for yourself: Are you aware that Aaron and his sons were consecrated to their priestly vocation according to a divine pattern as well, and they offered the prescribed sacrifices unto God according to a divine pattern?

Answer for yourself: Are you aware that David was given the same pattern when told to build the Temple, set aside the Priests, and oversee the work of the service (worship) within the Temple (I Chron. 28:13)?

1 Chr 28:10-15 10 Take heed now; for the LORD hath chosen thee to build an house for the sanctuary: be strong, and do it. 11 Then David gave to Solomon his son the pattern of the porch, and of the houses thereof, and of the treasuries thereof, and of the upper chambers thereof, and of the inner parlours thereof, and of the place of the mercy seat, 12 And the pattern of all that he had by the spirit, of the courts of the house of the LORD, and of all the chambers round about, of the treasuries of the house of God, and of the treasuries of the dedicated things: 13 Also for the courses of the priests and the Levites, and for all the work of the service of the house of the LORD, and for all the vessels of service in the house of the LORD.

Let us look and examine the the Hebrew word for :service and see what we find hidden in the Hebrew:

Strong's Concordance:

5656 `abodah (ab-o-daw'); or `abowdah (ab-o-daw'); from 5647; work of any kind: KJV-- act, bondage, + bondservant, effect, labour, **ministering (-try)**, office, service (-ile, -itude), tillage, use, work, X wrought.

Brown-Driver-Briggs' Hebrew Lexicon

5656 `abodah or `abowdah- labor, service

- a) labor, work
- b) labor (of a servant or a slave)
- c) labor, service (of captives or subjects)
- d) **service (of God)**

What we see from these words is that there is a "MINISTRY" and "SERVICE OF GOD" that was given by the Spirit of God according to a "PATTERN."

Even the New Testament alludes to this pattern:

Heb 8:5 5 Who serve unto the example and shadow of heavenly things, as Moses was admonished of God when he was about to make the tabernacle: for, See, saith he, that thou make all things according to the pattern shewed to thee in the mount. (KJV)

Now it is for us to both understand that a "pattern of ministry" existed both in the Old Testament and New Testament which was a pattern of the intended service of mankind and worship toward God. This is called "ministry" according to the Hebrew word. I know that the term "ministry" is so overworked today but it is for us to try to discern:

- If this "pattern" of service and worship of God can be discerned from the Jewish Scriptures
- If this "pattern" of service and worship of God can be shown from examples in the Old Testament and New Testament texts to have existed not only before Jesus' death but also existed "unchanged" after Jesus' crucifixion
- If this "pattern" of service and worship of God can be shown to have been quite similar if not the same in many instances as practiced and observed by both Jews and non-Jews both before and after Jesus' crucifixion

If this can discerned from New Testament examples as applying "unchanged" for both the Jew and the non-Jewish believer who came to God through the ministry of Yeshua's disciples and apostles then we need then only ask if our experience as Christians and followers of Yeshua is yet today according to this "pattern of ministry" or if our experience is different and if so we must ask "why?" If not then we have to honestly ask if we have let Israel be a light unto us (as Gentiles as the nations of the world) as God has said they were to be in the Jewish Scriptures or if we have been misled in our "ministry and worship" toward God.

In the articles that follow we will present evidence from both the Jewish Old Testament and the New Testament which proves beyond any doubt that there did exist not only a "pattern of worship" as observed by both the Jew and non-Jew but both observed and adhered to this pattern well before and after Jesus' crucifixion which indicates that nothing was changed by Jesus' death. One has to look to the official adoption of the Jesus Movement by the state of Rome in which "Christianity" became the state religion of Rome to see the organized changes made to this "pattern" of worship. Today few if any know that ever happened and that we have departed from the "pattern" of worship given by God

but i never knew that there was a pattern of worship god gave to jews and non-jews

in His Holy Texts.



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WORSHIPPING God IN SPIRIT AND IN TRUTH: THE PATTERN FOR THE NON-JEW

A "Gentile" is a term signifying a non-Jew, who is not a "son of the covenant" and is only subject to the seven Noachide Laws.

Once a Gentile came to the understanding of the one true God, he would turn from idols and worship the God of Israel. These were the "God fearers", who accepted certain basic Jewish obligations along with the Noachide precepts. According to this, idolatry, shedding of blood, and grave sexual sins were forbidden to Gentile believers. These were originally the Noachide precepts accepted also by the Synagogue on which the Gentiles were obliged. Let me remind you that we see in Acts 15 (at least 25 years after the death of Jesus) the admonition for the Gentiles to adhere to Noachide Laws to be accepted in the believing community of Israel and the Jesus Messianic Movement. It is logical that the Apostolic Church of Jerusalem should accept the view of the Synagogue on the conditions which Gentiles needed to fulfill in order to be saved.

BUT LETS NOT STOP THERE

It can be easily shown that the fulfillment of other commandments of Judaism were not prohibited to Gentiles. On the contrary, the Noachide precepts were only seen as the minimal condition for Gentiles to be accepted into fellowship with Israel and recognized as God-fearers. These were so understood by the God-fearers themselves, who were attracted to the Jewish way of life and accepted many Jewish commandments without becoming full proselytes (Sabbath, festivals, etc). This was also the attitude of Christian God-fearers, as may be seen from the Epistle to the Galatians; many of them wished to observe as many Jewish precepts as they could. It is evident that, while the leadership of the Mother Church decided to lay no burden upon the Gentile believers beyond the Noachide precepts, and the Jerusalem Church did not object to their voluntarily observing more (Col. 2:16-17). Among the figures of the early Church who instructed Gentile Christians to observe more precepts than these essential ones was Peter, as we know from Paul's criticism of him for demanding that Gentiles live like Jews (Gal. 2:14). Rather than interpreting the apostolic decree as a minimum, Paul saw in the Noachide precepts the maximal obligations of Gentile Christians. Rather than Peter being incorrect, a more comprehensive understanding of the Bible reveals Paul to be incorrect. What you must understand that we have in the accounts of the New Testament the Roman view and we all know that winners write history. Lacking is the accurate account that describes Peter's repentance along with Barnabas when confronted by the "men from James". The account in the New Testament does disclose however that they and the whole "house church" left the presence of Paul and went next door and no longer continued to break the kosher laws in order to "become all things to all men that they might win some". Breaking the Torah and sinning is never sanctioned by God in order to "win some". Lastly, we then have Paul's comment: "all in Asia forsook me". No wonder!

The liberation of Gentile Christianity from the yoke of Jewish commandments was a necessary step in order for Christianity to become a Gentile religion, separate from Judaism. It is impossible to know whether Paul was aware that by his "Gospel" he helped to achieve this aim in that he does not speak explicitly about the necessity

of separating Christianity from its Jewish roots and he never says that this was his intention, but it is clear that in fact such was his historical role. Paul taught that the Jewish way of life had no validity for Christians, but the Mother Church in Acts felt differently. For Christian God-fearers it was not easy to accept Paul's demand; the complete rejection of Jewish precepts was for many Gentile Christians a painful operation. But if Christianity was to become a world religion it had to become "free from the Law". Only a Christian free from the law could separate himself from Judaism.

With the rise of Christianity the teachers of Israel sought to distinguish between the heathens of the past and those Gentiles who were subject to religious values and morality. The very term "ger tzedek" (righteous gentile) stands for the gentile who turned from idols and made a sincere conversion to the faith of Jesus in the first century. Such a person was respected and welcomed by the Jewish community. The "ger tzedek" submitted to circumcision, immersion, and brought a sacrifice to the temple. Upon completion of such, he was considered as "one born in the land."

There are two other terms for righteous Gentiles: Ger Hashar, and Ger ToShav. In the Bible the Ger Hashar is seen as "the stranger in the gate", and the Ger ToShav was known as "the stranger in the land." These also accepted the faith of Israel (ethical monotheism) and were immersed, but withheld themselves from circumcision. Such "Righteous Gentiles" had a place in the world to come, and it was believed that in the age of the Messiah all Gentiles would come to recognize the one true God according to Zech 14:9.

Once the Ger Tzedek was accepted as a Jew, he was entitled to all the privileges that Jews born into the faith enjoyed. Such converts to Judaism were numerous before the rise of Christianity. Within Palestine and outside, wherever Jews came into contact with pagans, Judaism held a strong attraction. It was expected of the Gentile that given enough time, he would develop from the Ger Hashar to the Ger Tzedek.

DRAWING BACK FROM CHOOSE THOSE THINGS PLEASING TO God

The later development of Gentile Christianity offered the attraction of monotheism and at the same time imposed fewer restrictions on its new adherents that did Judaism. In other words, many of the commandments of God were neglected, denied, and not taught to non-Jews nor were they expected to adhere to them by their non-Jewish teachers. Commencing with the fourth century, when Christianity became the official religion of the Roman Empire, Jews were restricted in their own worship and were no longer permitted to continue their missionary activity and we find the conversion of the Ger Hashar and Tzedek dwindling. In spite of the peril to Jews and proselytes alike, we read throughout history of various instances where Christians joined the ranks of the oppressed Jews in order to adopt a more Biblically centered lifestyle. Sadly this never became accepted orthodoxy for the followers of Yeshua.



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EXAMINING THE PATTERN OF WORSHIP AS IT WAS DESCRIBED BY JUSTIN MARTYR IN HIS DIALOGUE WITH TRYPHO THE JEW...150 C.E.

Let us first get our bearings: it is **mid-second Century** and Christianity's greatest apologist is writing possible his greatest treatise defending the Gentile Christian faith: Dialogue With Trypho The Jew. Again let us understand that the Great Commission has been undertaken now for at least 80 years following Jesus' crucifixion by his disciples and apostles. That being the case you should understand that the Jesus Movement of Jerusalem has already exerted great influence among the Gentile nations in obeying Jesus' command:

Matt 28:20 20 Teaching them (the Gentile nations) to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world. Amen. (KJV) Matt 28:20 20 Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world. Amen. (KJV)

Justin's Dialogue With Trypho The Jew is the earliest surviving writing which sets out fully the issues which separated Christians and Jews. This fascinating Dialogue With Trypho The Jew was written about 160 C.E. It draws on earlier Christian exegetical traditions; in places it has very deep roots in Jewish-Christian polemic and apologetic.

Although Justin and Trypho argue vigorously, they do not resort to personal abuse or to name-calling. At the end of the Dialogue, they agree to disagree; after praying for one another they go their separate ways. Most later Christian anti-Jewish writings are less moderate in tone; unlike Trypho, the Jewish opponent(s) often cave in and accept the "truth" of Christianity. However, if we have twentieth-century understandings of "tolerance" in mind, it would not be appropriate to claim either Justin or Trypho as models of "tolerance". Both the Christian and his Jewish partner in dialogue not only set out their respective very different religious positions, they go further: they appeal vigorously to one another to change sides, with the clear implication that the other side is wrong-headed.

Answer for yourself: How believable is Justin's claim that his Dialogue With Trypho The Jew records an extended discussion he had with a learned Jew, Trypho, shortly after the second Jewish revolt?

Opinions have differed widely. My own view is that the Dialogue With Trypho The Jew is neither a verbatim account of a two-day debate which took place in Ephesus between a Christian and a Jew, nor a wholly artificial compilation of Christian polemical traditions which is unrelated to discussions between Christians and Jews in the middle decades of the second century. There are points at which Trypho is little more than a puppet: he is allowed to say only what Justin wants him to say. However, many of the arguments and responses of both Justin and Trypho are found in other writings from this period. In several key passages Trypho echoes widely held Jewish objections to Christian claims and sets out Jewish basic convictions or interpretations of Scripture which are well attested

elsewhere.

As we examine and analyze Justin's perception of the status quo of Christianity as it existed in 160 C.E. it is important to make sure we note the examples of "God-fearers" as well as "Proselytes" as discussed by Justin as this gives us a picture of what the Gentile was taught to do by those who knew Jesus best...his apostles and disciples. This was the pattern for not only Gentile inclusion into the Israel of God but the pattern of worship as taught the non-Jews by Jesus' closest followers. I hope we are smart enough to understand that any changes to this "pattern" that come after Justin do little more than destroy the efforts of the apostles and disciples to carry out Jesus' wishes and mandate and literally destroy the pattern of worship that you have seen by now that existed long before Abraham and which was reiterated by Moses for both the Jew and non-Jew. As we shall see, the Dialogue contains important references both to "God-fearers" and to "proselytes" which have been overlooked in recent scholarly discussion of these topics and these pictures speak volumes to Gentile Christians today if they have ears to hear.

WHO WERE TRYPHO'S COMPANIONS?

Several scholars have commented on Justin's characterization of Trypho the Jew. They have stressed that Trypho is a pleasant courteous Jew, and that, unlike many later Christian and Jewish disputants, Justin and Trypho respect one another. However, the role in the Dialogue of Trypho's companions has usually been quietly ignored, from Eusebius right up to the present.

In the very first extant sentence of the Dialogue Justin is met by an unidentified man who is accompanied by companions; the latter are referred to in the second sentence as the man's "friends". Most scholars except that the expected opening dedication is missing and that it probably mentions Ephesus in Asia Minor as the location of the dialogue (Eusebius, History of the Church, 94.18.6).

Answer for yourself: Do you grasp the importance of Ephesus being the location of this Dialogue between a Gentile believer and a Jew? We have in Justin's Dialogue his description of not only 2nd Century Judaism but Gentile believers in God who not only practiced the Jewish faith but were believers in Jesus as the Jewish Messiah. This is phenomenal for our information of the time period and what the Gentile believers in Jesus though Jewish evangelism had been taught concerning not only the accepted religious doctrines concerning Jesus in the 2nd Century long before Rome would take charge of the faith but we also have a through description by Justin of the Gentile's worship of God as it existed in the 2nd Century as taught by Jewish outreach.

The reader's curiosity is aroused immediately not only as to who is the person who engages Justin in conversation but as to whom are his companions. Before Trypho identifies himself and states that he is a circumcised Jew who has recently fled from the Bar Kochba war, his "followers and companions" inform Justin (and the reader of the Dialogue) that they are keen to hear "some profitable discourse" from Justin. But we are **not** told anything about the background of Trypho's companions at this point. This silence concerning the identity of Trypho's comparison turns out to be significant for a reason and we shall see soon why Justin desired to keep such identification of the companions identity silent.

The extended discussions between Justin and Trypho take place on two days, on both of which Trypho (but not Justin) is accompanied by friends. Indeed, Justin notes that some additional companions turned up with Trypho on the second day. Occasionally the companions intervene in the discussions to remind the reader of their presence.

Answer for yourself: What possible importance could this intervention by Trypho's friends in this religious dialogue between Justin and this circumcised Jew have? More on that later but you will be amazed!

These friends of Trypho never defend a point of view which differs from that of Trypho, but, as we shall see, these friends of Trypho are distinguished from Trypho in important respects. In the very last chapter (142), Trypho is still accompanied by his companions as he and Justin go their separate ways after praying for one another.

Although the companions are firmly in Trypho's court, Justin takes pains to distinguish between their reaction to Justin's Christian claims and Trypho's own reaction. Trypho's companions are portrayed as being more cynical about Justin's Christian claims than Trypho himself: they are therefore even less likely to become Christians.

Answer for yourself: What message, if any, are we to get from the increased cynicism of Trypho's friends toward Justin and his Christian claims? Again, more on that later.

This distinction (between Trypho and his friends) is set out clearly in the opening chapters, and maintained consistently thereafter; and this is very important and we must not forget that there is a similarity yet a dissimilarity between Trypho and his friends. In the first seven chapters, which are a prologue to the Dialogue as a whole, Justin tells Trypho about his intellectual pilgrimage and his conversion to Christianity. In response Trypho smiles and replies courteously, but his companions "laugh aloud" (8.3).

Answer for yourself: What did Trypho's companions know better than Trypho that made them laugh at Justin's profession of conversion to "Christianity"? Sorry, but you will have to wait for the bombshell to drop in a minute; please keep reading.

In the next chapter the reader is told that they "laughed aloud again and began to shout quite rudely" (9.2). Not surprisingly, Justin is offended and starts to break off the discussion. Trypho urges him to keep his promise and to continue. Justin agrees, with the provision that the companions must behave themselves and listen quietly. At this point two of the companions disappear, "with some jokes, and some jests at our zeal". Justin says ruefully. The remaining companions sit down quietly with Justin and Trypho, and after a brief conversation about the Bar Kochba war, they listen to the discussions between Justin and Trypho.

The hostility of Trypho's companions is not confined to the opening chapters. Towards the end of the second day of the discussions their rudeness is referred to again: "some of those who had come on the second day" protested at one of Justin's claims, and "cried out as though in a theatre" (122.4).

Answer for yourself: What possibly could be so funny that these friends and companions of Trypho would make such fun of Justin Martyr's heart-felt religious commitment?

DIALOGUE 8 & 9...BOUNDARIES BETWEEN GROUPS

In terms of the literary structure of the Dialogue, these two chapters are programmatic. They mark the transition from the Prologue to the main body of the Dialogue. Their structural role is confirmed by the fact that only here (8.3), and at the beginning and the end (141.5) of the whole Dialogue does Justin address Marcus Pompeius, the person to whom the Dialogue is dedicated. Most of the themes which will be discussed in the 133 chapters which follow are foreshadowed here.

Justin appeals to Trypho to become a Christian: "If you seek salvation seriously and have trusted in God, it is open to you, once you know the Christ of God and have become an initiate, to live happily."

Answer for yourself: Is there any significance to Justin's use of the term "initiate"?

According to Graham N. Stanton and Guy G. Stroumsa in their Tolerance And Intolerance In Early Judaism And Christianity (pp. 263-278) they tell us that the Greek word for "initiate" as used by Justin in

his Dialogue is a technical term used to refer to one initiated into the rites of the mystery religions; in particular to immersions connected to mystery religions (pp. 275).

Answer for yourself: Is Justin really a follower of Rabbi Yeshua or is he trying to teach pagan religions under the guise of a man named Jesus and is this the reason why the companions of Trypho are laughing and ridiculing him so much because they fully are aware of Justin's agenda since they were themselves Gentile "semi-proselytes" and Godfearers and were well acquainted with what Justin was teaching having been in those pagan religions before repenting and renouncing them and turning to the true faith of God...Biblical Judaism where the non-Jew has a place next to the Jew (Covenant of Noah and the Laws of Noah)?

Answer for yourself: Is there any literature that exists today to show that Justin was teaching paganism in Jesus' name and trying to spread existing paganism under the guise of a Jewish man who was little more to him than a reincarnated sun-godman? Yes there is.

Eusebius, in his Church History, tells us that Justin, in his Dialogue with Trypho, says "there exists not a people, civilized or semi-civilized, who have not offered up prayers in the name of a crucified Savior to the Father and Creator of all things" (Hist. Eccl. lib i. ch. iv).

Trypho, knowing the re-dressed paganism as taught by Justin, immediately makes a counter-appeal to Justin. **"When you have forsaken God and placed your hope on a man, what kind of hope yet remains for you?" From Trypho's perspective the failure of Christians to keep the Laws of their Covenant confirms that they are "Godless."** Trypho fully understood that the religion that Justin promoted was literally the forsaking of the Divine Revelation given by the God of the Bible. **In kindness Trypho acknowledges Justin as a friend and then urges him to be circumcised, then (as is commanded in the law) to keep the sabbath and the feasts and God's new moons, and, in short, to do all the things that are written in the law, and then perchance he will find mercy from God (8.4).**

Answer for yourself: In reality what was Trypho trying to accomplish with Justin? **He was inviting Justin to repent and enter into the Covenant with God; a Covenant which required circumcision and obedience to God's Holy Days and appointed times like the Sabbath and Festivals and New Moons.**

Trypho then summarizes his own views concerning the Messiah, and alleges that Christians have shaped a kind of Messiah for themselves by denying the Messiah of the Jewish Scriptures and fashioning one of their own making from the personification of solar entities ([http:// paganizingfaithofyeshua.netfirms.com](http://paganizingfaithofyeshua.netfirms.com)).

A little later Trypho criticizes Christians for their failure to mark out a boundary between themselves and pagans (10.3). In other words Trypho the Jew blames Christians for maintaining their pagan religious ways and not repenting of such false worship when taught the truth!

I don't wish to prolong this but you need to take just a second to read right now an [article concerning disturbing quotes about the paganization of the Christian faith](#) by scholars and authors who truly know what they are taking about. They make the same case that Trypho and his companions were making to Justin in the early 2nd Century. **THINK!**

The issues which separate Justin and Trypho are set out clearly: Justin appeals to Trypho "to know the Christ of God"; Trypho urges Justin to "do all the things that are written in the law". Their agendas are very different. Both refer to a rather different "rite of entry" into their respective communities, baptism and circumcision.

Both claim that the other person has been led astray by false teachers. Trypho claims that Justin has been led

astray by false speeches, and has followed men of no account; in fact both single out false teachers as responsible for the false stance taken by the other. Both hope that once the sway of the false teachers is shaken off, their rival will be able to change sides. In other words, from Justin's perspective, both synagogue and church hope that adherents of the rival community will be won over. In spite of tight social boundaries on both sides of the divide, movement is possible. As we shall see, the language of movement, "going over", is found more explicitly in Dialogue 47.

DIALOGUE 23: 2ND CENTURY DESCRIPTION OF THE "GOD-FEARERS"

Please understand that Justin in his Dialogue gives for all the world to see a "kodak-moment" of the Gentile Godfearer and his religious belief system as it existed in the 2nd Century A.D.; but few know this because they fail to study their own faith. Instead of reading about the origins of their Christian faith most Christians accept their experience as the barometer of truth instead of historical record and archeology which often will testify to the falsity of one's Christian experience today. One need only compare the religious belief system of the Gentile Godfearer who accepted Jesus as the Messiah in the 2nd Century A.D. with that of contemporary Christianity today to be horrified at the changes that have taken place over 1800 years which has almost completely destroyed the intended results of the Great Commission as first taught over the early centuries of the Jesus Movement before the establishment of the Roman state-religion called "Christianity." One good place to begin your comparison is to fully understand the religious belief system that Justin opposed in his day and which he strongly opposes in his Dialogue and fully understand that this religious belief system that Justin opposed was not only that of the Jews but the Gentile Godfearers who have likewise been taught by Jews themselves (these Jews were the Jewish followers of Jesus as we will quickly come to see)!!!!!!!!!!!!

At the end of a series of scriptural citations in chapters 21 and 22, Justin brings his argument to a climax by challenging Trypho and his companions: "If this is not so, tell me what you all think about the matters under discussion." And when no one answers, Justin adds: "Therefore to you, Trypho, and to those who wish to become proselytes I proclaim the Divine message ..." (23.3).

This is the first time the reader is given any specific information about the companions: they "want to become proselytes." This phrase can be understood in three ways:

- the companions could be either Jews or Gentiles who want to become proselytes to Christianity;
- or they could be Gentiles who want to become proselytes to Judaism.

Perhaps our first inclination is to assume that Trypho's companions are fellow Jews who are seriously interested in becoming Christians. That might seem appropriate in view of Justin's opening appeal to Trypho which we have just noted. However, the sustained hostility and cynicism of the companions makes this unlikely that they are Jews who are seriously interested in becoming Christians. In addition, the immediate context rules out the possibility that the companions are Jews. This passage comes at the climax of an extended discussion about circumcision which follows the programmatic chapters 8 and 9. Two sentences after the reference to the companions who wish to become proselytes, Justin makes an impassioned plea to them: "Stay as you have been born". And a familiar line of argument about Abraham's justification before circumcision then follows: the latter was just a sign. If Trypho's companions were Jews, there would not be any need to urge them to stay as they are and not to bother with circumcision. So the companions must be Gentiles.

Answer for yourself: Do they wish to become proselytes (i.e. convert fully) to Judaism, or to Christianity?

The latter view has been influential, largely as a result of the most widely available English translation, by A. L. Williams. Williams clarifies the ambiguous Greek by adding in brackets after "proselytes" the phrase "to the true faith". In other words Williams thinks that Trypho's companions are keen to become "proselytes" to Christianity. He is terribly wrong and this is how lies and false teachings are spread which led the flock astray.

Justin is keen to dissuade Trypho's companions from taking the final step of circumcision, for he knows (probably from experience) that it is even more difficult to convert to Christ those have become proselytes to Judaism than it is to convert Jews like Trypho. So he argues vigorously and at length that circumcision was not part of God's original purposes.

Answer for yourself: Again what do we see from Justin's account? We see that it was common for non-Jews to be instructed in the Torah and the Covenants of God whereby they and Jews were not only friends but often accepted circumcision and full conversion to Judaism as was the intention of the Great Commission which was to teach in all the world the Covenant of Noah and the opportunity for such Godfearers to make full conversion to Judaism if they so desired.

At the beginning of their lengthy discussion on this topic Justin lets Trypho have first say. Justin seems to be generous in allowing Trypho to deal the first card, but, as we shall see, Justin himself holds the trump card. Trypho's first card, (10.3) is the very first of the numerous explicit citations of Scripture in the Dialogue, Genesis 17:14: "The person who has **not** been circumcised on the eighth day shall be cut off from God's people." Trypho then claims that this command refers not only to born Israelites, but also to **foreigners** (including Justin himself), and to purchased slaves.

Answer for yourself: Did we not see in the prior articles that Abraham, a non-Jew, was circumcised as a "mark" of his Covenant with God long before Moses was commanded to be circumcised and later applied this to the whole of the Jewish males? We sure did.

In interpreting Genesis 17:14 to refer to three groups, Trypho goes further than the MT or the LXX which refer to only two groups: born Israelites and (foreign) purchased slaves.

But Justin ignores the point at this stage in the Dialogue and concentrates on his own arguments concerning circumcision. At the climax Justin attempts to trump Trypho's card concerning Genesis 17:14: he insists once again that circumcision was given as a sign, but not for righteousness. The sentences which follow are highly rhetorical:

*Understand that the blood of that circumcision has been made useless, and we have believed the blood that brings salvation . . . Jesus Christ circumcises all those who will ... Come with me, **all who fear God** who wish to see the good things of Jerusalem. Come, let us go in the light of the Lord, for he has set his people free, even the house of Jacob ... (24.3).*

These words are addressed directly to Trypho and his companions. The plea, "Come with me, **all who fear God**", is intriguing. These words are addressed directly to the companions: they fear God, and wish to see the good things of Jerusalem - and Justin urges them to join his side. We learn from this that Trypho's companions are referred to here as "**those who fear God**", a phrase found in several passages in Acts (10:2, 22, 35; 13:16, 26).

At Dialogue 10.4 the phrase "**those who fear God**" refers to Gentiles sympathetic to Judaism (many other scholars hold the same idea like Feldman, Jew and Gentile, p. 357). In this passage Trypho complains that Christians who claim to know God, do not keep the commandments - yet even those

who fear God do (the reason being that obeying the Commandments shows God your adherence to His Covenant with them and their love for Him). Perhaps Trypho even has in mind his own companions, as well as other Gentiles sympathetic to Judaism. It is important to note that in both 10.4 and 24.3 the phrase "those who fear God" is a very general way of referring to those sympathetic to Judaism and that this "pattern" is shown in many passages in the New Testament as well as found in Acts 10:2 and 10:22 with Cornelius and then again used in a universal sense in Acts 10:35. Again those Gentiles partial to Judaism is again seen in Acts 13:16 in Antioch of Pisidia in Asia Minor. In the context of these passages we see these non-Jewish Gentile Godfearers observing the Sabbath because Paul and Barnabas addressed them on the Sabbath day in the synagogues in Asia Minor (notice they were not "churches" in Asia Minor.

Justin's identification of Trypho's companions as Gentiles closely attached to Judaism who wish to become proselytes is striking. The companions are "God-fearers", even though Justin does not explicitly refer to them as such. In recent years (especially since the discovery of the Aphrodisias inscription) literature on "Godfearers" has become a growth industry. As far as I can see, none of the recent writers on this topic makes more than a passing reference to Justin. This is unfortunate. I am convinced that when Justin's evidence is set alongside the other varied and often baffling evidence, we are forced to conclude that Gentiles were attracted to Judaism for many reasons and that their relationship to Judaism took many forms. Today Gentile Christianity has little to do with Judaism and this is terribly unfortunate because it separation from the mother faith has robbed it of the "pattern" or worship God intended the Jew and Gentile share.

Before we leave chapter 23, we must ask why Justin has so much to say about circumcision in his opening exchanges with Trypho.

- First, he is responding to Jewish criticisms, well grounded in Scripture, of Christian claims.
- Secondly, he is deliberately ringing alarm bells for his Christian readers, some of whom were attracted to Judaism.
- Thirdly, and most important of all for my present purposes, he is appealing to Gentiles who currently had some form of attachment to Judaism and he was trying to influence them not to become proselytes, for he knew that proselytes were even less likely than Jews such as Trypho to respond to Christian preaching.

DIALOGUE 47: TOLERANCE AND INTOLERANCE

Several observations for the Christian need to be made from Dialogue 47. We have already seen that the programmatic chapters 8 and 9 imply that there is movement in both directions between Judaism and Christianity; in other words both were competing for recruits: this is what both Justin and Trypho assume in their opening appeals to one another. At 47.1 Justin reminds his readers of Trypho's initial appeal to him in 8.4 to become a proselyte.

Now here is where we must pay close attention. In response to a question from Trypho, Justin concedes that Jews who have become Christians and still wish to keep the law fully are to be accepted as long as they do not persuade Gentiles to keep the law, and as long as they have full fellowship with Gentile Christians.

Answer for yourself: What did we learn from this statement from Justin?

Justin admits that many Jews were currently believers in Yeshua/Jesus and such Jewish "believers in Jesus" were continually keeping the Law. Notice also that such Jewish believers in Jesus as Messiah did not at that time follow Paulinism whereby they replaced Law with grace as we have been

taught today. In other words Paulinism was not successful in the 2nd Century as it has become today under the influence and power of the Roman state in the 4th Century A.D. Justin refers to this issue three times in this one fairly short but very important chapter.

The third reference is particularly important as it concerns the Gentile believers in both God and Jesus:

Justin concedes, somewhat reluctantly, that Gentile Christians who have been persuaded by Jewish Christians to keep the law will be saved. This means that Judaism even had influence among Gentile Christians (Justin's people). Justin then notes that there are some Gentile Christians who are much less tolerant than he is: they will not converse or share table-fellowship with those who acknowledge Christ and keep the law (both non-Jew & Jews). This means that the dividing lines were being drawn over the Law and not the issue of the Messiah and Law as you now know is the heart of one's Covenant with God!

In reality Justin is denying the Covenant of God and replacing it with one of the Gentile's own making...and this has continued for 1800 years up to our day!

Answer for yourself: What else is so striking about the above verse by Justin? He admits that salvation exists within Judaism and not only in Christianity as Christianity would have you believe today! **WOW!**

Answer for yourself: Why is Justin himself so cautious about Jewish Christians, and why are some of his fellow Christians so intolerant? Justin gives one answer himself: Jewish Christians who insist on keeping the law arouse the suspicion of Gentile Christians and their lives as examples of high piety was always a stimulus for the Gentile Christian to begin to examine the Jewish faith and the Torah whereby if one did such an activity he would quickly see for himself the falsification of the doctrines and teachings of Gentile Christianity and reject it and become converts to the Jewish faith (all the while maintaining belief in Jesus as Messiah). Justin knew that the end result of such activity would persuade Gentile Christians to keep the law, a position Justin will not tolerate (47.3).

Answer for yourself: Why should Gentiles who "believe on this Christ" not be encouraged by Jewish Christians to "live in accordance with the law appointed by Moses"?

Answer for yourself: Why is Justin, tolerant in many other respects, so intolerant at precisely this point concerning the Law?

As we find throughout history Jewish Christians have always insisted that the law should be kept as a *sine qua non* as far as salvation is concerned; but the Bible never really teaches this. Obedience is expected of one who has received the grace of God and His Salvation by faith (not faith in Messiah but faith in God). These Jewish Christians mean well but they fail to present to the non-Jew his Covenant with God which preceded the Mosaic Covenant; the Covenant of Noah. Failing to do this they assume that the only way the Gentile can find acceptance with God is through total conversion into the Covenant of Moses; such by now you have learned is not correct. However, Justin does not say that this is their position. He implies that they are encouraging Gentiles to keep the law alongside their faith in Christ (this law being the law of Moses and not the Law of Noah).

One senses Justin's fear at what is going on. Justin and the Gentile Christians are losing the quest for converts and Biblical Judaism is winning. What Gentile Christians fail to realize is that Biblical Judaism was a world religion and it would not be until Rome will throw her power as a Political State behind religion would Judaism begin to wain and Roman Christianity surge to the forefront. So we see Justin's hidden agenda at this point. The clue to a probable explanation comes in 47.4: Justin

notes that some Gentile Christians who have been persuaded to keep the law have moved over completely to the Jewish religion; they have denied that "this is the Christ", and therefore cannot be saved. Their denial of "the Christ" involved the Gentile's belief in Jesus which is questioned once they realize that the Greek Scriptures have been purposefully falsified, misquoted, and mistranslated in order to promote a sun-godman of the Essenes in 200 B.C.E. Such Greek Scriptures the Jews have always rejected as false representations of the true Jewish Scriptures. That being so then one quickly comes to learn what were the true Jewish prophecies and in the light of their failure to be "fulfilled" then questions concerning Jesus as Messiah arise. I have dealt in other websites with these falsifications and the failures of these prophecies to be fulfilled:

- <http://www.geocities.com/bennoah1>
- <http://messianicprophecy.netfirms.com>

Other associated related studies can be found here:

- <http://returningtofaithofyeshua.freesevers.com>
- <http://faithofyeshua.faithweb.com>

Once one the student familiarizes himself with both the falsifications of the texts by the Essenes and later Gentiles as well as the failure of the true Jewish prophecies to be fulfilled then he can see more clearly why the events expected by the Jews did not occur and that such a failure cannot be laid at the feet of Jesus. Therefore the question about Jesus as Messiah cannot be truthfully answered and it yet remains a matter of faith. Time will tell.

Justin suspects that some Jewish Christians who encourage Gentile Christians to keep the law may in fact be responsible for turning them into proselytes to Judaism. The continuing attraction of Judaism to Gentiles, whether Christian or not, suggests that this is a plausible explanation. So I suggest that Justin is extremely sensitive concerning the status of Jews who have become Christians because he fears that some of them will encourage Gentile Christians to keep the law - and that will prove to be the crucial step on the path towards a complete transfer to Judaism.

This explanation is strengthened by sociological considerations. Justin's Dialogue provides ample evidence that in his day Judaism and Christianity were such keen rivals that sporadic conflict was always likely. Sociologists remind us that where groups are in conflict, the sharpness of the reaction to the "inner enemy" is in proportion to the sharpness of the conflict with the outer enemies. A group at odds with its arch-rival will react with even more hostility to a heretic than to an apostate, for a heretic still shares many of the goals of his former fellow members. Hatred is directed, not in the first place against opponents of its own view of the world order, but against the dreaded "internal enemy" who is competing for the same end.

In these terms, Jewish Christians who seek to persuade Gentile Christians to keep the law are an "inner enemy", "heretics", whose influence is to be feared.

DIALOGUE 122-3: "PROSELYTES"

These two chapters contain a set of vigorous exchanges over the interpretation of Isaiah 49:6 and 42:6ff., passages which refer to Israel as a "light for the Gentiles". Justin says to Trypho (and his companions): "You all indeed suppose that this [i.e. Isa. 49:6] was said of the stranger and the proselytes. But in reality these words were said of us (as if the Gentile Christians were the light of the world of whom Isaiah spoke and not Israel) who have been enlightened through Jesus ..." (121.1).

Answer for yourself: Are you aware that besides Ignatius who began replacement religion in his few letters around 110 C.E. one must wait for Justin around 160 C.E. for a an official construction of replacement religious doctrines to arise which would be the foundation for all that would come later in the Gentile Church?

Answer for yourself: Did you notice that in Justin's mind the Gentile Church which is apart from Judaism and Jewish Christianity has take the place of Israel in the Bible?

Justin continues, "These things also [Isa 42:6ff.], Gentlemen, have been spoken with reference to the Christ, and concerning the Gentiles that have been enlightened. Or will you say again: with reference to the Law and the proselytes he says these things'" (122.3).

Then some of those who had come on the second day (other Gentiles who have been enlightened toward Judaism and Trypho's friends) cried out as though in a theatre: 'What then? Does He [God] not say **them** with **reference to the Law and those that have been enlightened by it**' **Now these are the proselytes**' (122.4). **These Gentile semi-proselytes to Judaism knew full ware themselves that the passage misapplied by Justin was intended for them. They were the living proof and fulfillment of the verses in Isaiah; they had received the truth from the Jews as God had always intended!**

In his reply Justin insists that Isaiah 42:6ff. does not refer to "the old law and its proselytes, but Christ and his proselytes, us Gentiles, whom he enlightened...". Justin denies not only that the Jews have enlightened Gentiles since Jacob but the historical fulfillment of the passage and since failing to exegete the passage properly reads into the passage what he desires; this has been done now for 1800 years by Gentile Christianity.

There are several points of particular interest in this passage.

- **When Justin denies that the two passages from Isaiah refer to proselytes to Judaism, Trypho's companions fly into a rage. Their reaction suggests that they set great store by these passages: they insist that they themselves, as would-be proselytes, are enlightened by the law. A number of passages in Jewish writings state that *the law* is the light of the world, especially for proselytes. One need not only look at the Old Testament which testifies to this repeatedly but Philo: Joseph and Asenath; The Testament of the Twelve Patriarchs; Rabbinic traditions; and even the New Testament itself in places such as Rom. 2:17-20.**

Rom 2:17-20 17 Behold, thou art called a Jew, and retest in the law, and makest thy boast of God, 18 And knowest his will, and approvest the things that are more excellent, being instructed out of the law; 19 And art confident that thou thyself art a guide of the blind, a light of them which are in darkness, 20 An instructor of the foolish, a teacher of babes, which hast the form of knowledge and of the truth in the law. (KJV)

Trypho and his companions quote this well-established Jewish exegetical tradition and insist that it refers to them. Justin, however, takes it over and replaces the law with Christ. In short, Justin and Trypho are rivals, both seeking "proselytes" among Gentiles; both claim that Scripture supports their appeal to Gentiles.

- **(Justin claims that proselytes not only do not believe, but utter blasphemies against Christ's name doubly more than Trypho himself, and wish both to kill and to torment those who believe on him (122.2). No doubt the reference to the excessive enthusiasm of proselytes is rhetorical exaggeration. Justin immediately adds his own wry, but perceptive, comment: "For they [proselytes] are eager to become like you [Trypho and his fellow Jews] in everything." This suggests that proselytes are uneasy about their status and need to prove themselves, even though Justin alludes to the well-known rabbinic tradition that a circumcised proselyte "is like one who is native born" (123.1; cf. b. Yeb. 47b and 62a)**
- **In 122.1 "the stranger" is at least partly distinct from "the proselytes". Here we have further**

evidence for two groups with different levels of attachment to Judaism. This is what I have been teaching in this and other websites all along and we have now a 2nd Century witness by one opposed to Judaism that this is the case; different Covenants with different Covenant responsibilities and stipulations.

CONCLUDING OBSERVATIONS

Justin's Dialogue indicates that in the middle of the second century both Judaism and Christianity were concerned to maintain tight boundaries. Trypho complains that Christians (unlike Jews) do not mark themselves off from pagans (Christians were indistinguishable often from the pagans). Take time now to read the article entitled: Disturbing Quotes which concerns the Gentile Christian faith by scholars which speak about how Gentile Christianity is basically paganism unchanged where they only have attributed to a Jewish Rabbi prior pagan concepts and have tried to pass this off to the world as Divine Revelation He also mentions that some Jewish teachers forbid Jews to enter into conversation with Christians - lest they be persuaded by "blasphemous" Christian claims (38.1; 112.4). Justin's references to alleged Jewish persecution of Christians also point to Jewish anxiety lest community boundaries be breached.

Justin is concerned to maintain tight boundaries on the Christian side. He will not tolerate Jewish Christians who are not in full fellowship with Gentile Christians. Justin is very sensitive about Jewish Christians who persuade Gentile Christians to keep the law: he suspects that under their influence some Gentile Christians may move over completely to the Jewish polity (47.3-4).

And yet in spite of the concerns of both "synagogue" and "church" to maintain tight boundaries, there is movement across both boundary lines. This has happened in the past, and there is an expectation that it will happen in the future; but this is mainly determined by the availability of knowledge of the truth and it's availability to the Gentiles who never had the opportunity to know the truth about Jesus and the Jewish Scriptures before they were altered by the Essenes and later by Rome. In short, there is keen "on the ground" rivalry - and this is surely the mainspring of the intolerance expressed on both sides.

Justin's Dialogue suggests that there were different levels of attachment to both communities. On the Jewish side there were proselytes whose status was often ambiguous; would-be proselytes, such as Trypho's companions; other Gentile sympathizers or "Godfearers"; some Jews who acknowledged Christ, but were not in full fellowship with Gentile Christians; and some Gentile Christians who had "gone over" to Judaism.

On the Christian side there were two kinds of Jewish Christians, one acceptable to Justin, and one not; there were also Gentile Christians who seemed likely to go over to Judaism (47.1-4).

No doubt both sides hoped to consolidate the level of commitment of those on the "fringes" of their communities. From a later period a tradition expresses what is likely to have been the case in Justin's "school" as well as in synagogues: **"when the sage takes his seat to expound doctrine, many strangers become proselytes"** (Cant. Rab. 1.15; cf. 1.3 and 4.2). This is simply because one the Jewish sages and scholars begin to teach the truth about history, the corruption of their Holy texts, God's warnings about the Gentile nations repenting from idolatry and sun-worship, and the truth about the Messianic prophecies then these Gentiles were become associated with Judaism in great numbers. Such threatened the powers of be in the Gentile world such as governments for example. This tide of association with Judaism had to stop. We seen the attitude of such Gentiles who had been instructed in Judaism having been once enlightened: they ridiculed and mocked Justin for failing to see what they had been shown and his failure to turn from such folly once it is exposed. To them Justin was a laughing stock. These enlightened Gentiles now recognized their solar worship for what it was; an affront to God and crude idolatry and they turned from idols to serve the living God.

1Thes 1:9 9 For they themselves shew of us what manner of entering in we had unto you, and how ye turned to God from idols to serve the living and true God; (KJV)

Justin would not do that. As we have seen, the Dialogue contains important neglected evidence for the existence in the middle of the second century of "God-fearers", even though Justin does not use a specific term for Gentiles who already have some attachment to the synagogue.

Answer for yourself: Why did Justin write his Dialogue? I do not think that his main aim was to "win over" Jews such as Trypho. If that had been his hope and expectation, he would not have allowed Trypho to go his own way. Justin must have recognized that some Gentiles (such as Trypho's companions) were so strongly attached to Judaism that their conversion was unlikely. Perhaps his primary appeal (via his Christian "school") was to Gentiles who were broadly sympathetic to both Judaism and Christianity - Gentiles who did not appreciate the differences, Gentiles with a weak level of attachment either to Christianity or to Judaism. In other words he was trying to lay a foundation that not only might work in his day to dissuade Gentiles from associating with Judaism (semi-proselytes or fully converted Proselytes) as well as the days to come. Justin might not have succeeded with Trypho and his Gentile Godfearers but Rome will use this piece of literature to it's fullest advantage and Justin and his Dialogue become the very foundational document for Rome's Replacement Religious doctrines for 2000 years.

Let us end with this thought. Justin's friends, the two Gentiles who had been instructed in religious matters and texts by Israelites (the light of the world) both knew and saw the folly of Gentile Christianity. Let us not forget that they had once been where Justin was at...in the middle of idolatry and they like Justin did not know it. Upon instruction in the Torah and accepting their Covenant with God (the Covenant of Noah) they were contemplating going beyond the Laws of Noah and fulfilling Isa. 56 in their lives whereby they would acquire more mitzvot and make full conversion to Judaism. They, unlike Christians today, did not see the Law as a burden or a curse. What did they know that you have not been taught? These companions of Trypho demonstrate that it is perfectly permissible to believe in Jesus as Israel's Messiah and yet obey the Law of your Covenant. This is the way God intended...obedience to the Laws of our Covenant. The issues of the Messiah will honestly never be decided for sure until the Messiah either appears or returns. But belief in Messiah was never contingent upon salvation for either the Jew or the non-Jew and we see Justin admitting this in the 2nd Century C.E. Let us leave with this concluding remark The Great Commission had been continuing for almost 150 years and we see the fruit of it in the lives of Trypho's (himself a Jew) friends (themselves non-Jewish). They were practicing Biblical faith under the umbrella of Biblical Judaism and not Roman Christianity whereby they adhered to the Laws of their Covenant and desired to do more. The kodak-moment left to us by Justin is telling; Biblical Judaism whereby it is a light to the nations was a world power to be reckoned with as God intended. Sadly the power of Rome would later triumph over the power of Israel.

Answer for yourself: Understanding this picture as historically accurate from an "adversaries viewpoint" then did the Apostles go out carry out the Great Commission wrong following Pentecost? Not at all in fact we see that Gentile followers of Jesus were taught Judaism and their place within it way into the 2nd Century in fulfillment of the Great Commission. You need now ask yourself how we got so far away from the faith of Jesus and investigate to find the answers for yourself. Only then will you be fully convinced that we as non-Jews and Christian believers have lived our lives under the Roman yoke and not the yoke of the Torah and this has assured us that we live as apostates from the faith once given to the saints.

Besides commentary much of the above article was taken from Graham N. Stanton and Guy G. Stroumsa in their Tolerance And Intolerance In Early Judaism And Christianity (pp. 263-278)

Shalom



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HAVE YOU FOLLOWED GOD'S "PATTERN OF WORSHIP" IN YOUR LIFE?

Answer for yourself: Are you aware that within the Jewish Scriptures we can find a **"Pattern of Worship"** given by God that was followed by both Jews and non-Jewish believers in God both in the Old Testament and New Testament times?

Answer for yourself: Are you aware that both historically and archeologically we can attest that this **"Pattern of Worship"** continued until the 4th and early 5th Century A.D. when Rome for all practical purposes changed it for everyone and today we seldom if ever stumble onto the prior existing pattern that God had intended that all His children, both Jew and non-Jew, observe in their worship of Him?

Answer for yourself: Are you aware that the tabernacle was built according to the **divine blueprint** given to Moses by the Lord (Ex. 25:8-9)?

Answer for yourself: Are you aware that Aaron and his sons were consecrated to their priestly vocation according to a divine pattern as well, and they offered the prescribed sacrifices unto God according to a divine pattern?

Answer for yourself: Are you aware that David was given the same pattern when told to build the Temple, set aside the Priests, and oversee the **work of the service** (worship) within the Temple (I Chron. 28:13)?

1 Chr 28:10-15 10 Take heed now; for the LORD hath chosen thee to build an house for the sanctuary: be strong, and do it. 11 Then David gave to Solomon his son the pattern of the porch, and of the houses thereof, and of the treasuries thereof, and of the upper chambers thereof, and of the inner parlours thereof, and of the place of the mercy seat, 12 And the pattern of all that he had by the spirit, of the courts of the house of the LORD, and of all the chambers round about, of the treasuries of the house of God, and of the treasuries of the dedicated things: 13 Also for the courses of the priests and the Levites, and for all the work of the service of the house of the LORD, and for all the vessels of service in the house of the LORD.

Let us look and examine the the Hebrew word for "service" and see what we find hidden in the Hebrew:

Strong's Concordance:

5656 `abodah (ab-o-daw'); or `abowdah (ab-o-daw'); from 5647; work of any kind: KJV-- act, bondage, + bondservant, effect, labour, **ministering (-try)**, office, service (-ile, -itude), tillage, use, work, X wrought.

Brown-Driver-Briggs' Hebrew Lexicon

5656 `abodah or `abowdah- labor, service

- a) labor, work
- b) labor (of a servant or a slave)
- c) labor, service (of captives or subjects)
- d) service (of God)

What we see from these words is that there is a "MINISTRY" and "SERVICE OF GOD" that was given by the Spirit of God according to a "PATTERN."

Even the New Testament alludes to this pattern:

Heb 8:5 5 Who serve unto the example and shadow of heavenly things, as Moses was admonished of God when he was about to make the tabernacle: for, See, saith he, that thou make all things according to the pattern shewed to thee in the mount. (KJV)

Now it is for us to both understand that a "pattern of ministry" existed both in the Old Testament and New Testament which was a pattern of the intended service of mankind and worship toward God. This is called "ministry" according to the Hebrew word. I know that the term "ministry" is so overworked today but it is for us to try to discern:

- If this "pattern" of service and worship of God can be discerned from the Jewish Scriptures
- If this "pattern" of service and worship of God can be shown from examples in the Old Testament and New Testament texts to have existed not only before Jesus' death but also existed "unchanged" after Jesus' crucifixion
- If this "pattern" of service and worship of God can be shown to have been quite similar if not the same in many instances as practiced and observed by both Jews and non-Jews both before and after Jesus' crucifixion

If this can discerned from New Testament examples as applying "unchanged" for both the Jew and the non-Jewish believer who came to God through the ministry of Yeshua's disciples and apostles then we need then only ask if our experience as Christians and followers of Yeshua is yet today according to this "pattern of ministry" or if our experience is different and if so we must ask "why?" If not then we have to honestly ask if we have let Israel be a light unto us (as Gentiles as the nations of the world) as God has said they were to be in the Jewish Scriptures or if we have been misled in our "ministry and worship" toward God.

In the articles that follow we will present evidence from both the Jewish Old Testament and the New Testament which proves beyond any doubt that there did exist not only a "pattern of worship" as observed by both the Jew and non-Jew but both observed and adhered to this pattern well before and after Jesus' crucifixion which indicates that nothing was changed by Jesus' death. One has to look to the official adoption of the Jesus Movement by the state of Rome in which "Christianity" became the state religion of Rome to see the organized changes made to this "pattern" of worship. Today few if any know that ever happened and that we have departed from the "pattern" of worship given by God in His Holy Texts.

Let us continue our study.

HAVE YOU FOLLOWED G-D'S PATTERN OF WORSHIP IN YOUR LIFE...OR DO YOU OFFER G-D "STRANGE FIRE" IN YOUR CHURCH?



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NADAB AND ABIHU: A CASE STUDY IN DEVIATION FROM THE PATTERN OF WORSHIP

In this article we will be taught a very important lesson that sadly has escaped most of the Gentile Christian Church; namely, that there is a Divine "Pattern of Worship" that God has commanded and any deviation from it is displeasing to the Creator in spite of what we might think or believe. The seriousness of this lesson cannot be stressed enough.

You might have heard of Nadab and Abihu but we will become more acquainted with them momentarily. You need to position yourself to understand that the account of Nadab and Abihu occurs on their very first day to lead in worship the people of God. You might say that it occurs on their ordination day. It was their **first day** to lead the people of God in worship. As you read this document, please draw the analogy and question if at all possible if you have possibly been led in worship by contemporary "Christianized" Nadabs and Abihus.

Aaron and his sons had spent seven whole days within the tabernacle of meeting and now on this eighth day, they had been more than ready to begin the ceremonies which would complete their consecration to the priesthood. The ceremonies were tedious and difficult and they had to be followed and performed correctly to be pleasing to God. Aaron's brother and God's chosen mediator Moses, had been told by Yahweh,

"See that you make everything according to the pattern shown you in the mount" (EX. 25:40).

Now notice if you will that God tells Moses that there exists "a Pattern" that is to be followed by man when he worships God!

As you read this article, you will see that we have deviated from the "pattern" and you will quickly see that we (the Gentile Christian Church) have erred today and have not followed the "pattern for worship" as given by God. Let us draw the parallels to our situation as Gentile Christians who consider themselves followers of Jesus and "the Christ" today.

1 Cor 10:5-6 5 But with many of them God was not well pleased: for they were overthrown in the wilderness. 6 Now these things were our examples...(KJV)

Nadab and Abihu (Leviticus 10) had been very careful to do everything to the Lord's exacting specifications (but that would change). Aaron's sons Nadab and Abihu were very meticulous in slaughtering a calf, a kid, a bull, and a ram, washing and burning the kidneys, fat, and fatty lobe of the liver on the altar, pouring the blood at its base, burning the hide and flesh outside the camp, and then offering a grain offering mixed with oil. Let us not forget that this was done specifically according to the pattern given by God; the pattern He intended to be followed to the very "jot" and "tittle" of each command.

The high point of these preparations came when the glory of the Lord (God's Presence) appeared as a result of obedient worship and a great presence of fire went out from the Lord and entirely consumed the burnt offering and fat on the altar. During this last event Nadab and Abihu were moved with the rest of the congregation to fall on their faces in worship at this miraculous display of their Magnificent God, as He accepted with great pleasure, the sacrifice of His people.

Perhaps it was the emotion of the moment, yet nevertheless, whatever it might have been, it entered into the minds of these two sons of Aaron to make a generous gesture of worship to the Lord. Their hearts were no doubt filled with joy and thanksgiving at being chosen along with their father and the entire tribe of Levi to mediate God's dealings with His special people, Israel. God had taken extreme care to communicate to them the manner and spirit in which He was to be honored and worshipped, and they had been faithful to do all that He had asked of them. God would do the same to King David and Solomon when giving further instructions concerning "the Pattern of Worship" to be followed in the Temple as hopefully you have seen in the study of the prior articles.

Lev 10:1 And Nadab and Abihu, the sons of Aaron, took either of them his censer, and put fire therein, and put incense thereon, and offered strange fire before the LORD, which he commanded them not. (KJV)

Nadab and Abihu, however, were not content with worshipping "by the Book" or "by the Pattern of Worship" commanded by God; they wanted to excel in worship, and to do so, they would exceed God's expectations, hoping through their creativity to convey to Him their inestimable thanks and praise. They felt in their emotions and they reasoned in their minds that they were unable to express their gratitude doing only what the Lord had asked. They reasoned among themselves: "After all, if we do all that God required, surely He will approve if we improvise and bring Him what He has not asked for?" I can hear them now as they most likely reasoned and said to themselves: "We will go beyond the 'Pattern' for after all, does not God know our hearts?" This needs some deep thought in order to see if God can or will accept what man decides on his own to give God which God did not ask in lieu of what He did ask that man do and observe. The bottom issue here is the substitution of what the flesh manifests instead of the Spirit. Even more clearly we are speaking about Replacement Religion which is undetectable to the flesh of mankind since most are devoid of the necessary knowledge to even know that such a tragic substitution has even occurred.

So with love in their hearts (like us) and with great satisfaction in their own cleverness, Nadab and Abihu mistakenly devised a plan whereby they thought that they could draw closer to the Lord who chose them. With their father Aaron looking on, each took his censer and put fire in it. With eager hearts they approached the glory which so recently had accepted the sacrifice offered on the altar. "Surely" they thought to themselves drawing ever nearer the expression of Yahweh's presence, "this will assure Yahweh (God) of my appreciation for His selection of me to be a holy priest before Him." Can't you just picture Aaron as he looked on, his heart in similar fashion overflowing with gratitude to His Lord and with pride for his sons on this, their ordination day. Here they were, young men, selected by God to be members of a special class among all of the houses of Israel -- priests to the Most High God, of the order of Levi! They were God's worship leaders!

Answer for yourself: Can this apply to the Christian? [Do we offer God "Strange Fire" in worship and not know it today?](#)

Yet God will destroy and kill them for their false worship and their deviation from "the Pattern of Worship" which He had previously commanded. Tragically, they forgot that with God *obedience is better than any sacrifice one can bring God.*

This should hit home to us as followers of Jesus and "the Christ" since as Gentile Christians today we follow a different "Pattern of Worship" created by Rome instead of the "Pattern of Worship" commanded by God to

Israel which was to be the template not only for the Jews but all non-Jews and God-fearers as they made their way to the Temple and the Presence of God.

Maybe not intentionally but surely we do the same as Nadab and Abihu as Gentile Christians at times in our lives when we are led astray by false teaching which we fail to see for what it really is; namely, deviation from what God had commanded in the first place concerning His "Holy Days and Sabbaths" let alone the associated rituals and observance that are parts of these "appointed times" with God.

Now let us pick up the story of Nadab and Abihu. The Hebrew Scriptures teach us that Aaron's worship was interrupted by a sudden commotion which he heard breaking out among the assembly. All of Israel was riveted on the Glory as they beheld again the fire which, having just moments before moved them to fall on their faces, was now once again coming out of God's Presence and began racing rapidly outward. This surely puzzled Aaron, because the sacrifice of the animals had been completely consumed and there remained not so much as a morsel to be devoured by this blaze. But these flames were different than before in that they did not reveal Yahweh's pleasure in the worship and the offerings of His people as they had before.

Screams of horror broke out as the realization settled upon the people of Israel that the flames were directed not toward the altar, but on the two sons of Aaron who had just been worshipping God. Aaron, shattered by what he saw, felt the panic and fear as it filled his soul. It surely seemed like an eternity to the gathering until the flames departed just as swiftly as they had appeared. Where once stood two young men, there were now two smoking carcasses. Unlike the sacrifices which had been totally consumed, the displeasure of the Lord at the institution of perverted worship was manifested in His leaving their lifeless bodies intact and on the ground.

Answer for yourself: Should this worship not have been accepted? Did not God know their hearts and their attempts to love Him after their own zeal?

Notice what Moses says immediately who was quick to speak to Aaron about what had just happened. Moses says:

"This is what the Lord spoke of when He said: 'Among those who approach me I will show myself holy; in the sight of all the people I will be honored.'" Lev. 10:3

Such honor of God is NEVER done in the flesh or zeal of man but in OBEDIENCE to what God has said and commanded.

Aaron's mouth was quiet! Two of his cousins, being thus commanded of Moses, came forward and conducted the remains of his two sons outside the camp, to the place where the unacceptable portions of the sacrifices were routinely taken.

Aaron, being a prophet and having a heart filled with the knowledge of the purposes of Yahweh, knew that it was obedience and not sacrifice that the Lord desired from His people. This may be news to you but God has not changed; we have! When we fail to observe God's Holy Days and "Appointed Times" and substitute for them our own inherited by antisemitic Rome because of their hatred of the Jewish nation then we must realize that we appear before God as just another Nadab and Abihu regardless of our emotional response that accompanies our feeble attempts to make God accept a substitute worship from what He commanded. Often we don't even know what we are doing and that we are dishonoring God when we lift our prayers and voices as we sanctify man's holidays taken from solar gods and goddesses to which Rome affixed the name of Jesus over 1700 years ago. Instead of the Sabbath of God we congregate on "Sun-day"; a day set apart for Helios the Sun god of Rome. Instead of the Passover we celebrate and observe as Christians a fertility cultic day called "Astarte" or "Easter" which commemorated licentious behavior representing the new life of Spring (Easter and bunnies as prolific breeders, eggs as symbol of fertility). Instead of observing the Festival of Tabernacles which symbolized the gathering of all men with God we celebrate Thanksgiving. And I could go on

but you get the point. Instead of reading the "particular portions" of the Torah on God's Holy Days and Sabbaths along with the Haftorah (Prophets) as He commanded which convey the very specific messages He desires to communicate to His people corresponding to these specific days and time we have today over 2000 different Christian denominations all with a different passage with jumbled messages taken most likely from Rome's New Testament instead of the Holy Hebrew Scriptures recognized by the pre-Roman church. These specific readings may be new to you but if you desire to know more about them I suggest you read S. Spong's great book on this issue entitled Liberating the Gospels. In this book he will show you that basically the Gospel of Mark is little more than a midrash on the Synagogue readings (specific Torah and Haftorah portions read in succession through the Festival year beginning with Shavuot (Pentecost) and culminating at Pesach (Passover). These readings when taken in chronological order are the basic for the commentary of Jesus upon the synagogue readings which we find in his teachings as taken in "order" from Pentecost through Passover. I could not believe this when I first read this so I took the Gospel of Mark in my study Bible and took each paragraph/section, chapter by chapter beginning at chapter 1 through 16, and recorded the references to the Old Testament throughout the whole Gospel of Mark. After comprising the list of Old Testament references from each of the passages in Mark from chapter 1 through 16 I then compared them with the Torah and Haftorah readings for the synagogue in Israel in the first century and I about fell out of my chair. Although not 100 % accurate I found to my amazement that over 90% of the summary teachings of Mark flowed EXACTLY with the Torah/Haftorah readings of the synagogues in Israel in the first century in Israel. That only reinforced for the God's "Pattern of Worship" and I truly came to understand that on certain days and special times with God that God's message commanded for that day needs be read and not another which we usually say "God spoke to me and told me to tell ya". Sadly these are not from God when we have His expressed commands that ONLY certain passages and certain messages are to taught on certain "appointed times" with God. The analogy I make is that we surely don't say "happy anniversary" to someone when it is not his anniversary but his birthday. I hope you get the point. Get the book and begin to see God's "Pattern of Worship" for yourself. Now back to Nadab and Abihu.

Aarons' sons, regardless of the seeming innocence of their intentions, were surely guilty of disobedience in the worship of God. They were guilty of "Replacement Religion" as we today. Nadab and Abihu had been chosen by God to be a warning and an alarm to the congregation that God is to be obeyed to the letter, and that men were not to worship Him in ways He had not revealed. They had been the unwitting mediators of a great lesson by God to His people. And let me remind you that this "Pattern of Worship" has been given to King David and Solomon and handed down to the Holy Men of Old and we can find this "Pattern of Worship" not only in the first century in Israel but adapted and followed by Paul in Asia Minor among his Gentile congregations in the synagogues well into the 5th century before Rome finally succeeds in eradicating it.

God had not given Nadab and Abihu any instructions concerning the origin of the fire to be used nor did he command them to offer fire created by the hands of man. They had begun to think beyond the Word of God, and God, in His great care for the congregation, had given to them a strong reminder of the dangers of worshiping God with methods whose origins spring from the evil imaginations of the deceitful and sinful heart of man.

THE PROFANE WORSHIP IN MODERN ASSEMBLIES

Nadab and Abihu were by no means the only persons through whom the Lord has demonstrated his displeasure with unrevealed means of worship. We have the examples given to us of Uzzah, who in steadying the teetering Ark, forgot that the ground upon which it was in danger of falling was much cleaner than the hands of fallen man; of Saul, who in offering the sacrifice in the absence of the priest, committed the sin of presumption, losing forever in the process the kingdom to his posterity; of Jeroboam the first ruler of the Northern Kingdom, who created a feast to the Lord in his own heart, a sin into which all who followed him on the throne strayed, a sin which resulted finally in the kingdom entering into the captivity of the Assyrians; of Ananias and Sapphira, who gave of their belongings to the Lord, but in a deceptive manner and were carried lifeless from the

assembly.

Although we have these examples in our Bibles, we have still not responded to Him in obedience when it comes to the subject of worship, in spite of the advantage we enjoy of the Re-Newed Covenant. New hearts have been given to His people and instead of residing in a temple made of stone or skins, His glory, His Holy Spirit has come to dwell within His people corporately and individually. **In spite of these advantages over those who have gone before, most of Christianity is mired deep in worship forms of which not the Lord, but man is the author.** While many would claim that they are in New Testament assemblies, those who are truly seeking after the will of God know that when they read the letters of Peter, Paul, James, John, as well as other passages, they are confused by the glaring differences in practice from the first century assemblies and the assemblies of today. **Christians today are unknowingly offering to the Lord, sacrifices no less profane than that of Nadab, Abihu, Uzzah, Saul, Jeroboam, Ananias and Sapphira and they don't even know of this tragic departure from the "Eternal Pattern of Worship".**

Answer for yourself: How you say? When was the last time you ever read Leviticus 23?

Various feast days, such as Christmas, Easter, Palm Sunday, and others, are all products of the heart of man, and are celebrated zealously with exhausting effort and care, while that which our Lord commanded that we do in remembrance of Him (the Passover for instance) is forgotten and replaced by Easter. It doesn't stop there! **These are not just Jewish "day" for serious study will reveal to you that buried and hidden in these Hebrew texts are references to the non-Jews observing these days as well.** Few understand today that the Lord's Supper has nothing to do with the grape juice and wafers taken in reverence in most Churches today, but rather refer to the three meals taken in observance of the weekly Sabbath service (the fourth of the ten commandments). And in our Christian churches we have changed the Lord's Supper entirely from its Hebrew and Jewish context as relating to the Sabbath to the day devoted to the worship of the Sun, namely, Sun-day.

Answer for yourself: Have you ever stopped and wondered why you keep and observe the commandment concerning adultery, stealing, murder, lying, etc., yet fail regularly (without remorse) to keep the Sabbath commandment when it is in the same list and more is written about this commandment than any of the others in Exodus 20?

Instead of the "coming together" for the Lord's Supper, (1Cor.. 10:16-17, 11:17-20, ACT 2:42-46, 20:7), the focus of the majority of believer's meetings (church gatherings) has become the glorification of the abilities of one person (usually the preacher) and the passive entertainment of the assembled (the inactive congregation). Though Christ warned his disciples against the taking upon themselves titles such as "Teacher", "Rabbi" (Aramaic "Teacher"), "Father", and "Master" claiming these to belong solely to himself and the Father, these men cling tenaciously to "Reverend", "Father", "Doctor" (Latin, "Teacher"), "Pastor" ("Shepherd") etc. Instead of following in the example of Paul, an itinerant missionary, to provide for himself with his own hands, these are the busybodies, the idle of whom Paul wrote to the Thessalonians, who bleed the church of finances which might be used according to the Hebrew Scriptures to take care of the widows, the infirm, the sick, the lame, the blind, and to share with the poor in keeping the Biblical Festivals and Sabbaths of God. Today in Christianity we don't even know how the tithe was commanded to be used when given and we use it for everything under the sun when areas designated by God to receive the tithe go unaddressed by the vast majority of Gentile Churches today. Instead of recognizing that God dwells in holy hearts and in His assembly, many attempt to build for him lavish buildings made with human hands which is not an area permitted by God in which we are to use "the Lord's Tithe". To make matters worse we rob God of His tithe which assuring the people that they are not yet how we use the funds make the given an accessory to robbery. Neglecting the holiness of His true temple, the temple made without hands, we blindly place our confidence in the majesty of cold stone structures and the architectural monuments to man's creativity.

It is time to cleanse the dwelling place of the Lord (ourselves). If your assembly is not responsive to His Word, and you have made every honest attempt to be the watchman and to warn them of their ways, then you are free from their blood. You must come out and cease being a part of the problem and become part of the solution.

Our publications at Bet Emet will seek to call God's people to obedience in worship. It is not intended to annoy the disinterested, nor is it intended to condemn those who are not practicing the truth. We can also look back to a time when we, being ignorant of these things, also did not practice the truth. We preach the uncompromising Word, convincing, rebuking and exhorting -- but with longsuffering and patient teaching! We know that there are out there many "who have ears to hear", who are waiting for loving words of correction and instruction. God does not save us to live lives of insignificance but to live lives of glory and honor. He warned us that many in that day were going to be in shock to find that they do not truly belong to Him. Many will even make claims to have cast out demons and performed miracles in His name. **They may be sincere, but they are sincerely mistaken.** Paul, for transgressions much less perilous expressed doubt about the reality of the faith of his hearers, saying such things as *"I fear for you, that somehow I have wasted my efforts on you"* (Gal. 4:11) and *"Examine yourselves to see whether you are in the faith. Test yourselves."* (2 Cor. 13:5).

We have a far more compelling need to examine the assembly. At stake is the eternal destiny not only of ourselves, but of those we love.

Please do not rely on a short walk up an aisle or immersion in water as the evidence of your "faith". **You are not going to be judged by your faith, but by your works.** In the great epistle of the gospel of salvation by grace through faith, Paul says this:

"God will give to each person according to what he has done".

This verse applies not only to doing good deeds, but incorporated proper worship of God as well!

"Examine yourselves to see whether you are in the faith; test yourselves. Do you not realize that Christ Jesus is in you -- unless, of course, you fail the test?" 2 Cor. 13:5

Now that you know the rest is up to you. Blessings....



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HAVE WE FOLLOWED GOD'S PATTERN OF WORSHIP OR HAVE WE OFFERED GOD "STRANGE FIRE" IN OUR CHURCH AND OUR WORSHIP?

Answer for yourself: Are you aware that within the Jewish Scriptures we can find a "Pattern of Worship" given by God that was followed by both Jews and non-Jewish believers in God both in the Old Testament and New Testament times (well into the early 5th century and there are some records of this continuing until the 7th century)?

Answer for yourself: Are you aware that both historically and archeologically we can attest that this "Pattern of Worship" continued until early in the 4th Century A.D. when Rome for all practical purposes changed it for everyone and today we seldom if ever stumble onto the prior existing pattern that God had intended that all His children, both Jew and non-Jew, observe in their worship of Him? Are you aware that for another 300 years many non-Jews would give their lives to the Roman sword before they would allow themselves or their families depart from this "Pattern of Worship"?

Answer for yourself: Are you aware that the tabernacle was built according to the divine blueprint given to Moses by the Lord (Ex. 25:8-9)?

Answer for yourself: Are you aware that Aaron and his sons were consecrated to their priestly vocation according to a divine pattern as well, and they offered the prescribed sacrifices unto God according to a divine pattern?

Answer for yourself: Are you aware that David was given the same pattern when told to build the Temple, set aside the Priests, and oversee the work of the service (worship) within the Temple (I Chron. 28:13)?

1 Chr 28:10-15 10 Take heed now; for the LORD hath chosen thee to build an house for the sanctuary: be strong, and do it. 11 Then David gave to Solomon his son the pattern of the porch, and of the houses thereof, and of the treasuries thereof, and of the upper chambers thereof, and of the inner parlours thereof, and of the place of the mercy seat, 12 And the pattern of all that he had by the spirit, of the courts of the house of the LORD, and of all the chambers round about, of the treasuries of the house of God, and of the treasuries of the dedicated things: 13 Also for the courses of the priests and the Levites, and for all the work of the service of the house of the LORD, and for all the vessels of service in the house of the LORD.

Let us look and examine the the Hebrew word for :service and see what we find hidden in the Hebrew:

Strong's Concordance:

5656 `abodah (ab-o-daw'); or `abowdah (ab-o-daw'); from 5647; work of any kind: KJV-- act, bondage, + bondservant, effect, labour, **ministering (-try)**, office, service (-ile, -itude), tillage, use, work, X wrought.

Brown-Driver-Briggs' Hebrew Lexicon

5656 `abodah or `abowdah- labor, service

- a) labor, work
- b) labor (of a servant or a slave)
- c) labor, service (of captives or subjects)
- d) **service (of God)**

What we see from these words is that there is a "MINISTRY" and "SERVICE OF GOD" that was given by the Spirit of God according to a "PATTERN."

Even the New Testament alludes to this pattern:

Heb 8:5 5 Who serve unto the example and shadow of heavenly things, as Moses was admonished of God when he was about to make the tabernacle: for, See, saith he, that thou make all things according to the pattern shewed to thee in the mount. (KJV)

Now it is for us to both understand that a "pattern of ministry" existed both in the Old Testament and New Testament that was a pattern of the intended service of mankind toward God. This is called "ministry" according to the Hebrew words. I know that the term "ministry" is so overworked today but it is for us to try to discern if this "pattern" of service and worship of God can be discerned from the Jewish Scriptures and if examples of it can be determined to have existed after Jesus' death and if this "pattern of ministry" was remained unchanged for both Jew and non-Jew following the crucifixion of Jesus. If this can discerned from New Testament examples as applying "unchanged" for both the Jew and the non-Jewish believer who came to God through the ministry of Yeshua's disciples and apostles then we need then only ask if our experience as Christians and followers of Yeshua is yet today according to this "pattern of ministry" or if our experience is different and if so we must ask "why?" If not then we have to honestly as if we have let Israel be a light unto us as the nations of the world as God has said they were to be in the Jewish Scriptures or if we have been misled in our ministry toward God.

A LITTLE CATCH UP BEFORE WE GO ON

It is not my habit to chase rabbits here but let me give you a little tid-bid of knowledge which is shared on our other websites. Archeology today in the last 100 plus years is blowing the lid off the Catholic Church tradition and mind control to which we have fallen prey as not only Catholics but Protestants as well. Facts today reveal to us that these Patriarchs and Biblical heroes who were given this **"Divine Pattern of Worship"** were Egyptian Pharaohs and not "Jews" as we suppose. That means that men like King David, Solomon, Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, etc., were linked to Egypt as rulers and we don't know it because of Ezra. We can thank Ezra for that, a Persian no less passed off as another Jew, in the Hebrew Scriptures which he would edit and reinterpret and write with an agenda to cover up this Egyptian link since Persia was at war with Egypt in 600 B.C.E.

when the writing of Genesis were done in Babylon and Persia. Having said that then know for now that this "Pattern of Worship" that we find given to King David (Thutmose III) and handed down to Solomon (Amenhotep III) finds its roots in Ancient Egypt and beyond and has its origin in the earliest Divine Revelation given to mankind by God (Elohim). This "Pattern of Worship" revolves around the Invisible Creator who imparted within His creation the message of true salvation that in intricately linked with the solstices and the equinoxes. It will take a lot of reading to not only familiarize yourself with these new concepts but how they were later altered almost beyond belief but only in so doing will you come to see the very simple message of true salvation given originally by our Divine Creator to all of His creation which we have lost almost entirely today. You can thank Rome and and the "Early Church Fathers" and their hatred of the Jews for this. It is time we recover these truths and return to the True Pattern of Worship "once given the saints" and which the Jewish people carry with them today (since the Jews are the children of intermarriage of these Egyptians and semites). Now let us continue.

UNDERSTANDING THE "WORK OF THE SERVICE" ...CORRECTLY

Having justified for your that worship of God in Israel was according to a pattern, then let us regress to the evens surrounding the beginning of Tabernacle worship. The Bible records for us that the *"glory of the Lord appeared unto all the people."* Fire came out from the Lord and lit the offering on the altar, consuming the sacrifice, *"which when all the people saw, they shouted, and fell on their faces"* (Lev. 9:23-24). We can only imagine the mixture of awe, wonder, and joy which the people experienced on this holy and festive occasion as Nadab and Abihu led the people in worship.

Moments later, the scene changed dramatically, as a terrible judgment fell upon Nadab and Abihu. In the midst of their activities, *"there went out fire from the Lord, and devoured them, and they died before the Lord"* (Lev. 10:2).

Answer for yourself: Are you aware that God killed them in their "church?"

Answer for yourself: What had they done, to provoke the anger of the Lord?

The biblical narrative tells us simply that they "offered strange fire before the Lord, which he commanded them not" (Lev. 10:1).

Nadab and Abihu had done something which was expressly forbidden.

Answer for yourself: What had they done that was so bad in worshipping God to demand that their lives be taken?

Surprisingly, they merely added something to the worship of God that He did not command. They added a bit of "strange fire" which the Lord had not commanded. The judgment which came upon them stands as a perpetual testimony against those who presume to worship God by means which lack divine decree. It is a solemn warning: "the Lord spake, saying, I will be sanctified in them that come nigh me, and before all the people I will be glorified" (Lev. 10:3). God means that all false and man-made worship are detestable to Him and will not be accepted by Him and the deaths of Nadab and Abihu remain as eternal testimony to God's will in this matter.

Answer for yourself: Are we to understand by this story that God is displeased with synthetic worship that deviates from His expressed commandments regarding how He desires to be worshipped as taught throughout scripture which is according to "the" pattern that God chose and not man?

In order to gain a better understanding of scriptural principles of worship, we will make a further examination

of precepts and examples from the Bible.

BIBLICAL PRECEPTS

In the book of Deuteronomy, Moses exhorts the children of Israel to keep the law of God. In chapter 12, he reviews scriptural precepts pertaining to worship.

The Lord forbids his people to imitate pagan ways of worship: the Israelites were commanded to eradicate the remnants of corrupt worship from their midst. They were commanded to destroy **"all the places"** wherein the heathen served their Gods. They were instructed to purge the land of all the **implements** associated with false worship: "Ye shall overthrow their altars, and break their pillars, and burn their groves with fire; and ye shall hew down the graven images of their Gods." Even the **terminology of corrupt worship** was to be erased: "Destroy the names of them out of that place" (Deut. 12:2-3).

Answer for yourself: To the modern mind, this may sound strangely intolerant, but is it?

Answer for yourself: Do you believe that God is the same yesterday, today, and forever and that He changes not?

But the Lord warned his people against the danger of imitating the worship practices of the pagans: **"Ye shall not do so unto the Lord your God."** The chapter concludes with a further warning against imitating heathen worship. **"Take heed to thyself that thou be not snared by following them, after that they be destroyed from before thee; and that thou inquire not after their Gods, saying, How did these nations serve their Gods? even so will I do likewise. Thou shalt not do so unto the Lord thy God. What thing soever I command you, observe to do it: thou shalt not add thereto, nor diminish from it" (Deut. 12:30-32; cf. 4:2).**

The sufficiency and authority of scripture are brought to bear upon the content of our worship. This is the meaning of the scriptural law of worship: all forms of worship must have express scriptural warrant, if they are to be admitted as legitimate means of worship. **"The acceptable way of worshipping the true God is instituted by himself, and so limited by His own revealed will, that He may not be worshipped according to the imaginations and devices of men, or the suggestions of Satan, under any visible representation, or any other way not prescribed in holy scripture"** (Westminster Confession, 21:1).

The biblical pattern of worship needs no supplements of human devising; indeed, such man-made innovations are a snare the very seed of idolatry.

When we consider the fallen nature of mankind, we see why the biblical precepts of worship are necessary. Since the fall of Adam, the nature of man has been thoroughly corrupt. This inherent corruption drives men away from God: "There is none that understandeth, there is none that seeketh after God" (Rom. 3:11). **Thus, the native tendency of mankind is to pollute the worship of God, exchanging the truth of God for a lie, worshipping and serving created things rather than the Creator (Rom. 1:25).**

Just as men are incapable of forging a method for their own salvation, so they are incapable of devising proper means to worship and serve God. Therefore, the only proper way to worship God is through the means established by the Lord himself.

WORSHIP IN THE WILDERNESS

During the wilderness wanderings, the Israelites had to be schooled in proper principles of worship. Their native tendency toward corrupt worship was shown early, while they waited for Moses to return from Mt. Sinai.

Growing restless, Aaron and the people constructed a golden calf to serve as a visible symbol of deity.

Virtually all expositors decry the action of the Israelites as idolatry. What is often over looked, however, is the manner in which the Israelites justified their action. They did not view the calf as a newly-created deity; rather, they made the calf as a testimony of their divine deliverance from Egypt. The calf-image evoked a sense of the strength displayed in their deliverance. "These be thy Gods, O Israel, which brought thee up out of the land of Egypt. And when Aaron saw it, he built an altar before it; and Aaron made proclamation, and said, Tomorrow is a feast to the Lord" (Ex. 32:4-5).

Answer for yourself: Did you notice that Aaron did not plan to worshipping the golden calf, but rather desired to re-direct the people's worship toward God; yet he himself was guilty of adding to the accepted worship commanded expressly by God?

Answer for yourself: Although our intent is to worship God, have we, like them, added to the worship of God in our church or in our denomination, or omitted from our worship necessary elements commanded by God and thus stand condemned like Israel and know it not until we die?

In other words, the Israelites did not claim to worship new deities that would be blatant idolatry. No, they intended the calf to serve as a symbol of deity; and Aaron seeks to honor the sacred name of the Lord through this monstrous invention. Even the Anglican author, J. Packer, explains this incident as an attempt by Aaron to worship the Lord (not other Gods) an attempt using unlawful means. "Aaron made a golden calf (that is, a bull-image). It was meant as a visible symbol of Jehovah, the mighty God who brought Israel out of Egypt. No doubt the image was thought to honor Him, as being a fitting symbol of His great strength. But it is not hard to see that such a symbol in fact insults Him: for what idea of His moral character, His righteousness, goodness, and patience, could one gather from looking at a statue of Him as a bull? Thus Aaron's image hid Jehovah's glory." Knowing God (Downers Grove: Inter-Varsity Press, 1973), pp. 40-41.

Now, when Moses returned, he did not regard this matter lightly. He did not employ the tactic which Christianity has used for centuries (and which evangelical churchmen presently endorse), simply cautioning the Israelites not to worship false Gods, noting that the image itself was not a deity, and then allowing the image to remain strictly as a symbol. Moses "took the calf which they had made, and burnt it in the fire, and ground it to powder, and scattered it upon the water, and made the children of Israel drink of it. And Moses said unto Aaron, What did this people unto thee, that thou hast brought so great a sin upon them?" (Ex. 32:20-21).

This sin had transpired while Moses was receiving the ten commandments on the mountain. And the Decalogue (the Ten Commandments) forbids not only the worship of false Gods, but it also condemns the worship of the true God by unsanctioned methods. The same is found in the Laws of Noah as applying to all non-Jews of the world and the Mosaic legislation only built upon it.

Answer for yourself: More to the point, when shown [presuming that you have read the prior articles in this website] that the celebration and observance of Biblical Festivals and the Sabbath is part of the divine pattern of worship for all time (for both Jew and non-Jew), then are we guilty as Israel [as ingrafted Gentiles into the Israel of God] by substituting for observance our church calendar which is full of paganized holidays to which we affix Yeshua's name to the neglect of the true days of Biblical worship?

Stop...read that again...and THINK!

THE SCRIPTURAL LAW OF WORSHIP

The first commandment declares, "Thou shalt have no other Gods before me" (Ex. 20:3). It is plain that the Lord God is the only proper recipient of worship.

The second commandment continues the focus on worship by telling us **how God is to be worshipped**. It does so in a negative sense, by **forbidding us to worship God with human inventions**. "Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image" (Ex. 20:4).

A graven image is not merely a statue of a false deity. If that were the case, the second commandment would be redundant of the first. Instead, the second commandment plainly forbids making or revering physical or artistic representations of the true God.

When the Lord revealed himself to the Israelites, He did so by means of His word not by physical images to be imitated or embellished. Therefore, He warned them: "Take ye therefore good heed unto yourselves; for ye saw no manner of similitude on the day that the Lord spake unto you in Horeb out of the midst of the fire: lest ye corrupt yourselves, and make you a graven image, the similitude of any figure," etc. (Deut. 4:15-16).

Let us take time to note that Roman Catholics and Lutherans divide the ten commandments differently than ordinary Protestants. Catholics and Lutherans combine the first two commandments into one, thus subsuming the second command as a mere appendix to the first. They divide the tenth commandment into two commands prohibiting different kinds of covetousness. **Thus, they still maintain ten in number, but the effects on their doctrine of worship is devastating.**

The apostle Paul instructed the Athenians, **"We ought not to think that the Godhead is like unto gold, or silver, or stone, graven by art and man's device" (Acts 17:29)**. Any attempt to represent God by human devices is an insult to the Lord. His pronouncement is clear: **"I am the Lord: that is my name: and my glory will I not give to another, neither my praise to graven images" (Isa. 42:8)**.

BUT IT IS MORE THAN AN IMAGE

The prohibition expressed in the second commandment reaches beyond what we might call an image, in the strictest sense of the term. In its broader scope, this commandment really forbids the use of all man-made devices in worship. It directs us to a basic concept: **that the only acceptable way of worshipping God is to render homage to Him according to the instructions given in His word. Any deviation from his word by adopting humanly-devised forms of worship is, de facto, a violation of the scriptural law of worship. This is devastating to Gentile Christianity which can be shown when investigated through in-depth study that many of it's very foundational doctrines and dogmas are pagan to the core and which therefore render the worshipper as an idolator before God!**

In practice, many modern Protestants have unwittingly adopted this same viewpoint. The second commandment is expounded as a mere expansion of the first, and restricted in application only to false deities and open homage to images. As a result, they admit images and false teachings into churches, ostensibly for didactic purposes. This modern interpretation is contrary to the Protestant confessions of the Reformation as delineated in the Heidelberg Catechism #96-98, Westminster Confession, 21:2-3; Westminster Larger Catechism, #107-109.

In other words, all religious ceremonies and institutions must have clear scriptural warrant, if they are to be admitted as valid expressions of worship...those which don't render the worshipper an idolator...and you may never know this until you die and let God tell your face to face (idiom for Yom Kippur)

TEMPLE WORSHIP

The designation of a central place of worship did not occur until the Israelites conquered and settled the land of Canaan. A central site for public worship had been anticipated since the time of Moses (Deut. 12:11; cf. 12:5, 14); but it did not reach fulfillment until the reign of David. During David's rule, the ark of the covenant was moved to Jerusalem, thereby establishing the city as the center for the sacrificial ordinances of the Levitical priesthood. Even so, the entire program of worship, from the tabernacle to the temple, was directed by divine revelation.

Tabernacle worship was structured according to the divine blueprint. The Israelites were instructed: "Let them make me a sanctuary; that I may dwell among them. According to all that I shew thee, after the pattern of all the instruments thereof, even so shall ye make it." Descriptions of the tabernacle furnishings reiterated that all things had to be made according to the God-given pattern (Ex. 25:8-9; cf. 25:40; 27:8; Num. 8:4; Acts 7:44; Heb. 8:5).

Later, David provided Solomon with the plan for constructing the temple: "David gave to Solomon his son the pattern of the porch, and of the houses thereof and the pattern of all that he had by the spirit also for the courses of the priests and the Levites. All this, said David, the Lord made me understand in writing by his hand upon me, even all the works of this pattern" (1 Chron. 28:11-13, 19).

Nothing was left for improvising; everything was ordered by the divine pattern for worship.

Solomon built the temple according to the heavenly blueprints left by David, and Jerusalem remained the seat of public worship for the entire kingdom of Israel.

After the death of Solomon, the kingdom became divided and the people slid into corruption and apostasy. The northern tribes swiftly embraced false worship, and never recovered from their apostasy. Within the kingdom of Judah, there were several seasons of reformation, amidst other waves of idolatry. The key to understanding the history of the Israelites is to note the critical connection between the worship of the people, and God's dealings with them in relation to their worship.

THE APOSTASY OF THE NORTHERN KINGDOM...AN EXAMPLE THE CHRISTIAN CHURCH SHOULD LEARN FROM

When the northern tribes seceded, Jeroboam took a pragmatic approach to worship in the northern kingdom, devising a "local" program of worship suited to his own purposes (1 Kings 12:28-33). Jeroboam's actions were wholly revolutionary. He established a new center for worship, new means for worship, and a new priesthood. It was not so much that Jeroboam encouraged his people to worship other deities, but that he devised new methods which displaced the biblical means of worship; Jeroboam's offense was akin to Aaron's sin in making the original golden calf.

Answer for yourself: If you have read the earlier articles in this series and on this website can you not see the similarities in what Gentile Christianity has done; not only concerning the appointed times of YHWH such as the Sabbath and the Biblical Festivals but the many replacement doctrines concerning Yeshua as well (evidence for this on our other websites)?

Subsequent kings in the north, such as Ahab, blatantly embraced the worship of Baal. Later, when Jehu ruled the northern kingdom, he exterminated the house of Ahab, and repudiated the Baalism of his predecessors. Yet for all his zeal, Jehu retained the "sins of Jeroboam, which made Israel to sin" (2 Kings 10:29-31).

The reign of Jehu indicates that the guilt of Israel came not merely from idolatry, in the narrow sense of the term: that is, the worship of false deities. Jehu eradicated the worship of other deities and claimed to worship

the Lord, but he clung to the **unhallowed methods of worship** instituted by Jeroboam. Thus, Israel was charged with corrupt worship for attempting to worship the true God, the Lord, with unsanctioned means.

The comparison here between Jeroboam and Jehu again illustrates that Jeroboam's original crime was in establishing alternative forms of worship from those enjoined in the Mosaic law (remember within the Mosaic Law are Laws for non-Jews..the Laws Of Noah which the Mosaic Laws built upon). Jeroboam's initial action took Israel to the slippery slope of corrupt worship. From there, the nation frequently degenerated into further idolatry by worshipping false Gods as well.

Therefore, let it be noted that the first step on the path of idolatry is taken when men presume to worship the Lord through means and measures not ordained in the word of God.

Answer for yourself: How much do you know about "idolatry" and just what it is? Is it possible that although we don't bow to fire or stones we yet practice idolatry in our Christian Churches and don't know we do? A sure test is to read the articles on our [Laws of Noah Website](#) where we define this according to the Rabbis and their interpretation of it. Hopefully you will take this challenge and then factor in just what we have been taught about this "Jesus" in our Churches and you will the terrible idolatry to which we have innocently fallen and of which we are guilty.

The kings of northern Israel were idolaters; the apostasy of the nation was thorough; and so the Lord destroyed the northern kingdom. A chilling account is provided in 2 Kings 17:4ff., with a summary judgment in verses 20-24 of that same chapter.

The 17th chapter of 2 Kings also explains the origin of the mongrel religion of the Samaritans. After the Assyrians conquered the northern kingdom of Israel, the Assyrian king deported the Israelites; he then used the land of Israel as a relocation center for Babylonians and other displaced persons (2 Kings 17:24-41). These heathen refugees "feared not the Lord: therefore the Lord sent lions among them, which slew some of them" (2 Kings 17:25).

Alarmed by this development, the king of Assyria sent back an Israelite priest to instruct the people how to serve the Lord. The people then professed to worship the Lord God, but they attempted to render service to the Lord by resorting to their customary idolatry, employing their own devices and priesthood. ***"So they feared the Lord, and made unto themselves of the lowest of them priests of the high places, which sacrificed for them in the houses of the high places. They feared the Lord, and served their own Gods, after the manner of the nations whom they carried away from thence. So these nations feared the Lord, and served their graven images, both their children, and their children's children: as did their fathers, so do they unto this day" (2 Kings 17:32-33, 41).***

The technical term for such a religious admixture is **syncretism. For centuries it has been the modus operandi of Roman Catholicism. Sadly this Samaritan approach to worship is only too prominent among professing Protestants and in the church growth movement among contemporary "evangelicals." The trends in popular culture and the deviant worship of the pluralistic masses are adopted as a way to make worship "relevant" and appealing to modern society.**

THE KINGDOM OF JUDAH

After the separation of the northern tribes, the kingdom of Judah often embraced corrupt worship, beginning with the reign of Rehoboam: "Judah did evil in the sight of the Lord, and they provoked him to jealousy with their sins which they had committed, above all that their fathers had done. For they also built them high places,

and images, and groves, on every high hill, and under every green tree. And there were also sodomites in the land: and they did according to all the abominations of the nations which the Lord cast out before the children of Israel" (1 Kings 14:22-24).

Today, many Roman Catholics and evangelicals decry the sins of abortion and homosexuality as manifestations of our nation's corruptions (which they are); but these contemporary moralists are generally silent about the heinous sin of corrupt worship.

When Asa became king in Judah, he instituted reform. In the scriptural account of his reign, he is commended for removing corrupt worship. "Asa did that which was good and right in the eyes of the Lord his God: for he took away the altars of the strange Gods, and the high places, and brake down the images, and cut down the groves: and commanded Judah to seek the Lord God of their fathers, and to do the law and the commandment. Also he took away out of all the cities of Judah the high places and the images: and the kingdom was quiet before him" (2 Chron. 15:2-5; cf. 1 Kings 15:12-19).

Read the above passage in "red" again and THINK!

Among the later kings there were both good and evil rulers. What is striking about the biblical narratives is that kings are consistently measured by their approach to worship. Those rulers who made an effort to restore biblical worship are commended; those kings who resorted to idolatry (or tolerated corrupt worship) are criticized.

During the reign of Godly King Jehoshaphat, the people manifested an attachment to corrupt worship, in spite of efforts by the king to reform the land. "The people had not prepared their hearts unto the God of their fathers." Many resorted to sites of corrupt worship, "for the people offered and burnt incense in the high places," and these high places were not taken away (2 Chron. 20:33; 1 Kings 22:43; 2 Chron. 20:33).

Corrupt worship reveals a serious problem of the heart. In conducting unsanctioned worship, the people showed that their hearts were not right with God, regardless of what their professed motives might have been.

In subsequent generations, the kingdom of Judah degenerated into further idolatry and Baal worship. "They left the house of the Lord of their fathers, and served groves and idols: and wrath came upon Judah and Jerusalem for this their trespass" (2 Chron. 24:18).

Answer for yourself: Could anything be clearer? The Lord detests corrupt worship and he punishes this sin.

Hezekiah was a good king, and he issued a call for national repentance; he also established a program of reform (2 Kings 18:5-6; 2 Chron. 30).

The passover was restored. Moreover, the people "arose and took away the altars that were in Jerusalem, and all the altars for incense took they away, and cast them into the brook Kidron all Israel that were present went out to the cities of Judah, and brake the images in pieces, and cut down the groves, and threw down the high places and the altars out of all Judah and Benjamin, in Ephraim also and Manasseh, until they had utterly destroyed them all" (2 Chron. 30:14; 31:1).

Under Hezekiah's leadership, we see two aspects of reform united:

- the positive work of restoring the biblical pattern of worship,
- and the negative work of removing the elements of unscriptural worship.

Both aspects are essential components of thorough reform.

As a negative facet of reform, Hezekiah "brake the images, and cut down the groves, and brake in pieces the brazen serpent that Moses had made: for unto those days the children of Israel did burn incense to it: and he called it Nehushtan [*a piece of brass*]" (2 Chron. 18:4).

The destruction of the brazen serpent is an extremely important event, for it demonstrates the far-reaching scope of genuine reform. The brazen serpent was originally made at the command of God. It had not, however, been designated as an implement for use in the ordinary worship of the Lord. Therefore, because the brazen serpent had been superstitiously abused, it was necessary to destroy it.

Contemporary readers may find it difficult to comprehend this deed. It is easier to discern why Hezekiah led the people to destroy the high places, images, and groves dedicated to unsanctioned worship. But, truly, the brazen serpent was a hallowed symbol of God's former deliverance of the Israelites.

Answer for yourself: Why destroy it?

Answer for yourself: Why not simply caution the people against the abuse of a traditional symbol?

Hezekiah was wiser than both Papists and our modern evangelical churchmen, who would, no doubt, follow a more "moderate" course. The king realized that the serpent had become a snare; it fostered superstition. And Hezekiah knew that this superstition this corruption of worship was sufficient to provoke the wrath of God. Far better to dispense with a sacred relic, than leave it as a temptation for present and future generations.

As noted, the brazen serpent was included in no part of the ordinary worship of God. By comparison, the passover was an integral part of the stated worship of God; therefore the passover was renewed and restored. But since the serpent had no sanctioned role in the stated worship of God, it was better to remove it altogether.

After Hezekiah's rule the nation again drifted into apostasy. The last reforming king was Josiah. He purged "Judah and Jerusalem from the high places, and the groves, and the carved images, and the molten images. And they brake down the altars of Baalim in his presence; and the images, that were on high above them, he cut down; and the groves, and the carved images, and the molten images, he brake in pieces, and made dust of them, and strewed it upon the graves of them that had sacrificed unto them. And he burnt the bones of the priests upon their altars, and cleansed Judah and Jerusalem. And so did he in the cities of Manasseh, and Ephraim, and Simeon, even unto Naphtali, with their mattocks round about. And when he had broken down the altars and the groves, and had beaten the graven images into powder, and cut down all the idols throughout all the land of Israel, he returned to Jerusalem" (2 Chron. 34:3-7; cf. 2 Kings 23:4-14, 24).

In addition to purging the kingdom of corrupt worship, the young king directed repairs of the house of the Lord (2 Chron. 34-35; 2 Kings 22). After Josiah's death, the kingdom of Judah passed again into apostasy. The nation then fell to the Babylonians, and the Jewish people were carried away into exile.

Eventually, the Jews were permitted to return to their homeland and commence rebuilding the temple in Jerusalem. They were careful to restore the temple and its services according to the scriptural pattern (Ezra 3:10). When the construction was complete, "they set the priests in their divisions, and the

Levites in their courses, for the service of God, which is at Jerusalem; as it is written in the book of Moses" (Ezra 6:18). Moreover, the passover was restored (Ezra 3:10; 6:18, 20-22).

WHAT DOES ALL THIS MEAN TO THE CHRISTIAN?

With this in mind we are forced to confront the worship of God in the contemporary churches today which have substituted Pagan days of worship for the Holy Days of the Bible and the Lord's Sabbaths. To replace the "pattern" of worship in the Bible, given to both Jews and Gentiles with one of man's making birthed out of antisemitism is an abomination that has gone unnoticed by most well meaning Christians for much too long. **There is hardly any way you will every know of this or see this tragic loss of "true worship" unless you study and study hard.** I am one who is called to do this to help others see the darkness that has overtaken them. There are many reasons for such neglect and oversight, and it is not our intent to discuss the various factors that contributed to the loss of such Biblical truth in this article. But as I end this article, I behoove you to "consider your ways" and listen to what Bet Emet Ministries, as well as other ministries today are saying about the **paganism that is accepted as righteousness Sunday after Sunday in our churches.** We need a new Josiah to have the courage to stand up and address the problem of corrupt worship as it exists in Christianity today. Bet Emet is one such voice among many today. We plead with those who read this article to request our free publications on such issues, for if you read them, you will come to understand what you now do not perceive. **Your only sin is the sin of ignorance, for you have not had, for the most part, adequate religious teachers who were well versed in such issues. Thus, the blind follow the blind and both fall into the ditch! We at Bet Emet Ministries beg you to not let this be your legacy. Shalom.**

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THE EPISTLE OF BARNABAS & THE LOSS OF JEWISH "PATTERN OF WORSHIP"

Soon after the Jewish apostles died, leadership of the Church was transferred to people who had no great respect for Jews or Judaism. Rather than seeing Jewish people as erring brethren to whom they were indebted for the gifts of Scripture, the Messiah and Old Testament saints, the Jewish people were looked upon as reprobates hated by God. Sentiment expressed against some Jewish leaders by Jewish followers of Yeshua was used by later non-Jewish leaders as an indictment of all Jewish people. **The Epistle of Barnabas, from the end of the first century, reflects this negative attitude and applies it to Jewish practices as well.** As H. L. Ellison put it, "Already the so-called Epistle of Barnabas, which may go back to the last decade of the first century, uses such language about Jews, Judaism and the Law, as to make any effective contact between the two sides virtually impossible. As soon as it had the power, the Gentile Church did its utmost to defeat God's purpose. It persecuted and bullied, thereby automatically putting itself in the wrong. It spread the vilest calumnies about the Jews" (Ellison, H. L., **The Mystery of Israel**, Grand Rapids, Michigan: Eerdmans, 1966, 82ff).

Many writers did not display an accurate understanding of the very things they criticized, including the nature of the Old Testament revelation. **Ignatius of Antioch**, in the same period, was clear in indicating the uselessness of all Jewish things. **Justin Martyr**, one of the famed leaders of the early second century, spoke of Jewish people and practice in condescending terms. In his dialogue with Trypho, he expressed dismay over the fact that Jewish followers of Yeshua still maintained their cultural identity and practice. He accepted the possibility of their salvation, but could not understand Jewish practice as a way of expressing their faith. Justin believed that fulfillment by Yeshua eliminated Jewish things. **These and other antisemites like them never desired adherence to this "Pattern of Worship" and influenced negatively many others to depart from it.**

Two significant historical events, the 1st (66–70 CE) and 2nd (133–135 CE) Jewish revolts against Rome, changed the balance between the number of Jewish and Gentile believers in the body of Messiah. Moreover, other factors converged to cause the Gentile believers to separate themselves from their Hebraic roots and the synagogue. These events included:

- The influx of more Gentile converts than Jewish converts
- The destruction of Jerusalem, the Temple and traditional Judaism
- The expulsions of Jews from Rome and Judea
- The antagonism between traditional Judaism and the Messianic believers
- The growing battle between traditional Judaism and the increasingly numerous Gentile believers.
- Anti-Jewish Polemics and Writings such as the Epistle of Barnabas and many others

Few Christians have ever read the Epistle of Barnabas and do not know of its importance today. The Epistle of Barnabas (130-138 CE, probably in Alexandria) is valuable because it contains the first explicit mention of Sunday observance by the Christians. The writer who assumes the identity of Barnabas is acute in his attacks on almost all "Jewish" practices. **The purpose of his epistle was to provide a basis for the total rejection of Judaism as a religious practice and to provide a theological basis for Christians to forsake**

"Jewish" practices and take on their new role as the true Israel. He condemned Christians who continued certain Torah observances by stating, *"take heed to yourselves and be not like some, piling up your sins and saying that the covenant is theirs as well as ours. It is ours, but they lost it completely just after Moses received it . . ."* (Epistle of Barnabas 4:6-9).

Answer for yourself: Did you catch that? Is declared sin for the Gentile believer to see that Jews and Gentiles share much of the same Covenants of God. Here we have the seedbed of Replacement Religion as Israel is being stripped of her "calling to the Gentile world" by this antisemitic writer masquerading as Paul's traveling friend Barnabas. **Much could be said about this epistle but for now understand that it is singularly responsible for increasing intolerance to those Christians who desired to practice Scriptural commands which were modeled by the Jewish believers.**

Many in the Church assume that practices such as Sunday worship and Easter celebration, etc., have existed since the book of Acts. Furthermore, many think the Biblical Holy Days were never a valid form of Christian worship. **However, when we examine Church history we find a totally different picture. As we go back in time, approaching the era when the early Christian believers separated themselves from the Messianic believers, we discover that the earliest Christian assemblies worshipped on the Sabbath and kept the Biblical Holy Days.** Numerous Christian and non-Christian historians of the ante and post-Nicene period have left us with a plethora of information concerning the practices and beliefs of the early Christian assemblies. It is a fact that the early Christian Gentile Churches not only continued to meet on the Sabbath but observed the Biblical Feasts and Festivals. Besides this we can see the Gentile being incorporated into the "Pattern of Worship" given to King David and handed down through Solomon and we can see that this same "Pattern of Worship" existed in first century both inside and outside Israel and was reflective of the synagogues in Asia Minor as well.

Answer for yourself: Were you aware that there even exists a "**Pattern**" for Worship" given by God to mankind? Do you think that your Gentile Church even knows of this today? Are the Jewish people the only ones following this "Pattern of Worship" in the world today? Do you want to know of this "Pattern for Worship" given to David and follow it today as did the Gentiles and Jews of past centuries? Can God be happy that we have diverted from this "Pattern" and come up with our own "Replacement" worship?

Answer for yourself: What was this "Pattern of Worship" that was followed by the Jews and taught as well to the non-Jewish God-fearers who were coming to God and attending the synagogues of the first century both in side and outside Israel?

Answer for yourself: Can it be shown that this same "Pattern of Worship" was followed by the early Gentile Church up and until the edict of Constantine which abolished it in the middle 4th century?

Answer for yourself: Do we as Christians follow this "Pattern of Worship" today in Catholicism and Protestantism?

Answer for yourself: And if not then is possible to recover this "Pattern of Worship" today in our Christian Churches?

These are important questions that deserve our strongest attention and it is to these answers that we now seek through the study of the articles on this website. Let us begin our serious study into the non-Jewish believer in God (God-fearer) and see if we can find adherence to a Divine "Pattern of Worship" both in the Old and New Testaments. The results might surprise you and cause you to rethink what you are being taught today in your Christian Churches. **The bottom line you will see is that we as non-Jews have inherited an antisemitic Replacement Religion instead of "the faith once given to the saints" (Jude 1:3).**

Jude 1:3 Beloved, when I gave all diligence to write unto you of the

common salvation, it was needful for me to write unto you, and exhort you that ye should earnestly contend for "the" faith which was once delivered unto the saints. (KJV)

We have already looked at the word "the" and plumed its importance. As a quick refresher the use of the "definite article" (the) refers to the uniqueness of the item addressed. It stands out among all the rest as "uncommon" and not "secular". There is nothing like it to be compared. This is all the more important as we consider that Biblical Judaism is "the" faith which was once for time given by God to mankind. **Of course we find these many, but not all of these same religious tenants within Biblical Judaism spread throughout world religions to various degrees but for our purposes here we need only focus on Biblical Judaism as the example of all examples to be followed for not only the Jew but the non-Jew as well.**

Strong's Concordance teaches us something about our responsibility regarding this "Pattern of Worship" as it relates to the Greek word "earnestly contend":

75 agonizomai (ag-o-nid'-zom-ahee); from 73; to struggle, literally (to compete for a prize), figuratively (to contend with an adversary), or genitive case (to endeavor to accomplish something): KJV-- fight, labor fervently, strive.

Recovering this "Pattern of Worship" is not easy. God knew of the attempts coming to destroy it by men opposed to Him and His will for mankind so we are told in the strongest terms that we must "struggle and fight with our adversaries fervently" in order to keep, maintain, and restore this "Pattern of Worship" which was ONCE given and delivered to the Saints. Notice as well the word "once".

Thayer's Greek Lexicon states:

530 hapax- 1) once, one time 2) once for all

It sure appears to me that this unique faith which is set apart by the definite article "the" (Biblical Judaism which has a place for the non-Jew within it) is also noted to be given by God once and for all to all mankind (a mixed multitude of Jews and non-Jews at Sinai) and Israel, as God's Holy Nation and Royal Priesthood, is the mediator of this "Pattern of Worship" for all mankind.



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RESTORING THE PATTERN OF WORSHIP AND THE FAITH ONCE GIVEN TO THE SAINTS

Being fully aware that often those encountering the worship services of Bet Emet Ministries are confused at the differences they experience when contrasting with their own churches, I felt it was time to express the truths gathered from my many years of study where I discovered the "pattern of service (worship)" given by Yahweh to David as detailed in I Chron. chapter 28. If you were to undertake a comprehensive study of the "pattern" you would be surprised to know that this "pattern of worship" survived among Gentile believers until the fourth century A.D. where it was finally crushed by anti-Semitism and anti-Judaism by the emerging "organized" Gentile Christian church headed by the Emperor Constantine. Efforts to destroy the pattern actually began as early as the middle of the second century with the forgery of Christian religious documents along with the persecution and destruction of the religious writings of the Jews and sadly ultimately succeed over the next three centuries in destroying almost all traces of the Jewish Roots of Christianity. Rome wins! Only by diligent research and scholarship have I been able to "rediscover" the faith once given to the saints. Before we go on let me ask you some important questions if I may:

- If the "pattern" for worship was handed down from David to Solomon and finally to the men of the Great Assembly as headed by Ezra the Scribe, and subsequently handed down to the men of the days of Jesus; then if Jesus, the exemplary Jew is to be our example, why don't we follow Jesus' method of worship as he always adhered to this "pattern" himself?
- Since this "pattern" of worship can be demonstrated to have been handed down to the Jewish converts of the Jesus Messianic Movement within 2nd Temple Judaism as well as to the Gentile converts and Godfearers that came from the fruits of the Great Commission, then why have we not been taught about its necessary components let alone been taught to practice this "Pattern of Worship" in our churches today? Surely the testimony of over 2,500 different Christian denominations reveal to us that no "one Pattern" of worship exists in Christianity today.
- Having learned that the New Testament is full of references to this "Jewish pattern of Worship" in the early church which is composed of both Jews and Gentile believers, then what prevents us from repenting and returning to the worship of God as found in the early church before paganism was mixed with it and it became in large part unacceptable to Yahweh?
- If it can be demonstrated that much of what Paul taught the Gentiles to whom he took "his" Gospel was adherence to "the" pattern of Jewish worship as found in the Holy Scriptures, then what prevents you from reevaluating your current experience in light of God's revelation concerning His will for us in adhering to this Divine Pattern of Worship?
- If it can be shown, and it can through study of the original languages of Scripture, that there is often a different message being conveyed than what is understood in reading the "English" rather than the original languages of the Bible (Hebrew and Greek), and understanding that since Jesus is a Jew, and his followers that took his message to the nations (Gentiles) were also Jewish, then do you not think that it is possible that what was conveyed in Hebrew or Greek is more correct often than what is conveyed in English? Can we get a deeper truth from

reading the words of our Bibles in their original language than in the English translations? Could it be that this English translation is partly responsible for obscuring the "Pattern of Worship" from us today?

- If it can be demonstrated that pagan Gentiles influenced the change and abolition of this "Pattern of Worship", should you not want to return to the worship of God that was "in spirit and in truth" before it was corrupted?**

Those were very good questions to say the least. The aim of this study is to present the Jewish liturgy in its "original freshness," so that all, both Jews and Christians, may come to see and realize how closely the Rabbis have preserved this "Pattern of Worship" down through history while others have deviated or even replaced this "Pattern of Worship". No renewal can come about except through a rediscovery of our Spiritual Roots and of the historical, spiritual, and cultural soil in which these Jewish Roots gave life to the New Testament experience. The church was born of Judaism and lived its life within Judaism for several decades, and only in the light of Judaism can it perceive and recover its vital identity which is so needful in today's world. But "rethinking theology" can mean only one thing: the rediscovery of the Hebrew and Jewish categories within which Christian experience first appeared and which this experience used in order to communicate its truths as well. We are hearing more and more today such statements as this one of L. Swidler:

"Jesus was a 'Rabbi' and not a 'Father,' a 'teacher,' and not a 'reverend'; he was a Jew and not a Christian; he attended the synagogue and not a church; he celebrated the Sabbath on Saturday and not Sunday; he prayed in Aramaic and Hebrew and not in Greek or Latin; he read the Hebrew Scriptures (Old Testament) and not the New; he recited the psalms and not the rosary; he celebrated pesach (the Jewish Passover), shavu'ot (the Jewish Pentecost), and sukkot (huts) and not Christmas or Lent."

Now comes the hard part for you the reader.

Answer for yourself: Do you have the theological courage to draw the proper theological conclusions from such statements of fact? For me and many others who have studied to know the differences, the assertion of the Jewishness of Jesus must mean an assertion of the inescapable centrality of **adherence to Jewish religion in the followers of Jesus and an acceptance of the need of returning to them and measuring ourselves by them in every effort we make to understand the Christian experience.**

Answer for yourself: Why should we return to Jewish religion? Why go back in heart and mind to distant Jewish religious teachings that are so alien to the modern scientific and technological mentality as seen in the Gentile Christian church of today? The answer is simple. Those distant symbolic and literal teachings of Jewish religion contain concealed words and expressions of their meaning that if received, heard, and understood, have the power to enrich and give joy to human life as nothing else can. We need to rediscover Hebrew and Jewish truths so that we may once again hear in its original purity the logos and meaning that was revealed by God through them. We must rethink theology with the aid of Hebrew and Jewish perspectives not only because Jesus is Jewish, but to assure ourselves that we practice a faith unaffected by compromises with false worship masquerading itself as "holiness." Love for our origins is in fact a love for the present which is marked by high standards of quality. The rediscovery of one's origins is not a love for events that took place in a distant time; rather they are as it were the foundations that support the present. The rediscovery of origins does not mean a distancing from the present but a recovery of the roots and truths that must sustain the present.

For the sake of understanding, what are the "origins" from which our churches spring and on which today are built:

The Churches of Christ acknowledge that in God's plan of salvation the beginning of her faith and election is to be found in the patriarch, Moses, and the prophets. She professes that all Christ's faithful, who as men of faith are sons of Abraham (Gal. 3:7), are included in the same patriarch's call and that the salvation of the church is mysteriously prefigured in the exodus of God's chosen people from the land of bondage. On this account the

church cannot forget that she received the revelation of the Old Testament by way of that people with whom God in his mercy established the ancient covenant of Abraham in which all nations (Gentiles) were to be blessed with the blessings of temporal as well as eternal blessings. Nor can she forget that she draws nourishment from that good olive tree onto which the wild olive branches of the Gentiles have been grafted (Rom. 11:17-24).

Without a doubt Christianity is grounded and sustained by the Hebrew and Jewish origins of its faith, election, call, exodus, people, bondage, Old Testament, covenant, root, peace, and reconciliation.

THE IMPORTANCE OF LITURGY OVER THEOLOGY

Judaism does not have a theology in the strict sense, that is, a systematically organized reflection on God; for the same reason, it gives priority to practical action. This explains the importance of the liturgy. It is this Jewish Liturgy, patterned after the commandments in the Oral and Written Torah, which provides a place for both symbolic and direct encounters with God. Such a place is where one does not speak about God, but speak to God, where one does not think about God but think in the presence of God, and where God is not an object of thought but a subject who calls and challenges His people. This space is made up of words, gestures, music, movements, listening, story telling, silence, rites and ceremonies that have been taught and handed down by God to man since the beginning of time.

For the Church, then, a return to its origins must mean a return to this space in which Israel experienced itself as the people of God. It must mean entering into these rituals of words and gestures, music and movements, and silence and ceremonies that is also ours as Christians. Let the Christian never forget the spiritual ties that link him through the Re-newed Covenant with the stock of Abraham. Such ties between the Church and Israel unite the two and they become one in fulfillment of Scripture. Such a bond is not accidental but essential in light of the revelation of Eph. 4 where there is only "one faith" and not two! The Church's identity is connected with Judaism as it shares the same space and vitality. This co-existent heritage is best expressed by the people of the "Re-newed" Covenant with the stock of Abraham through adherence to the pattern of liturgy "once given to the saints."

For too long the majority of Christian scholars have never taken seriously the fact that Christian experience and, above all, the Christian liturgy are bound up with Jewish religious ceremonies. For them Jesus Christ is presented as the originator of the Christian liturgy; either an absolute originator in regard to both content and form, or content and not form. This is simply not the case and a fabrication and distortion of Biblical history. The truth of the matter is that the forms of worship practiced by Jesus and first century Jews, Converts, and Godfearers were not new but only inherited as handed down from Jewish posterity; in particular King David. So there are two views on this matter. These parties, once split in their opinion have conceded their opinions to the wealth of Biblical scholarship that exists today. Nowadays no informed scholar thinks of looking outside the Biblical and Jewish tradition for the origin of the Christian sacraments and liturgy. But in reading these scholars one develops the sense that the "place of origin" is looked upon as unimportant and concessions are implicitly made that allows for Christianity's divergence from the "pattern" with its resultant inclusion of many facts of paganism that go unnoticed to the unlearned. Besides this, often negative judgments are made and passed upon Jewish worship. On reflection, this is of course a perfectly logical step, since once Jewish worship has been reduced to a lifeless skeleton, what is left but to decide that it is useless and a thing of the past? That is what Constantine believed and said and this idea he imposed upon the world! Such is due to the sinister working of anti-Semitism and anti-Judaism that has infected many doctrinal positions of the contemporary Christian Church, primarily due to dispensational theology which is replete with replacement theology which does such damage to the truths of God's revelation in Holy Scripture.

JESUS AND JEWISH LITURGY

Upon years of scholarship and intense study, I am supremely confident that our need is to reverse the procedure

of the scholars I have been describing who espouse Replacement Religion and begin to assert the greatness and originality of the New Testament's depiction of Jesus not outside of Judaism in being in opposition to Judaism thus creating a new replacement religion, but to envision the depiction of the explanatory Jew, Jesus, along with and within Judaism, bringing the finer parts of his faith to life in his own life as he modeled God's truths as demonstrated for us in his recorded teachings, conduct and behavior.

First Century Judaism which gave the world this example of Jesus to follow as the "perfect" man, his mother Mary, the apostles, the early communities, and the first Christians (both Jewish and Gentile) were all nourished by the "Pattern" of worship given by God to David which had been faithfully protected and handed down to their generation. Such prayers, psalms, rites, and ceremonies brought them life because they were God breathed.

In the following articles it is not my purpose to compare Jewish liturgy with the Christian, but rather to present you with truthful information so you can better understand how greatly the original Christian community were indebted to the Jewish liturgy, and above all, how much a part the liturgy plays in "linking" us today with the stock of Abraham and the Churches of Christ that exist today.



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RECOVERING GOD'S PATTERN OF WORSHIP...JEWISH WORSHIP

It may be surprising to many of you, but the New Testament, that is, the collection of Christian writings that came into existence in the second half of the first century, bears abundant witness to the existence of the Jewish liturgy, not only to the Jewish Messianic congregations but the Gentile Messianic congregations as well! This is a startling revelation in light of our experience today as contemporary Christians whose worship is patterned after little, if any, Jewish liturgy as was our counterparts in the first three-four centuries! The witness in the New Testament of Jewish liturgy is unfortunately not descriptive. In other words, it tells us that in the time of Jesus and beyond as seen in the book of Acts, that certain prayers, rituals, and ceremonies existed, but it does not tell us in what they consisted or how they were practiced. The New Testament tells us little about the content, structure, and dynamics of such liturgy. If you wanted to learn what the realities were behind the terms, prayers, rituals, and ceremonies recorded in the New Testament you would have only one recourse open to you: to draw on your own experience through your own direct participation in such liturgies, which is lacking in most Christians, or consult a variety of sources where you could read about the various liturgical rites and texts used in the services. In doing this type of study we stumble at the beginning because we link the words we read to our very own personal experiences and the realities that are a part of our very own cultural world, instead of their intended meaning when spoken in their original setting.

The apostles and the first readers of the Christian scriptures were in a privileged hermeneutical position: when they read of synagogue and Sabbath and Passover, they were brought in contact with realities they knew and were familiar with; for example they observed Passover because the Holy Scriptures instructs us to celebrate and observe it; whereas such observance is foreign and strange to most Christian Churches because they have replaced

Passover with Easter which was totally foreign to the believers in the first century let alone considered an idolatrous expression of pagan worship. Present-day readers (and those of centuries past) of the Christian scriptures find themselves in the opposite hermeneutical situation: a situation of uneasiness and danger. Uneasiness, because they keep encountering terms now outside their cultural horizon; danger, because they are easily tempted to fill the Jewish words with a content alien to them, a context often 180 degrees opposite their original intended meaning! Such a failure in correct interpretation of the words of our Bibles have lead Christians to mistakenly believe when reading the New Testament that Jesus came to replace Jewish worship with a new variant of Christian worship! This phenomena is extremely important because it shows clearly that the New Testament writings can be approached with different and opposite understandings which may be in harmony or out of harmony with those of the religion of Jesus (Judaism). If they are in harmony, the writings reveal hidden yet luminous meanings which those without the proper understanding of the Hebrew behind the English overlook. Such conditions result in one reading the New Testament with a mistaken understanding, thus arriving at the erroneous conclusion of seeing Jesus and his followers replace the faith and religion given to them God with one that denies the eternal truths and precepts enumerated at Sinai.

If then, we are to avoid misinterpreting the liturgical information provided in the New Testament literature, we much have recourse to other sources that are more directly and explicitly Jewish that explain in detail what is

only alluded to in the New Testament. This statement explains the series of publications that Bet Emet has recently begun in order to cite some of the many New Testament passages that attest to the existence of Jewish liturgy in early Christianity before changed by paganism as this Jewish revelation was taken to Gentile land in the third and fourth centuries. Our studies will contain important documentation of the liturgy in the Temple and synagogues, the liturgy as seen in the Sabbath, and the liturgy as seen in the celebration and observance of Passover, Pentecost, Tabernacles, Hanukkah, and Yom Kippur. Next we will examine "the prayer" (Shema), and the Lord's prayer. Lastly we will conclude with sources from the Mishnah, the Talmud, and the prayerbook (Siddur). Let us not forget that our inquiry is to ascertain and confirm not only the presence of Jewish worship in the early Christian community, both Jewish and Gentile, but to come to an understanding of the worship service as it existed then in order to model our lives in such worship that was "in spirit and in truth."



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MAINTAINING THE UNITY OF THE FATIH BY RETURNING TO THE PATTERN OF WORSHIP

What are we to do when religious denominations or religious para-church organization with which we fellowship departs from the truth and teaches doctrines opposite of what the Bible expressly teaches?

What is our responsibility when false teachers have entered into the church and many have been deceived into accepting false doctrines as the doctrines of God?

What admonition does the Bible, the word of God, give us for this situation?

There are many warnings from the New Testament writers about false teachers. Peter says that "there will be false teachers among you, who will secretly bring in destructive heresies, even denying the Lord who bought them . . ." (2 Peter 2:1). John speaks of antichrists and deceivers in the last days. The book of Jude contains prophecies about mockers in the last days and false shepherds who have gone after the sin of Balaam. Paul warns the church of false teachers in many of his epistles, most notably in 2 Thessalonians. Deceivers have entered into the church since the first century and have led many astray, and we are warned that false teachers will deceive many in the church in the end time. John encourages us in Revelation chapter 3 verse 11 to "Hold fast what you have, that no one may take your crown."

Who could take your crown anyway?

The answer is false teachers that lead you into disobedience without your knowledge. In other words "don't lose your rewards for disobedience through ignorance or deception whereby you are led in a false way." We've been warned, and when we come to see deception from false teachers, now what are we to do?

WHO ARE WE TO FELLOWSHIP WITH ANYHOW?

One of the first things which must be clarified is with whom is our fellowship? The Bible shows us clearly. 1 Corinthians 1:9 says we were "called into the fellowship of His Son, Jesus Christ our Lord." Philippians 1:5 explains that we have fellowship in the gospel. The truth of God binds us together, gives us a common ground and basis for our association and communion. Also, in Philippians 2:1, Paul shows that it is a fellowship of the spirit. As he says in Romans 8:14, those who are being led by the spirit are the sons of God. God's truth and spirit bind us together and serve as the basis for our association, our joint participation. John

agrees with Paul's writings by saying, "truly our fellowship is with the Father and with His Son Jesus Christ." (1 John 1:3) Our fellowship is with God, through his holy word, guided by the holy spirit; we have this fellowship because we are the children of God. In the book of Ephesians, the apostle Paul admonished the church in Ephesus to "walk worthy of the calling with which you were called . . . endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace." (Ephesians 4:1,3) In verse three, another meaning of the word translated peace is "harmony". Paul encouraged the church to maintain the unity and harmony that they had

with one another because of their calling. In verse four he makes it clear that there is one body and one spirit; there is one mind into which we are called. God's church, the body of Christ is not divided. Paul asks in 1 Corinthians 1:13, **"Is Christ divided?"** with the obvious answer being "no, he is not." What are we to think in the presence of 1500 different and conflicting denominations and non-denominations that find little fellowship or harmony between them? Where is the unity? Jesus himself said, **"If a kingdom is divided against itself, that kingdom cannot stand. And if a house is divided against itself, that house cannot stand."** (Mark 3:24-25)

Think with me for just a minute why we have over 1500 different denominations and creedal doctrines concerning Jesus and the message he taught? Which one of the 1500 is **"the" faith once given to the saints and which reflects the Apostle's doctrine?** Is your church following the "one faith" of Ephesians chapter 4, or is the church down the street whose doctrinal statement conflicts with yours? Confusing isn't it? How are we to make sense of the matter or better yet, can we? I have good news for you, because I believe it is possible through inspired study to reclaim the faith that was once given to the saints and which follows the pattern of worship prescribed for all mankind in I Chronicles chapter 28. More on that later.

Continuing in Ephesians chapter four, Paul says in verse 14 that we should no longer be like children, **"tossed to and fro and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the trickery of men, in the cunning craftiness by which they lie in wait to deceive. . ."** In the previous verses, Paul says that God provided ministers and teachers so that we all might **"come to the unity of the faith and the knowledge of the son of God"** (verse 13). We have received our instruction and understanding from God, and we should be mature enough spiritually to discern the truth, not being led astray by false teachers. We should be **"speaking the truth in love"** and growing up **"in all things into Him who is the head--Christ"** (verse 15). Paul told the Ephesian church that they should have learned the truth well enough from those God ordained to teach them that each and every one of them, the members of the church, could be well established in the unity of the faith, knowing the truth and clinging to it. We should be spiritually mature and able to rightly divide the word of truth (2 Timothy 2:15), not being led astray, or away, from the truth.

In chapter five of Ephesians, Paul writes some words that have direct meaning for those who God has called into his church, the body of Christ, today. In verse one of chapter five, Paul says, **"Therefore be followers of God as dear children."** Who are we to follow? God. Let it sink in for a minute. We are responsible to God; He is the one who has called us into the fellowship of His body, and we should follow Him, not being led astray. This statement is directly in line with Paul's admonition to imitate him as he imitates Christ (1 Corinthians 11:1). **"We should follow someone only as he or she is following God and His Word. If one who is a leader in the Body of Christ does not follow the teachings of the Bible we must not follow him or his movement with which he has been entrusted for direction."** Jesus Christ is the head of the church, and we are to be in subjection to him (Ephesians 5:24). **"We ought to obey God rather than men."** (Acts 5:29) Oh how my heart cries out for my close friends and family to begin to let that Scripture direct their lives and no longer lean upon their own understanding or the mistaken understanding of so many churches who have let the Word of God become secondary to their own experience. For too many their experience has become the barometer of truth instead of letting the Bible dictate what their experience is to be. If we obey then our experience will change and become reinforced by the Word of God. Amen!

Verse three of Ephesians chapter five says, **"But fornication and all uncleanness or covetousness, let it not even be named among you, as is fitting for saints."** It is not proper for the filth of the world to be included with the church, the body of Christ. Jesus was found perfect and blameless, why would we want to corrupt his body or even the reputation of it by allowing uncleanness of any sort to be associated with it? Paul tells us that uncleanness, the filth of the world, should not even be named among or associated with the body of Christ. In 2 Corinthians 6:15 Paul says, **"What accord has Christ with Belial? Or what part has a believer with an unbeliever?"** There is no part for uncleanness within the body of Christ, not even rumors of such things (please understand this principle applies not only to the natural world but the spiritual world as well.). Paul tells us in Ephesians 5:3 to not let it even be named among us. We should be far removed from such filth.

Ephesians 5:6-7 says, "Let no one deceive you with empty words, for because of these things the wrath of God comes upon the sons of disobedience. Therefore, do not be partakers with them." What are empty words? From the Greek, the word empty could also be translated "devoid of truth." So, Paul says do not let anyone lead you astray with words that contain no truth. Clearly, such people would be false teachers. Paul calls these false teachers "the sons of disobedience." Another way of translating these words from the Greek could be "those who stand in obstinate opposition to the divine will." These individuals do not want to do things God's way; they want to do it their own way. In verse seven, Paul warns us to not be partakers with these individuals. The Greek word for partaker used here is *summetochos*, and it means "partaking together with one; joint partakers of something." We do not want to be counted among them. For example, when Korah and his congregation rebelled, God told the children of Israel to separate themselves from Korah and his group so that He could destroy them (Numbers 16:21). Should we not separate ourselves from a rebellion against the truth, a rebellion against God's will? Let's continue in Ephesians chapter five to see what else Paul says.

In verse eight Paul explains that we were once part of the world, we were darkness, but now we are called out of the world and are light and should **"walk as children of light."** Again, we need to follow the calling of God and remain faithful. Ephesians 5:11 says, **"And have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather expose them."** The Greek word translated fellowship in this verse is *sugkoinoneo* and it means "to become a partaker together with others, or to have fellowship with a thing." Paul is telling us to not be aligned with or have a partnership with those people who are instruments of darkness. He further tells us to expose or reprove them. The Greek word used here is *elegcho* and it means "to convict, refute, confute, generally with a suggestion of shame on the person convicted: by conviction to bring to the light, to expose; to find fault with, to correct--by word: to reprehend severely, chide, admonish, reprove--by deed: to chasten, to punish." In other words, we are to expose them and correct them, refuting their works since they are to have no part with us.

This is work for the courageous and not the faint of heart! So often many judge Bet Emet Ministries because of the God-given righteous indignation shown toward such error, hypocrisy, and deception as so often proliferates in the Body of Christ. Little to they know God's temperament toward such sin! As one who does understand because I have done the work necessary to discover correctly God's attitude toward such manipulation and deception, please let the truths enumerated in our newsletters as well as the tapes be your guide as we both join together to chide, refute, and shame such who practice such wickedness let alone lead others into deeper sin. We must cast out the leaven in a spirit of love. **True love always confronts for the sake of others. True love is always redemptive, delivering from sin to obedience and blessing.** If we at Bet Emet did not love God, His Word, or God's people we surely would not subject ourselves to ridicule and slander which comes in response to messages that call for the "presumed righteous" to repent in the face of the multitude of error being taught today from the majority of the houses of God in our land. Let us never forget to judge ourselves lest we be judged. The best place to judge ourselves in now as we submit ourselves to every Word that proceeds from the mouth of God and His Word. Amen!

Paul further shows the seriousness of this matter in verse 12 when he says it is shameful for us to even speak of the things that these individuals do in secret. The indication here is that we should remove ourselves away as far as possible from such people. In verse 13 Paul explains that these things will be exposed, they will be made clear by the light, the truth of God, or, as he made clear in verse 8, those who are walking in the fellowship of the truth. In verse 14 Paul says, **"Awake, you who sleep, Arise from the dead, And Christ will give you light."** Could this be a warning to those of us in the church today who are spiritually asleep, who are not aware of what is going on? This could be an admonition to all of us who have been or who are sleeping to wake up and to call upon Christ to give us light, to illuminate and make clear his way for us. Now is the time to **"be diligent to present yourself approved to God."** (2 Timothy 2:15) In verses 15-21 of Ephesians 5, Paul exhorts us to walk carefully and wisely, using the time well because of the evil around us, being submitted to one another in the fellowship. As Paul says we are to esteem others better than ourselves (Philippians 2:3) and to exhort each other, even more as we see "the Day approaching." (Hebrews 10:25) This last Scripture is just example of severe misinterpretation as seen by the majority of teachers today. Upon study you will be persuaded as I that Paul was not taking about "the day" referring to the weekly Sabbath (Saturday), thereby encouraging the attendance of religious services; rather the day in focus is the "Day of the Lord" or judgment day where every

man and woman will be judges and rewards given or taken away. Thus Bet Emet cries out in the darkness of deception and religious lies that "all" is not right that we have been told. It is paramount we repent in several areas of our lives (even religious lives) and begin to obey God both in our civil lives as well as our religious lives if we want to be assured of reward and not shame on "that day."

In verse 22, Paul begins to explain the marriage relationship, but, as he reveals in verse 32, he is making a point about the church's relationship with Jesus Christ. Paul explains that the wife is to be submitted to the husband because the husband is the head of the wife. He explains also that the head of the church is Jesus Christ, and it is to him that we as a church should be submitted and that we should be following. These verses are quite interesting in light of verse 32 and in reference to the preceding verses which talk about our fellowship with those who would deceive us. We are to be submitted to Jesus Christ. He is the head. He is the one we must follow and be obedient to. If we are worried about rebellion, it should obviously be rebellion against the head of the church--Jesus Christ. Just as a wife is to revere and respect her husband, the church is to revere and respect Jesus Christ (verse 33).

In Ephesians 5:26-27 Paul explains that Christ gave his life that he might "sanctify and cleanse it [the church] with the washing of the water by the word, that He might present it to Himself a glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing, but that it should be holy and without blemish." The word translated sanctify also has the meaning "to separate from profane things and dedicate to God." The church is to be pure, spotless, and without blemish. The church is the body of Christ, and it should not be marred or tarnished in any way.

The apostle Paul provides further exhortation for us about our responsibility in maintaining the purity of the body of Christ. In 2 Corinthians 6:14-15 we are told, "Do not be unequally yoked together with unbelievers. For what fellowship has righteousness with lawlessness? And what communion has light with darkness? And what accord has Christ with Belial? Or what part has a believer with an unbeliever?" The Greek word heterozugeo is translated "unequally yoked together with," and it means "to have fellowship with one who is not an equal." Obviously, Paul is referring to those who are spiritually unequal. The Greek word for unbelievers is apistos and it means "those who are unfaithful, not to be trusted, unbelieving." These are the ones who are not following the truth and who are not maintaining the unity of the fellowship of the body of Christ. There are two different words used in verse 14 which are translated "fellowship" and "communion." The first word, metoche, means "a sharing, communion, or fellowship." The second word, koinonia, means, "an association, fellowship, community, communion, or joint participation." Both of these words denote a group that has binding ties, in this case the election and truth of God.

In verse 17 of 2 Corinthians 6, Paul uses the writings of Isaiah and Jeremiah to say, "Come out from among them and be separate, says the Lord. Do not touch what is unclean, and I will receive you." The word translated "come out" is exerchomai and means "to go out of an assembly, i.e. to forsake it; to go forth from one's power, escaping from it in safety." Please read the last verse once again! Paul is saying that we should escape from those who are unbelievers, we should forsake them; we are to have no part with them. The church of God, the body of Christ has no part with the works of Satan (in a Jewish context meaning the flesh which opposes the truths of God). God told Israel to be separate, and he has also called us out of the world and its ways. What is your response when you are show error which concerns the practice of your faith? What is your spirit like when you encounter correction? Should we follow false teachers back into the bondage from which we came out of? Shouldn't we maintain the purity of Christ's body and keep the unity of the faith?

Paul also has included instruction for us in his epistles to the church in Thessalonica. 1Thessalonians 1:6 shows that we are followers of the apostles and God. Paul clarified this relationship when he admonished us to imitate him as he imitates Christ. We are bound to God and the truth, and there is nothing wrong with following the direction of someone else who is following God. But we are each responsible for our own salvation individually (Philippians 2:12). In verse 12 of chapter 2, Paul tells us to have "a walk worthy of God" who calls us. Looking in chapter five, we are told to pursue what is good (verse 15) and to test all things, holding onto that which is good (verse 21). Paul continues in verse 22 by saying, "Abstain from every form of evil." He tells us to stay away from it, do not have anything to do with it (even if it is religious evil and untruths masquerading as

Biblical truths). In 2 Thessalonians 1:12 he explains that the name of Jesus Christ should be glorified in us. Can Christ's name be glorified if his people are polluted by the presence of unbelievers, those who have departed from the truth and are not walking in it? Can Christ's name be glorified if his people are polluted by observing and adhering to a religious system that is a mixture of paganism and Judaism passed off as truth? I dare say not!

In 2 Thessalonians 3:6 Paul writes, **"But we command you, brethren, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that you withdraw from every brother who walks disorderly and not according to the tradition which he received from us."** The word for withdraw used here, stello, also means "avoid; to remove one's self; withdraw one's self; to depart; to abstain from familiar intercourse with." We are not to be associated with those individuals who walk disorderly, who have turned away from the teachings of God as found in His Holy Scripture. The word for disorderly means "walking outside of the prescribed boundaries." These prescribed boundaries would be delineated by the word of God, the tradition we received from the apostles. Did you hear that? Is your church following the tradition of the Apostles or is it following some man and his doctrine? Is it following a denomination's doctrine that can be proven to oppose teachings in the Bible?

Let us not forget that in Matthew chapter 7, verses 21-23 Jesus tells many who believe that they are "right" with God to depart because they practice the work s of "iniquity." The Greek word for iniquity is defined in the Strong's Concordance as **"those who are not subject to Jewish Law."** Let me ask you, are you subject to Jewish Law or do you practice a "lawless" faith? Are Yahweh's commandments a pattern for your life or have you been taught that the "Law" was done away and we are no longer under law but grace only? Does your church submit to Jewish Law? Does your church disregard Matt. 5:17 where Jesus tells all to **"quit thinking I have come to destroy the Law."** Does your church teach you to submit to Jewish Law or is it like so many churches today that are infected with dispensationalism that you have been told that the "law" was done away with in Christ? On a more personal level let me ask you: Did you celebrate Easter or Passover this last year; did you observe Rosh HaShannah, the Day of Atonement, and Tabernacles? Do you know the Sabbath is not Sunday no matter what your pastor says? Did you give 33% of your tithe last year to the widows, orphans, sick, lame, and blind as Jewish Law and the Bible commands? Did you allot the other 33% of your tithe to observe and celebrate the Festivals of the Lord and teach your children the proper worship of Yahweh that surrounds His Holy Days? Did your other 33% of your tithe which was given to your church go to propagate more false teachings coming from your pulpit instead of financing Yahweh's Kingdom as taught by truly anointed men of God? Jesus told us that **"Greater works we are to do than he every did."** We are deceived to want to see physical eyes opened and deaf ears opened in the miracle services that continually beckon us and our money. Let me ask you, is it not at these miracle services that many tithe to the ministry and thus rob Yahweh in ignorance as the ministry does not give the money to the designated areas in Holy Scripture? Are we not accomplices to robbery and not know it? Now listen closely. Did not Jesus say that in order for us to believe, that he would heal a cripple physically to reveal the "greater works of God" that are done spiritually (for example...forgive sin)? **Spiritual miracles are always greater than physical miracles.** With this understanding, Bet Emet understands that the greater works than Jesus did are being done through straightforward teaching that "opens the eyes of the spiritually blind, opens the ears of the spiritually deaf, and raises the spiritually dead to obedience" who have innocently trusted in the commandments of men to the neglect of the commandments of God. How can we continue to negate the very words of Christ in Matt. 5:17 where he says **"quit thinking I have come to destroy the Law."** **I believe it is about time to reconsider what we have been taught and what we have listened to and begin to let the Scriptures, rightly divided linguistically, culturally, and historically, be our authority for our faith and practice.** Can you think of a better idea?

The Greek word paradosis is translated "tradition" and it refers to "a giving over which is done by word of mouth or in writing; objectively, that which is delivered, the substance of a teaching; of the body of precepts." So, this is not referring to the traditions of men, but the word of God which was delivered through the mouths and pens of the apostles.

In verse 14, Paul tells the church in Thessalonica to note those who do not follow the teachings he has delivered.

After noting such individuals, the church members are not to keep company with them. Paul says to not be counted with individuals who reject the teachings of God which he is delivering. In verse 15 he says that we should not consider those who are walking astray as enemies, rather, we are to admonish them as brothers. We should warn and exhort these individuals so that they might return to the fellowship of Jesus Christ.

Romans 16:17 provides an admonition similar to that of 2 Thessalonians. Paul states here, **"Now I urge you, brethren, note those who cause division and offenses, contrary to the doctrine which you learned, and avoid them."** Too often we think these type of Scriptures apply only to cults, but that is not the case. **One of the important things to notice here is the source of the divisions which are being created. They are coming from those who are deviating from the doctrines delivered to the church: the doctrines of God which are from His Word.** The divisions do not come from those who are remaining loyal to their calling by avoiding those who are not being loyal to the Scriptures. Paul tells us to avoid these people. The Greek word Paul uses is ekklineo and it means "to turn one's self away from; to keep aloof from; to shun." In other words, Paul is saying, stay away from those individuals. This is hard for our culturalized mind to comprehend, but the Scriptures are the standard that God has set for you and I; He did not ask our opinion or advice in telling us what is required of us for fellowship with Him through His son.

In 1 Timothy 6 Paul provides us with more instruction about what we are to do when false and deceptive teachers enter in among us. In verses 3 through 5 he says, **"If anyone teaches otherwise and does not consent to wholesome words, even the words of our Lord Jesus Christ, and to the doctrine which is according to godliness, he is proud, knowing nothing, but is obsessed with disputes and arguments over words, from which come envy, strife, reviling, evil suspicions, useless wranglings of men of corrupt minds and destitute of the truth, who suppose that godliness is a means of gain. From such withdraw yourself."** The word Paul uses for "teaches otherwise" is heterodidaskaleo and it means "to teach other or different doctrine." Did you hear that? This seems clearly to speak to today, because we have definitely seen this occur; we have received other doctrine (over 1500 different and conflicting ones at present). What are we told to do? Verse 5 says, **"From such withdraw yourself."** Do you understand that means to leave your fellowship if they lead you into error and seek out those who fear God and are submitted to His Word as their sole authority!

Withdraw in this verse is from the Greek word ahistemi and it means "to remove; to stand off; to go away; to depart from." Isn't Paul speaking directly to us and our situation at this present time? Definitely so if your church teaches and models the Sabbath as Sunday, the tithe collected for the expenses of the church instead of distribution to the widows, orphans, sick, lame, and blind, and the remaining parts of the tithe being distributed equally between the teaching levite, janitors, and choir along with the festival tithe which is yours. So few understand or submit to the festival tithe since they belong to congregations that have replaced God's Holy Days and Festivals with pagan holidays which are been remodeled and had the name of "Jesus" affixed to them. Such is blasphemy to God's truths of Holy Scripture.

In verse 11 of 1 Timothy 6, Paul says, "But you, O man of God, flee these things and pursue righteousness, godliness, faith, love, patience, gentleness." The word translated flee, pheugo, carries the meaning "seek safety by flight; to escape safely out of danger." Paul is telling us to run away from the evil and unrighteous because fellowshiping with them is dangerous. We are to pursue, or follow, to run after "righteousness, godliness, faith, love, patience, gentleness," the attributes of God.

Paul provides even more admonition for us in the epistle to Titus. In Titus chapter two, Paul explains the qualities of a sound church. In verse 8 he says that if we exhibit these characteristics, **"one who is an opponent may be ashamed, having nothing evil to say of [us]."** The word for opponent, enantios, means "one who is against, opposite, or contrary." If we are submitted to God and following him, remaining in our fellowship with God, it is very clear who the contrary one, the opponent, is, and he or she will not be able to condemn us.

In Titus 3:9-11 Paul says, **"but avoid foolish disputes, genealogies, contentions, and strivings about the**

law; for they are unprofitable and useless. Reject a divisive man after the first and second admonition, knowing that such a person is warped and sinning, being self-condemned." The word translated here as reject is paraiteomai and it means "to shun; to avoid; to refuse; to decline." The word for a divisive man is hairetikos and it means "a heretic; a follower of a false doctrine." Paul is telling us to admonish, or correct, someone who is going astray, following a false doctrine, and then to avoid such a person, to not have association with him/her. We are to remain separate (this is true holiness).

Jude gives us further instructions in his epistle. He discusses false teachers who enter into the church and "turn the grace of our God into licentiousness and deny the only Lord God and our Lord Jesus Christ." (verse 4) In verse 18 he tells us there will be mockers in the last time. He says they are "sensual persons who cause divisions, not having the Spirit." (verse 19) Jude points out that they are the ones causing divisions. If we follow Paul's instructions and separate ourselves from such deceivers, we are not creating division, we are remaining faithful to our calling. These false teachers do not have the spirit of God, and are therefore not considered sons of God (Romans 8:14); they are not even part of the body of Christ. So, even if they say they are Christians, they are not because they do not have the spirit of God. If they did have the spirit of God, they would be following God and walking appropriately. Since they are not members of the body of Christ, separating ourselves from them, in essence, removing them out of our fellowship, is not rebellion or division; it is a necessary action to maintain the unity of the faith.

Jude continues in verses 20 and 21 saying, "But you, beloved, building yourselves up on your most holy faith, praying in the Holy Spirit, keep yourselves in the love of God, looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life." Those of us who are truly of the body of Christ, the ones God has called out of this world, and who are being led by the spirit of God are to continue growing in grace and knowledge (2 Peter 3:18), building ourselves up in the faith. We are also to keep ourselves in the love of God. The word translated keep, tereo, means "to attend to carefully; to take care of." We are to be working out our own salvation with fear and trembling (Philippians 2:12).

John tells in 1 John 1:3 that "that which we [the apostles] have seen and heard we declare to you, that you also may have fellowship with us; and truly our fellowship is with the Father and with His Son Jesus Christ." According to this passage, John says that the apostles, the physical leaders of the church, the ministers, are able to have fellowship with us, the members of Christ's body, because they deliver the truth, the things that they have seen and heard. It seems that their fellowship with us, or ours with them, is dependent upon what they are teaching. This application is congruent with the many things Paul says which we have already covered. John goes on to say that the fellowship that we have is actually with God and Jesus Christ. We need to diligently endeavor to remain in that fellowship, the fellowship that really matters.

When Peter and the other apostles were told not to preach in Jesus' name they said, "We ought to obey God rather than men." (Acts 5:29) Is that a fair assessment of your attitude when confronted with the many challenges toward the practice of your faith that have been shown to violate God's will in His Holy Scriptures? Again, the instruction is clear: our allegiance is to God, first and foremost. Jesus Christ is the head of his church, his body, and we are to be in subjection to him. 2 Corinthians 8:5 shows that the Christians in Corinth first gave themselves to God and then to the apostles. They made sure they were in subjection and obedience to God first, and then they submitted to the apostles as they followed God. It is fine and right to follow the example and teachings of individuals as long as they are following God, but if they stray from that which was once delivered, should we not follow God rather than those individuals?

In Acts 19, it is recorded that Paul visited Ephesus. In verse 8, Luke explains that Paul taught in the synagogue for three months. Verse 9 says, "But when some were hardened and did not believe, but spoke evil of the Way before the multitude, he departed from them and withdrew the disciples, reasoning daily in the school of Tyrannus." Verse 9 seems to indicate that some of those to whom Paul had been preaching rejected his instruction after having first accepted it. The Moffatt Bible translates this verse as, "But as some grew stubborn and disobedient, decrying the Way in presence of the multitude, he left them, withdrew the disciples and continued his argument every day from eleven to four in the lecture-room of

Tyrannus. So, some turned away from the truth and were speaking against it, causing divisions and confusion. What was Paul's response? Not surprisingly, it was exactly along the lines of his instruction in his epistles to the Corinthians, Ephesians, Titus, etc. Let me ask you: Do really and truly believe that obedience is greater than any sacrifice you can bring God? Are you courageous enough to obey Paul in this regard? Paul removed himself and the disciples, those who were receiving and holding onto the truth, from fellowship with the dissenters; he separated them, marked them off from the unbelievers. Verse 10 shows that they continued meeting in a place outside of the synagogue for two years.

In Romans 8, Paul gives us encouragement for times when we face persecution and trials. He says in verse 31, **"If God is for us, who can be against us?"** Paul asks in verse 35, **"Who shall separate us from the love of Christ?"** In verses 38 and 39 he continues, saying, **"For I am persuaded that neither death nor life, nor angels nor principalities nor powers, nor things present nor things to come, nor height nor depth, nor any other created thing, shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord."** Nothing can come between us and God's love. Only our sins separate us from God (Isaiah 59:2; Hebrews 6:4-6). We can and should maintain our fellowship with God and with one another, being like minded and unified in the faith. We need to hold fast to the Head, Jesus Christ, because that is the source of our spiritual nourishment and growth (Colossians 2:19). **"God is faithful, by whom you were called into the fellowship of His Son, Jesus Christ our Lord."** (1 Corinthians 1:9) We are called into the fellowship of Jesus Christ, and there is no place for the fellowship of demons with it (1 Corinthians 10:20).

God clearly told the Israelites to be a separate nation and to not fellowship with their heathen neighbors (Exodus 33:16; Deuteronomy 7:6; Ezra 6:21;10:11; 1 Kings 8:53). In Deuteronomy 12, God explained to the Israelites why they were to remain separate from the heathen nations. In verse 30 and 31 God says, **"Take heed to yourself that you are not ensnared to follow them, after they are destroyed from before you, and that you do not inquire after their gods, saying, 'How did these nations serve their gods? I also will do likewise.' You shall not worship the Lord your God in that way. . ."** These words are applicable to us today. We are to worship God in spirit and truth (John 4:24), not according to pagan customs and practices. In the book of Proverbs, Solomon says, **"My son, do not walk in the way with them [sinners]. Keep your foot from their path."** (Proverbs 1:15) He also says, **"Do not enter the path of the wicked, And do not walk in the way of evil. Avoid it, do not travel on it; Turn away from it and pass on."** (Proverbs 4:14-15) These proverbs are quite clear: do not follow unrighteousness, remove yourself from those who are walking astray. We don't even want to be counted among them. Solomon also says, **"The way of the Lord is strength for the upright, But destruction will come to the workers of iniquity."** (Proverbs 10:29) We should follow the paths of the Lord; His way is the right way. Those who deviate from the ways of God bring destruction upon themselves.

In Psalm 94, David speaks of God as the refuge of the righteous. This psalm contains much instruction and wisdom for us today. I will not quote all of it here, but I encourage you to read it, thinking about how David's words apply to our situation today. In verse 20, David asks, **"Shall the throne of iniquity, which devises evil by law, Have fellowship with you?"** The obvious answer is no. God is faithful to protect and preserve us, and he will deal with those who are following after unrighteousness.

We should follow the admonition of Jesus Christ in Luke 11:35-36 and make sure that our whole body is full of light and not darkness. This applies to us individually in our own lives; we should be becoming perfect as our Father in heaven is perfect (Matthew 5:48). Also, it has a larger application: we should be striving to keep the body of Christ full of light and not darkness. Our fellowship should glorify the name of God.

We are told in several places to rejoice when we are persecuted for adhering to God's way of life. Jesus said we are blessed when men hate us and exclude us and call us evil (Luke 6:22). Peter says that we are blessed when we are reproached for the name of Christ (1 Peter 4:14). If we suffer with Christ, we will be glorified together (Romans 8:17). We are told in Philippians that it has been **"granted on behalf of Christ, not only to believe in Him, but also to suffer for his sake."** (1:29) " All who desire to live godly in Christ Jesus will suffer persecution." (2 Timothy 3:12) 1 Peter 3:14-15 says, **"But even if you should suffer for righteousness"**

sake, you are blessed. 'And do not be afraid of their threats, nor be troubled.' But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts, and always be ready to give a defense to everyone who asks you a reason for the hope that is in you, with meekness and fear."

IN CONCLUSION:

Paul tells us in Acts 20:30 that false teachers would rise up from among us, "speaking perverse things, to draw away the disciples after themselves." Warnings such as this are spread throughout the New Testament. Paul spoke at some length regarding our responsibility as a church, as the body of Christ, when false teachers and deceivers try to lead us astray. Other New Testament writers also spoke about what we are to do. The instructions given in the Holy Bible regarding what we are to do when faced with false teachers and brothers who are walking astray tell us to avoid them and to not associate with them. By fellowshiping with these individuals, the name of God is tarnished. There is one faith, one baptism, one body, and it is not divided. There is a unity, a harmony, of the faith, and we are to maintain it. We are not to be counted among those who are not walking after the truth which has been delivered to us. It seems quite clear what our responsibility is when the situation arises where false teachers are among us and when brothers walk astray: we are to avoid them, have no fellowship with them, be separate from them, maintaining the unity of the faith. God's house, his church, cannot be divided against itself; it will not stand if it is. God is not the author of confusion. We are to avoid those who cause divisions and teach false doctrines. This much is clear. We must exercise spiritual discernment in order to determine if such actions are appropriate in the present time. Are individuals walking astray and teaching false doctrines as the word of God, bringing shame upon the name of Christ? We are to note those who are walking disorderly, correct them, and be separate from them. That is our responsibility in this matter. We are not to invite such a person into our house or even greet him/her (2 John 10). We must maintain the unity of the faith that was once given to the saints and which was handed down faithfully into the early part of the fourth century until it was eradicated by the paganism of Rome.

God gives us encouragement in his holy word: "Because you have kept My command to persevere, I also will keep you from the hour of trial which shall come upon the whole world, to test those who dwell on the earth. Behold, I come quickly! Hold fast what you have, that no one may take your crown." (Revelation 3:10-11) "The God of peace will crush Satan under your feet shortly. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you." (Romans 16:20) "God is faithful, by whom you were called into the fellowship of His Son, Jesus Christ our Lord." (1 Corinthians 1:9) "And we know that all things work together for good to those who love God, to those who are the called according to His purpose." (Romans 8:28)



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TILL WE ALL COME IN THE UNITY OF THE FAITH...WHICH FAITH?

Before we begin understand one thing. When a definite article is used such as "the" it means unique, special, only one of a kind When a definite article is used such as "a" it means one of several. Notice now that when Paul says:

Ephesians 4:13 "Till we all come in the unity of *the* faith" he was referring to only ONE faith...and that the faith that existed at that time.

Answer for yourself: What should this mean to you?

You must decide when reading the materials from Bet Emet Ministries if you are in "the" faith that Paul was referring to at that time. Either your faith is grounded in the faith of the first century church, Biblical Judaism or, if you rather...Messianic Judaism....OR if your faith lies outside the faith of Yeshua.....seen today as Gentile Christianity which is a replacement religion and opposes much of what "the" faith once given to the saints possessed. Now, on with the article.

Slowly over the years of my Pastorate in Dallas, Texas I have witnessed a slow awakening, and I stress "slow" awakening of the Gentile Christian Church to the Jewish roots of their faith. This is encouraging, especially in light of the great need for such a "restoration" once you come to the knowledge of the truth concerning how Gentile Christianity has strayed from the ideals and Apostolic Religious Doctrines that James and the Jerusalem Church desired for her. I have witnessed over the years a new emphasis within the Church on the singing of the Psalms in their worship, the use of banners at various occasions in the tradition of the Tribes of Israel, the celebration of the Biblical feast days (Passover, Unleavened Bread, Pentecost, Rosh Ha Shannah, Yom Kippur, Tabernacles, etc.). **This is wonderful and necessary for our repentance if we ever wish to return to the faith of Yeshua which is Biblical Judaism and not Christianity by the way.** Not only that but sacred dancing, especially in Charismatic churches, is prominent. With the deplorable condition of our public school system home schooling has become a viable alternative. Sabbath celebrations in homes of traditional Sunday Christians are very encouraging. Some have even gone so far as to teach the correct doctrine regarding the Biblical Tithe. Many are beginning to use the Hebrew name of God (Yahweh) where this was unheard of only a few years ago. Some are displaying Jewish symbolism (Menorah, Star of David, Shofar, etc.) in their congregations. These are but a few of the elements drawn from our Judaic heritage that are now becoming common place in the worship, practice and teachings of many Christian congregations today who are studying their Jewish roots of their faith. Literally prophecy is being fulfilled in our midst and many fail to realize it.

But not all are open to such attempts at recovering the truth and rich heritage of their faith. Although many of these activities are not yet the accepted norm in all Christian circles, it is only the beginning of a rapidly developing trend which can hardly be ignored. **But in spite of the many who have failed to "discern the times" those who have are contributing to a Judeo-Christian restoration that was prophesied in the**

Jewish Scriptures.

BUT MAINLINE CHURCHES SEEM DISINTERESTED WITH THIS JUDEO-CHRISTIAN RESTORATION

However, some in Christian leadership are expressing apprehension in returning to "the faith once given to the saints. I can remember speaking about this great need with my previous senior Pastor and he could only say we are not living in the first century any longer. True, but what escaped him is that the Commandments of God are eternal; whether it be the first century or the twentieth century. His fears were born out of a fear of legalism which is propagated by an incorrect emphasis on the Pauline writings.

May God hasten the day when something is judged, not by whether it is Jewish or Christian, but by whether or not it is Biblical centered

JUDEO-CHRISTIANITY...WHAT THE CHURCH NEEDS TO MODEL

I find that most people are familiar with the term "Judeo-Christianity". The term can be found to be used frequently by scholars, Bible students and commentators who write on the early church. Simply said, it means *"having roots in both Judaism and Christianity"*. Judaism and Christianity were publicly coined words. The word "Christian" was first used in A.D. 42 in the city of Antioch as seen in Acts 11:26. Eventually it was adopted for the purpose of differentiating between believing Jews who had faith in Yeshua as the Messiah and Jews who did not accept Yeshua as their Messiah. Ultimately it became an identity for the entire Gentile Church. *The irony of the whole thing is that the vast majority of those who call themselves followers of the "Christ" and identify with the term "Christian" have little in common with the religious belief system of Yeshua or first century Biblical Judaism.* This is an undeniable fact to those who study the Jewish Yeshua of the first century and then compare what Yeshua believed vs. what they have been taught by their Gentile Churches. The term "Judaism" was born of similar circumstances and was, no doubt, coined for the purpose of implying a "divorcement" from Christianity and their errant beliefs which often contradicted Moses, the Writings, and the Prophets.

the proper system of worship and practice for the people of God is not "Christian" in a religious sense, but "Jewish" simply because "Jewish worship" patterns for us best the Divine example in a Biblical sense and therefore remains eternal and universal for all nations

Nevertheless, these are acceptable terms when understood in a complimentary fashion and we will use them for identification and orientation. But the phrase Judeo-Christianity is perhaps most ideal in that it expresses and maintains the inherent bond between that religious faith which Yahweh authored at Sinai.

What most Christians fail to grasp is that when they read Ephesians 4:5, the "One Faith" of Scripture is not "Gentile Christianity" but "Biblical Judaism"...quite simply the Faith of God and the ONLY Faith ever given by God to man

SO WHY THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN THE TWO? ISN'T CHRISTIANITY TO BE THE FULFILLMENT OF JUDAISM AND IF

SO HOW CAN IT CONTRADICT IT SO?

In the Book of Malachi God, through the prophet said: For I am the LORD, I change not; therefore ye sons of Jacob are not consumed. (KJV)

Answer for yourself: Do you really believe the above Scripture? Do you really? If you really believe that God is the same yesterday, today, and forever, then I challenge you to be brutally honest with yourself in answering the following questions:

Answer for yourself: Why then is there such a startling difference between Christianity and Judaism on so many religious doctrines and beliefs?

Answer for yourself: How can two religions, Judaism and Christianity, that came from the same God who is One and a complete unity have so many conflicting doctrines like those on atonement, salvation, Christology, Messiah, days of worship, etc.?

Answer for yourself: Did Yeshua start an entirely new religion in spite of the fact that he is recorded saying in Matt. 5:17: *Think not that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfil.* (KJV)

Answer for yourself: Is Yeshua responsible for all of the differing doctrines and practices that bear the name of Christianity today as found in over 2000 different Christian denominations in the world today?

Answer for yourself: Is there a difference between the "Christ of Faith" and the "Christ of History" and if so do you know what it is?

Answer for yourself: Who is the "real Yeshua" as distinguished from the various thousands of different denominations and non-denominations that exist today who claim to follow Yeshua but have so many conflicting doctrines?

Answer for yourself: Could it be that the Jews, who follow the same religion that Yeshua did, be right and those who follow the New Testament and its doctrines which can be shown to "opposed to Judaism" when compared to the unforged Hebrew Scriptures, be wrong? Of course this question predisposes that the reader is aware of the adulterated and forgery and purposeful mistranslation and misquotation that is abundant in our Christian Old and New Testaments.

These are reasonable questions that deserve sensible, factual answers.

HAVE WE COMPLETELY MISSED THE MARK IN THE GENTILE CHURCH?

Answer for yourself: One may question: "What difference does it make as to how I worship God so long as I have accepted Christ as my personal savior?"

As startling as it may sound to you, the vast majority of Biblical texts are devoted NOT to the message of redemption, but rather how one is to obey and please God, serve God, and honor God AFTER becoming a believer

Perhaps you need to sit down and contemplate on the above thought. Because the statement is true. Ministries like Bet Emet are called to share such insights with a Gentile Church which has departed from *"the faith once given to the saints"*. (Jude 1:3). Much of what the Gentile Church teaches the non-Jewish believer today are unfortunately "falsehoods" which are recorded in the New Testament by the anti-Semitic writers of the New

Testament. I know you have been taught that the New Testament was written by the Apostles, but other than a few writings by Paul (7), the vast majority of this literature defies identification as to authorship. One thing is certain, however; scholarship today can prove that most of these writings were drafted by non-Jews with strong anti-Semitic leanings. Thus we have a document that is full of Replacement Religion and religious dogmas and doctrines and which conflicts with the Bible Yeshua used, the Hebrew Scriptures written by "holy men of old". That means those who follow the teachings in the New Testament without comparing with the writings of Moses and the Prophets taken ONLY from the Hebrew Bible and Hebrew Scriptures of Judaism cannot be assured they are being obedient to the God they say they love. One's love for God must motivate us to be "sure" we are right in what we believe and how we respond. That means you will have to study hard and often be exposed to materials which will challenge you to your very core. But love for God demands we pay whatever price to ensure we are not opposing Him and disobeying Him out of misdirected zeal.

The precaution given to ancient Israel is a valid one for the Church today. God pleaded with them on several occasions not to worship Him through learning the ways of the heathens. In this day of restoration and renewal of the Church, there is a turning away from many of the man-conceived concepts of worship which have been handed down to us by the historic church fathers with a return to Biblical patterns, even if they do appear Jewish in nature.

Dear child of God...if you have not already you soon will see that "Jewish" means "Biblical"

PILATE'S QUESTION....IT MUST BE YOURS AS WELL

Pontius Pilate asked a significant question of public concern, both for our day and his, when he inquired of Yeshua, ***"What is truth"?*** (***John 18.38***). The greatest of men still struggle to find the answer to this all-consuming question as they seek to please the living God. We at Bet Emet Ministries are dedicated to finding the truth in order to assure that we are worshipping the Father in Spirit and Truth. Our dedicated study for the past fifteen years has shown us that much of what we were taught by Christianity was anything but truth and surely not given by the Spirit. Repentance was the order of the day and remains such today.

Failure of multitudes of believers to fully answer this profound question for themselves has left the Gentile Church in a quagmire of conflicting doctrines and practices. I know many of you who read this article might say that Yeshua said, "I am the Truth"; but sadly this question can not be answered satisfactorily with such a simplified answer. Nearly everyone at some time has found himself a victim of these conflicts only to ponder the same question: "What is truth"? **Perhaps one of the greatest mistakes to be made in our pursuit of divine truth has been the failure to acknowledge the source of truth...the Jewish people who were entrusted with Divine revelation for the whole of mankind.**

THE SOURCE OF BASIC TRUTH FOR ALL THE WORLD...INCLUDING THE CHRISTIAN CHURCH CAME FROM GOD THROUGH THE JEWISH PEOPLE AND THEIR TEACHINGS. MANY TEACHINGS IN CHRISTIANITY THAT DOES ORIGINATE WITH THE JEWISH PEOPLE CAN BE SHOWN TO BE NOT SOUND DOCTRINALLY AND WILL INVARIABLY BE FLAWED IN ITS CONCLUSIONS AND APPLICATIONS...NO MATTER HOW NOBLE IT MIGHT SOUND..

Because of the anti-Semitism of the early Gentile leaders of the Church, we have the gradual drift of the Christian Church from its Hebraic and Jewish Roots that has robbed the believers of their rightful heritage, the power that goes with the Word of God when obeyed, and has rendered the Christian Church a very divided people (over 2,000 different denominations containing multitudes of conflicting doctrines. We are without an excuse when we look to that "one faith" and "one Lord" and "one Baptism" when we ponder the myriads of conflicting doctrines and practices within the corporate body of Christ. Somebody got off tract and it was not

the Jew who yet today follow the faith and religion of Sinai. Can you guess who erred?

Answer for yourself: Where is the *"faith once given to the saints"*? (Jude 1:3).

WAS YESHUA TO CREATE A NEW RELIGION AND REPLACE JUDAISM WITH WHAT WE HAVE TODAY OR WAS HE A REFORMER WITHIN JUDAISM?

Any time Judaism is mentioned along with the Law you can hear sincere Christians respond: "I am not under the Law". Such responses come from a fear of legalism and a return to bondage. But such statements are based upon an inadequate knowledge and understanding of Judaism in the first place. Although that is often the reaction of some when one does something that appears to be Jewish in nature we must remember that Yeshua said, "Think not (although some still do) that I am come to destroy the law...". Contrary to what you might think or have been told Yeshua was not advocating a legalistic system for achieving righteousness, nor was he attempting to terminate the Law, which is the guideline or pattern for moral discipline, praise and worship. Biblical Judaism was simply God's chosen system of praise, worship and service.

Yeshua did not come to start a new religion for the world, let alone his church which he was to build. Yeshua came to reform Biblical Judaism (Sinai faith) which was intended by both him and his Father to be the faith taken to the Gentiles in the Great Commission because within it we find the Covenant of Noah and the Laws of Noah for the Gentile world as their covenant with God.

Clearly *"Christ is the end [the Greek word for "end" in this verse is actually the word "goal"] of the law for righteousness"* (Romans 10:4). Christ-likeness is the goal and when we examine the life of "the Christ" among us then we see that he adhered to Judaism and taught repentance toward the Laws and Commandments of God which frame one's Covenant with God.

For example, Yeshua never terminated the Passover celebration. He never intended that we replace the Passover and substitute Easter observance [a pagan festival and rite] for the Passover which was given and commanded by God for both Jews and Gentiles alike. Sadly for most of us, although most of us are unaware, our churches, some on a weekly basis, substitute "crackers" and "grape juice" as a pseudo-Communion for the Passover which was to be celebrated only **ONCE A YEAR**. When this principle of reform is understood and the "fear factor" is eliminated, the Church is going to see an accelerated restoration of Judeo-Christianity. Charges of legalism and of being Judaizers in the historic context will diminish. Taking the former as an wide example for all the Festival day, we as Christians have failed to heed Yeshua's warning to worship the Father in Spirit and in Truth for our worship is flawed and unacceptable to our Father for the most part if we follow the traditional pattern of most churches where paganism is mixed with Biblical Judaism. The sad fact is that most of the church is unlearned and uninformed about such things because their focus has been limited to redemption only to the exclusion of other important doctrines in the Bible such as worship and teaching.

THIS IS NOT TO BE UNDERSTOOD AS LEGALISM..BUT OPPORTUNITIES TO DRAW CLOSER TO GOD THROUGH REPENTANCE & OBEDIENCE TO HIS WORD

Having understood the above warning from Yeshua in John 4, the return to Judeo-Christianity through intense study and repentance, thus leading to a return to a more Biblical pattern of worship of the Father cannot be construed as legalism or a return to religious bondage. Those who say different are simply wrong and have

failed to grasp the real message of the Scriptures.

"An over-Hellenized over-Latinized Christianity needs a re-Judaizing process to bring it back to its founding Jewish roots and RENEW it more in keeping with its own inherent ideals." (Edward Flannery- Catholic scholar)

HOW THE NON-JEWISH BELIEVER LOST THE FAITH ONCE GIVEN TO THE SAINTS

Discerning Christian scholars are beginning to recognize the record of the Holy Scriptures and the truth of history. In a very real sense Gentile Christians have been discriminated against by their own leadership. They have been denied their right of equal access to the Judaic heritage guaranteed them by the New Testament. Presbyterian scholar Harry E. Gaylord described it accordingly, *"The Christians, as they were eventually called, did not have a uniform approach to Jewish law, but they were not trying to break away from Judaism. They were a group within Judaism trying to make their views normative. First generation Christianity was a part of Biblical Judaism, but the next generation would depart from it."*

Answer for yourself: Since the inherent Jewishness of the gospel of Yeshua is so clear in the first century, the obvious question is, "What brought the massive divorcement of Christianity from Biblical Judaism?"

For the answer one need only trace the course of history. After the death of the apostle Paul and the destruction of Jerusalem in A.D. 70, subsequent generations, which included more and more Gentiles, made every effort to remove all traces of Jewishness from the gospel of Yeshua. As the Church became increasingly Hellenized (Greek) and Latinized (Roman), many of the concepts of polytheism (other gods) began to appear, gain prominence and become entrenched in the Church. Not only that but the Gentile Church began to collect the writings of the earliest believers in Yeshua and corrupt them through numerous alterations whereby purposeful misquotations and mistranslations of the Prophets were used to create new ideas that were foreign to the original writers. Many Jewish texts were taken out of context on purpose and edited in the Gentile Church's canon of Scripture called the New Testament. Misquotations, mistranslations, and misapplications of the "inspired Old Testament", the Bible Yeshua used, became replete within the pages of the Bible you carry today. And you are not aware most likely because you have, since you are a New Testament Christian instead of an Old Testament Christian, never verified for yourself if what you are reading in your Christian Old and New Testament is a faithful representation of what the Prophets and Moses wrote. You have taken for granted that the New Testament is correct, for after all, it has a black binder which says "Holy Bible" on it. You accepted such a document without question...or should I say "by faith". You have been deceived and not know it...that is up to now. The Church remains a victim of many of these elements today because few study such things...and if you do you are "suspect" by your Pastor. Today's Christian has been brainwashed to prefer "preaching" instead of "study". Yet when I try to find "preaching" as gift to the church I only find the "teacher" instead. Sadly the Christian Church today needs to pray that God send them courageous teachers for only when the teacher does his job is the congregation equipped to be the real proclaimers or "preachers". We have it just backwards today. In spite of such deception restoration and doctrinal renewal for the Church is on God's agenda (Deut. 32:2). Many are beginning study for themselves and come to the point in their lives where they are beginning to *"...ask for the old paths, where is the good way..." (Jer.6: 16)*. They will be the prophetic ones who *"....shall build the old waste places: thou shalt raise up the foundations of many generations; and thou shalt be called, The repairer of the breach, The restorer of paths to dwell in" (Isaiah 58:12)*. Bet Emet Ministries is one of many who have felt the call to return to the old paths which is the good way, and in doing so, build the waste places destroyed by Gentile Christian anti-Semitism and anti-Judaism. In our pursuit to return to the "faith once given to the saints" we may not have Gentile Christianity's support, but rest confidently in the fact that we are raising up David's tabernacle in fulfillment of Scripture by helping to restore the paths and foundations for many who seek the truth about the God of the Bible. Shalom.

WHERE DO WE GO FROM HERE?

The present renewal of the Church in Spirit is going to result in a renewal and restoration of Biblical truth in the area of worship and practice.

Answer for yourself: What is the end purpose of and need for this Judeo-Christian restoration?

Quite simply said Paul said it best in the book of Ephesians. Notice this was written to the non-Jew and not the Jew. This is of utmost importance and remains so for the Gentile Christian today.

Eph 2:11-12 11 Wherefore remember, that ye being in time past Gentiles in the flesh, who are called Uncircumcision by that which is called the Circumcision in the flesh made by hands; 12 That at that time ye were without Messiah, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope, and without God in the world: (KJV)

After reading the above verse you can more easily understand why "salvation is of the Jews" and not the Church. The non-Jew has nothing apart from Israel and the Revelation of God given to them by the Jews. **Only when the non-Jewish believer come to the startling understanding that much of his religious belief system is based upon a corrupted, adulterated, an flawed document, his Christian Bible, will he be able to fully understand why the Jews, who do not accept the New Testament, are the ONLY bearers of true salvation in the world today.** Only after verifying through diligent personal study for yourself what I said is the truth will you then be able to "fulfill" the following passage, not only in your life, but before the God you love.

Eph 4:13 13 Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Messiah: (KJV)

The trip for the contemporary Christian believer to acquire such knowledge is long and hard. Many, many tears will flow as he is confronted with the startling facts and realization that he has believed "the lie" which we were warned about to avoid. Anger for being victim to such deception is unavoidable. Only by the grace of God will compassion come to cleans such anger whereby you can experience the compassion of God for your fellow believers who are still trapped in such lies and false religion. May God speed your hunger for truth and your discipline to acquire it. You are a valuable piece of God's puzzle, for without you "unity of the faith once given to the saints will impossible". Shalom. Craig Lyons M.Div.



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GETTING ACQUAINTED WITH THE GENTILE AS PICTURED IN THE HEBREW SCRIPTURES

Before we examine the New Testament for examples of how the non-Jew and God-fearer related to the "Pattern of Worship" we need familiarize ourselves with the terms for them used in the Hebrew Scriptures and the Old Testament. The following is taken from the Encyclopedia Judaica.

Ancient Israel was acquainted with two classes of "Gentiles" or "strangers" and we find references to them in the Old Testament:

- The resident aliens who lived with the Jewish people long-term
- The foreigners who considered their sojourn in the land more or less temporary

The "foreigner" were referred to as zarim (Myrz) or **nokhrim** (Myrkn), terms generally applied to anyone outside the circle the writer had in view (e.g., Ex. 21:8; 29:33). They retained their ties to their original home and sought to maintain their former political or social status. On occasion they came as invaders (II Sam. 22:45-46; Obad. 11). More often they entered the land in the pursuit of trade and other commercial ventures.

Answer for yourself: What is of importance in our study concerning the "Pattern of Worship" that might be noticed concerning the "resident alien" and the "foreigner"? Concerning "the foreigner" the usual laws were not applicable to them, and they were protected by folk traditions concerning the proper treatment of strangers (cf. Job 31:32) and by special conventions resulting from contractual arrangements between the Israelites and their neighbors (cf. I Kings 20:34). In the legislation of Deuteronomy, an Israelite may charge a foreigner usury though he may not do so to a fellow Israelite (Deut. 23:21), and the septennial remission of debts does not apply to the debts of foreigners (Deut. 15:3).

Of importance for our study concerning the "Pattern of Worship" it is important to note that the "stranger" or "foreigner" was barred from the cult (Ex. 12:43):

Exod 12:43-45 43 And the LORD said unto Moses and Aaron, This is the ordinance of the passover: There shall no stranger eat thereof: 44 But every man's servant that is bought for money, when thou hast circumcised him, then shall he eat thereof. 45 A foreigner and an hired servant shall not eat thereof. (KJV)

Also of importance for our study concerning the "Pattern of Worship" it is important to note that the "stranger" or "foreigner" was not bound by the ritual laws, and it was permissible to sell him animals that had died a natural death (Deut. 14:21):

Deut 14:21 21 Ye shall not eat of any thing that dieth of itself: thou shalt give it unto the stranger that is in thy gates, that he may eat it; or thou mayest sell it unto an alien: for thou art an holy people unto the LORD thy God. Thou shalt not seethe a kid in his mother's milk. (KJV)

The fact that Deuteronomy includes a special prohibition against foreigners' ascending the throne (Deut. 17:15) and that Solomon specifically requested that God listen to their prayers (1 Kings 8:41) may indicate the important position some foreigners occupied during the age of the monarchy.

I King 8:41-43 41 Moreover concerning a stranger, that is not of thy people Israel, but cometh out of a far country for thy name's sake; 42 (For they shall hear of thy great name, and of thy strong hand, and of thy stretched out arm;) when he shall come and pray toward this house; 43 Hear thou in heaven thy dwelling place, and do according to all that the stranger calleth to thee for: that all people of the earth may know thy name, to fear thee, as do thy people Israel; and that they may know that this house, which I have builded, is called by thy name. (KJV)

NOW...LET US LOOK AT THE RESIDENT ALIEN..."THE GER"-PROSELYTE

In contrast with the foreigner, the ger, the resident alien, lived more or less permanently in his adopted community. Like the Arabic "jar", he was "the protected stranger," who was totally dependent on his patrons for his well-being. As W.R. Smith noted, his status was an extension of that of the guest, whose person was inviolable, though he could not enjoy all the privileges of the native. He, in turn, was expected to be loyal to his protectors (Gen. 21:23):

Gen 21:23-24 23 Now therefore swear unto me here by God that thou wilt not deal falsely with me, nor with my son, nor with my son's son: but according to the kindness that I have done unto thee, thou shalt do unto me, and to the land wherein thou hast sojourned. 24 And Abraham said, I will swear. (KJV)

Of MAJOR importance for our study in identifying and recovering "the Pattern of Worship" we must notice that this "resident alien" in Israel was bound by the Laws of the Jews (Num. 15:15-16).

Num 15:15-16 15 One ordinance shall be both for you of the congregation, and also for the stranger that sojourneth with you(the resident gentile), an ordinance for ever in your generations: as ye are, so shall the stranger be before the LORD. 16 One law and one manner shall be for you, and for the stranger that sojourneth with you. (KJV)

Answer for yourself: Did you notice that this commandment of obedience to these "ordinances" was to be **FOREVER** for both the Jew and the non-Jew who is akin with Israel? How long is "forever"?

Answer for yourself: What is an "ordinance"?

Strong's Concordance: # 2708 chuqqah (khook-kaw'); feminine of 2706, and meaning substantially the same: KJV-- appointed, custom, manner, ordinance, site, statute. 2706 choq (khoke); **from 2710 (root word);** an enactment; hence, an appointment (TIME, space, quantity, labor or usage): KJV-- appointed, bound, commandment, convenient, custom, decree (-d), due, law, measure, X necessary, ordinance (-nary), portion, set time, statute, task.

In order to make sure you see this let me reiterate. God commanded of the non-Jew who gathers with, assemble with, or dwell with Israel to observe the same "appointed times", the same "appointed customs", the same "necessary set times", the same "commandments", the same "appointments in time" which were commanded of the Jews. This dear ones, these appointed times, are the Biblical Festivals and Sabbaths of the Lord.

Brown-Driver Briggs Hebrew Lexicon teaches the above as does the Strong's Concordance but they go one step further: The word also carries the idea of "standing in awe" together with the Jews when they stand before YHWH.

Now for a real shocker. On the contrary, the Israelites themselves were gerim (Ex. 22:20) as were their ancestors (Gen. 15:13; cf. 23:4; Ex. 2:22).

Ex. 22:20 And a stranger shalt thou not wrong, neither shalt thou oppress him; for ye were strangers in the land of Egypt.

Gen. 15:13 13 And He said unto Abram: 'Know of a surety that thy seed shall be a stranger in a land that is not theirs, and shall serve them; and they shall afflict them four hundred years;

Gen. 23:4 4 'I am a stranger and a sojourner with you: give me a possession of a burying-place with you, that I may bury my dead out of my sight.'

Ex. 2:22 22 And she bore a son, and he called his name Gershom; for he said: 'I have been a stranger in a strange land.'

Aliens were apparently attracted to their ranks when they left Egypt (Ex. 12:38, 48), and their numbers were further augmented during the time of the conquest of Canaan (Josh. 9:3ff.). By far the greatest number of gerim consisted of the earlier inhabitants of Canaan, many of whom were neither slain as Deuteronomy commands (cf. e.g., 7:2) nor reduced to total slavery (cf. I Kings 5:29; II Chron. 2:16–17). Immigrants also were numbered among them—foreigners who sought refuge in times of drought and famine (cf. Ruth 1:1) and refugees who fled before invading armies.

Since all of the landed property belonged to Israelites (cf. Lev. 25:23–24), the gerim were largely day laborers and artisans (Deut. 24: 14–15; cf. 29:10). Both the Book of the Covenant which classed them among those who were dependent (Ex. 23:12) and the Decalogue which referred to them as "your stranger" (gerkha; Ex. 20:10; cf. Deut. 5:14) attest their inferior position in Israelite society. While a few acquired wealth (cf. Lev. 25:47), most of them were poor and were treated as the impoverished natives. Thus, they were permitted to share in the fallen fruit in the vineyard (Lev. 19:10), the edges of the field, and the gleanings of the harvest (Lev. 23:22). Like the other poor folk they were also granted a share in the tithe of the third year (Deut. 14:29) and the produce of the Sabbatical Year (Lev. 25:6).

Since the foreigners' defenselessness made them vulnerable, the Israelites were frequently reminded of God's special concern for the weak (Ex. 22:21–22; cf. Deut. 10:17–19) and were enjoined not to molest them (Ex. 22:20; cf. Jer. 7:6). They were not to be abused (Deut. 24:14) and were to receive equal treatment before the law (Deut. 1:16; cf. 24:17; 27:19). In case of accidental homicide, the cities of refuge were open to them as well (Num. 35:15), or there was to be *"one standard for stranger and citizen alike" (Lev. 24:22).*

Lev 24:22 22 Ye shall have one manner of law, as well for the stranger, as for one of your own country: for I am the LORD your God. (KJV)

Moreover, the Israelites were enjoined to be especially solicitous of the welfare of the ger and to befriend him as one of their own, since they could recall the sufferings of their own people in the land of Egypt (Lev. 19:34; cf. Deut. 10:19).

With the passage of time, the gerim were assimilated culturally and religiously. Doeg the Edomite, for instance, was a worshiper of YHWH by the time of Saul (I Sam. 21:8), as was Uriah the Hittite in the reign of David (II Sam. 11:11). Hence, the ger, in contrast to the nokhri, was required in many cases

to conform to the ritual practices of the native Israelite.

That means they shared the same "Pattern of Worship"!

THE PATTERN OF WORSHIP AS APPLIED TO THE GER AND RESIDENT ALIEN GENTILES & NON-JEWS

Thus, gerim were subject to the same laws as were the Jews in the following areas:

- Non-Jews were concerned with ritual purification ([Num. 9:2–14](#)) and the observance of the Passover (immersion/mikvah was required before observance as well).
- Non-Jews concerned with laws of incest ([Lev. 18:26](#)).
- Non-Jews were observant of some of the food taboos ([Lev. 17:10–16](#) [prohibition of eating blood and immersion/mikvah connected with repentance] but cf. [Deut. 14:21](#)).
- Non-Jews were expected to observe the Sabbath ([Ex. 20:10](#); [Deut. 5:14](#)),
- Non-Jews were expected to participate in the religious festivals like the Passover, Unleavened Bread, Shavuot (Pentecost), Tabernacles, ([Deut. 16:1–22](#)),
- Non-Jews were to undergo Mikvahs/immersion which was required before observance of Festivals like Shavuot [Pentecost] ("being born again") ([Exodus 19:10–11](#)).
- Non-Jews were expected to fast on the Day of Atonement ([Lev. 16:1–34](#)).
- Non-Jews were permitted to offer up burnt offerings ([Lev. 17:8](#); [22:18](#); [Num. 15:1–16](#).) and,
- Non-Jewish males must be circumcised in order to partake of the sacrificed paschal lamb ([Ex. 12:48–50](#); [Num. 9:14](#)).

Above we just looked at many ways the non-Jew was instructed concerning various commandments concerning worship that applied to him as one who "stood besides Israel" in the worship of the God of Israel. We saw without a doubt that these non-Jews who worshipped the God of Israel were required to keep the Sabbath, the Biblical Festivals like Passover (Pesach), Unleavened Bread (Hag Ha Matzah), Pentecost (Shavuot), the Day of Atonement (Yom Kippur), the Festival of Tabernacles, the Sabbath, be immersed or mikvahed prior to observance of these "appointed times" with God, to be circumcised if they were to observe the Passover and partake of the lamb, to fast on prescribed holy days, to refrain from blood and other food laws (Laws of Noah), as well as various morality laws.

Indeed, they, no less than the Israelites, were expected to be loyal to YHWH ([Lev. 20:2](#); cf. [Ezek. 14:5–8](#)). **This loyalty did not require of these non-Jews that they keep all of the 613 mitzvot given to the Jews but many of them as we have seen. Beyond the minimum of the 66 Laws of Noah we see the concept of Isa. 56 being factored in here where the non-Jew was required to "chose things that please YHWH" which were over the minimum Laws of Noah.**

YET THERE WERE DIFFERENCES

However, social differences did remain, and some gerim were better received than others. While third generation offspring of Edomites and Egyptians might "be admitted into the congregation of the Lord" ([Deut. 23:8–9](#)), Ammonites and Moabites were not to be admitted "even in the tenth generation" ([23:4](#)). Furthermore, even while the Holiness Code admonished Israelites not to subject their fellows to slavery ([Lev. 25:39](#)), they were specifically permitted to do so to the children of resident aliens ([25:45–46](#)). A Hebrew slave belonging to a ger could be redeemed immediately, and if not redeemed served until the Jubilee Year ([25:47ff.](#)), but one belonging to an Israelite served until the Jubilee ([25:39ff.](#)). Correspondingly, a Hebrew could serve as a hired or bound laborer ([25:40](#)) of an Israelite, but only as a hired laborer of an alien ([25:50](#)). Indeed, the humble position of the ger generally was emphasized by the usage of the term in the Holiness Code: e.g., "The land is Mine; you

are but strangers resident with Me" (25:23; cf. 25:35,).

In practice, of course, there were Israelites who became propertyless and destitute and had to support themselves as day laborers (Deut. 24:14; cf. Lev. 19:13), and no doubt there were also gerim who became prosperous and acquired land. This narrowed the gap between the two classes and resulted in frequent intermingling. Marriages between the two groups did take place, only marriages between Israelites and the aboriginal inhabitants of Palestine being prohibited in Deuteronomy 7:3–4. On close examination it appears that even in the theory (and it was hardly more) of the author of Ezra-Nehemiah only marital alliances with the non-Israelites of Palestine were illegitimate, because the laws of Deuteronomy 7:3–4 and 23:3–9 applied to them. The absorption of converts from other nations is reported with equanimity—Ezra 2:59–60 (= Neh. 7:61–62); Ezra 6:21; Nehemiah 10:29 ("and everyone who withdrew from the uncleanness of the peoples of the lands [note the plural] to the teaching of God"). The phenomenon of such conversions is alluded to in Isaiah 56:3 and Zechariah 2:15; 8:20ff., and the predictions of the conversion of the gentiles in Isaiah and Jeremiah are well known. In late Second Temple times, the term ger had become virtually synonymous with "proselyte," and strangers were admitted to the religious fellowship of Israel (Jos., Apion, 2:28).

THE GER TOSHAV AND THE LAWS OF NOAH

Whereas, as stated, the word "ger" in the Bible was taken to refer to the [proselyte](#), the [ger toshav](#), the ["resident stranger,"](#) was regarded as belonging to a different and special character. [He was a non-Jew who accepted some, but not all of the commandments of the Torah,](#) as a result of which he was permitted to reside in the land of Israel and enjoy many of the privileges of citizenship. [Various views are expressed by the rabbis as to the qualifications which entitle the resident gentile to be accepted as a ger toshav, ranging from the renunciation of idolatry to one who accepts the whole of the discipline of the Torah with the exception of the dietary laws \(Av. Zar. 64b\).](#)

Answer for yourself: How did Judaism settle this difference of opinion?

[The halakhah was decided that it applies to the person accepting the seven "Noachide Laws" \(Maim. Yad, Issurei Bi'ah 14:7; Sh. Ar., YD 124:1\).](#) The laws, privileges, and restrictions of the ger toshav are exhaustively dealt with in the Talmud. As, however, it was laid down that the acceptance of a ger toshav was permitted only during the period that the Jubilee was in force, and that law was no longer in power in Talmudic times, the discussion was purely academic.

We at Bet Emet have [a website dealing exclusively with and in-depth concerning the Laws and Covenant of Noah for your futher study.](#)

Shalom.



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THE NON-JEW AND HIS RETURN TO GOD'S SABBATHS WHICH CONSTANTINE OUTLAWED

Answer for yourself: Why don't we as Christians and followers of Jesus and "the Christ" keep and observe the Biblical Holy Days in the Christian Church today?

We can begin to look at Constantine to find the loss of the Biblical Holy Days and the Sabbath for the non-Jew.

Let us learn an important truth from 2 Thess. 2:3

"Let no man deceive you by any means, for that day will not come unless the falling away comes first, and the man of sin is revealed, the son of perdition who apposes and exalts himself above all that is called God or that is worshiped so that he sits as God in the temple of God."

Let us look no further than Constantine to be one of many who fulfills this passage. As far as the history of christianity is concerned, Constantine was one of the most influential men that ever lived. From the Writings of the Apostles (Gospel's), until Martin Luther nailed his theses to the church door in 1517, there was no single person that so changed the course of church history as Constantine did. Indeed, his influence was so vast that it continues to tower over Christendom in this, our own time. Both in church customs, doctrines and in church government, christianity owes sunday and a lot more to Constantine's intervention.

It may be news to you but Constantine began to change the Biblical Holy Days, forsaking the Shabbot and assigning Sunday as God's day. He outlawed the 7 Biblical Festivals and Feasts of God as well. He replaced them with pagan holidays derived from Sun Worship which find their origins with men. If we look at the Shabbot this should not be surprising to us for after all, the Gentiles (pagans) were already used to Sunday worship due to their background in "Sunday" - "Sun" worship. The logic of Constantine was very simple: "As more and more Gentiles came into the faith, why make them learn of God's Holy Sabbath and His Laws?" The root for all these changes comes from his intense antisemitism and hatred of the Jews as we find in his [Easter Letter](#).

At the beginning of the 4th century, a monumental event occurred for the Church. In AD 306, Constantine became the first Christian Roman Emperor. At first, he had a rather pluralistic view and accorded Jews the same religious rights as Christians. However, in AD 321, he made Christianity the official religion of the Empire. This signaled the end of the persecution of Christians, but the beginning of discrimination and persecution of the Jewish people.

Already at a council in Elvira (Spain) in AD 305, declarations were made to keep Jews and Christians apart, including ordering Christians not to share meals with Jews, not to marry Jews, not to use Jews to bless their fields, and **not to observe the Jewish Sabbath.**

Imperial Rome, in AD 313, issued the Edict of Milan, which granted favor to Christianity, while outlawing synagogues.

Then, in AD 315, another edict allowed the burning of Jews if they were convicted of breaking the laws. As Christianity was becoming the religion of the state, further laws were passed against the Jews:

- The ancient privileges granted to the Jews were withdrawn.
- Rabbinical jurisdiction was abolished or severely curtailed.
- Proselytism was prohibited and made punishable by death.
- Jews were excluded from holding high office or a military career.

These and other restrictions were confirmed over and over again by various Church councils for the next 1,000 years.

In AD 321, Constantine decreed all business should cease on "the honored day of the sun." By substituting Sunday for Saturday as the day for Christian worship, he further advanced the split. This Jewish Shabbat / Christian Sunday controversy also came up at the first real ecumenical Council of Nicea (AD 325), which concluded Sunday to be the Christian day of rest, although it was debated for long after that.

Answer for yourself: What should this tell us? Simply that up until the early 4th century non-Jewish believers in God were taught to keep and observe the Sabbath along with the Jews!

Overnight, Christianity was given the power of the Imperial State, and the emperors began to translate the concepts and claims of the Christian theologians against the Jews and Judaism into practice. Instead of the Church taking this opportunity to spread its Gospel message in love, it truly became the Church Triumphant, ready to vanquish its foes (first it was the Jews and later it would be Gnosticism and any who would dare to disbelieve the imperial religious doctrine).

After 321, the writings of the Church fathers changed in character. No longer was it on the defensive and apologetic, but aggressive, directing its venom at everyone "outside of the flock," in particular the Jewish people who could be found in almost every community and nation.

1Thes 1:9 9 For they themselves shew of us what manner of entering in we had unto you, and how ye turned to God from idols to serve the living and true God; (KJV)

The above passage refers to Non-Jews who turned from idols to serve the living God of the Jews. They had just come out of idolatry. And that was fine when gentiles first entered the faith. They didn't know the Law, that they had a Covenant with God or that God expected of them to observe and keep His "appointed times" and Holy Days" like the Sabbath. But they could learn. They attended the synagogues, on Shabbot and observed "ALL" of the Jewish Biblical Holy Days. But Constantine and others made sure they did not continue to learn the Ways of God. He made sure that everything Jewish was removed from the then "existing" church.

You might want to look up the word "gentile". It means pagan. It means anyone outside Judeo Christian faith. Webster's dictionary states: "Gentile....anyone belonging to a non Jewish nation; anyone who is not a JEW OR A CHRISTIAN." Yet Christians today claim the title of Gentile. This is part of the Lie that Constantine started and it obviously continues today. If you are a believer in the God of Israel through Yeshua then you are no longer a Gentile. You are grafted in to the Olive tree, which is Israel. And that being so then you should resemble Israel in your worship!

Rom 11:24 24 For if thou wert cut out of the olive tree which is wild by nature, and wert grafted contrary to nature into a good olive tree: how much

more shall these, which be the natural branches, be grafted into their own olive tree? (KJV)

Answer for yourself: Have you ever noticed that any reference to Yeshua and the early church being a part of Judaism brings accusations of "Pharisee" "Legalist" and after that comes "one who would stone Christ" and finally "Christ Killers". This kind of talk brought us the Inquisition, the Crusades and the Holocaust.

CONSTANTINE'S COUNTERFEIT JESUS

A terrible deception has occurred and the vast majority of 2.5 billion Christians haven't a clue. Today in Gentile Christianity we have accepted a Constantine Jesus instead of the Jewish Messiah. Through Constantine's clever ruse of "replacement religion" we have centered in Christianity today not a Jewish Messiah but a Gentile Messiah. This person will look for all the world like the Messiah pictured in Christian paintings. He will look extremely "Gentile". This false messiah has and will continue to infiltrate the church. He will speak of Easter and Christmas and Sunday as if they were God's Holy Days. He will not allow Sabbath worship. He will declare Sunday as the Sabbath Day. As long as you worship the "Gentile Jesus" you won't have to worry about persecution. Nobody is going to bother you. You will be safe in your church and deceived the false comfort provided by errant theology. All this because you believed The Lie. The lie that you are separate from Israel. The lie that says the Olive tree is dead. The lie that says the Law is dead. The lie that says you are somehow better than Israel because you will be 'taken out' of the world in the day of Jacob's trouble. And the lie that says the Commandments of Almighty God are passed away. The lie says that you, as a Gentile Christian believer, have replaced Israel and that you are "the New Israel".

TIME TO STUDY FOR YOURSELF AND EXPOSE THIS LIE

Rom 11:17-18 17 And if some of the branches be broken off, and thou, being a wild olive tree, wert grafted in among them, and with them partakest of the root and fatness of the olive tree (Israel); 18 Boast not against the branches. But if thou boast, thou bearest not the root, but the root thee. (KJV)

We must begin at the beginning; namely with the Biblical Calendar. We can call this for all practical purposes the Jewish Calendar for I have found, as you will if you do the study, that "Jewish" is a synonym for "Biblical". I wish that could be said for the Christian Church but it simply is not so; in fact the opposite is more often the rule. The Lord's Calendar is a diary of His Appointments of His "appointed times" with mankind. These are specific times on which He wants to meet with us. The word 'set time' in Hebrew is "moed". It means an 'appointment' and a 'rehearsal'. These are appointments set in eternity as rehearsals for what is to come. We find time and time again when consulting the Hebrew words for the non-Jewish believer in God in the Hebrew Scriptures example after example of the non-Jew keeping and observing the Sabbath and the these Biblical "appointed times" and Biblical Festivals and Feasts with the Jew in the Hebrew Scriptures and the Old Testament. Many never see this for they know not where or how to look or study at this level. Words like "alien", "foreigner" and "stranger" go unnoticed in the Old Testament in contexts regarding these Holy Days of the Lord yet everyone of them is a beautiful picture of the overall "Pattern of Worship" given by God to all His children; to all mankind. Again and again God emphasizes to both the Jew as well as the non-Jew that we are to keep the Feasts at their appointed time as "rehearsals" for Eternity.

Numbers 9:2 says: *"Make the Israelites celebrate the Passover at the appointed time."*

In verse 14 we read, *"A foreigner living among you who wants to celebrate the LORD's Passover must do so in accordance with its rules and regulations. You must have the same regulations for the foreigner and the native-born."*

Isa 56:1-2 1 Thus saith the LORD, Keep ye judgment, and do justice: for my salvation is near to come, and my righteousness to be revealed. 2 Blessed is the man that doeth this, and the son of man that layeth hold on it; that keepeth the sabbath from polluting it, and keepeth his hand from doing any evil. (KJV)

But you read the above verse thinking this was a commandment for the Jew only most likely. But let us keep reading.

Isa 56:6-7 6 Also the sons of the stranger, that join themselves to the LORD, to serve him, and to love the name of the LORD, to be his servants, every one that keepeth the sabbath from polluting it, and taketh hold of my covenant; 7 Even them will I bring to my holy mountain, and make them joyful in my house of prayer: their burnt offerings and their sacrifices shall be accepted upon mine altar; for mine house shall be called an house of prayer for all people (nations). (KJV)

Wow. Here we have the example of non-Jews keeping the Sabbath of God let alone participating in Temple worship and the Sacrificial System. It would appear to me and hopefully you that these non-Jews are definitely "grafted" into the Israel of God more so than Christians today regardless of what they want to believe about themselves.

Isa 56:8 8 The Lord GOD which gathereth the outcasts of Israel saith, Yet will I gather others to him, beside those that are gathered unto him. (KJV)

Take a look at this chapter and you will see the church as it was/is supposed to be. We were supposed to learn about and keep the Lord's Sabbaths (the weekly sabbath as well as God's "High Sabbath" which are more commonly known as the Biblical Festivals and Feasts. We are plainly Commanded here to keep the Sabbaths of the Lord. We are now getting the chance to learn and do as many are returning to the Hebrew roots of the church. Let us do so in thanksgiving and delight.



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GENTILES AND JEWISH CLASSIFICATION

In the Jewish worldview all gentiles who are ethical monotheists will achieve salvation. Judaism does not denigrate gentiles and does not see them as condemned to eternal damnation. Rather we see them as fellow human beings, from other nations, searching for God and for meaning in life. Judaism wishes them well with their search and celebrates those who succeed in becoming ethical monotheists. Jews are obligated in many rituals and ceremonies and those Jews who fail to fulfill these rituals are considered sinners. Gentiles, however, are not obligated in these commandments and are only obligated to be ethical monotheists. Those who fulfill this obligation receive their full reward in the world-to-come.

There are three main categories of gentiles [see R. Yom Tov ben Avraham Alshevili, Chiddushei HaRitva, Makkot 9a n.].

THE NOACHIDE MONOTHEIST:

This person is generally called a **Ben Noach (or Noachide) meaning a proud descendant of the biblical Noah.** In the Jewish tradition Noah and his sons were commanded to fulfill seven commandments which amount to ethical monotheism [see Aaron Lichtenstein, The Seven Laws of Noah]. **Those gentiles who observe these commandments are considered righteous gentiles. They are, however, not Jews and are not considered part of Jewish society.** They are righteous people and recognized for their accomplishments. However, they remain part of the human brotherhood but not part of Jewish society.

THE GER TOSHAV: NON-JEWS WHO GO BEYOND THE LAWS OF NOAH AND WHO, BEFORE A BET DIN (COURT) VOW TO OBSERVE THEIR COMMANDMENTS AS ETHICAL MONOTHEISTS

The Path of the Righteous Gentile states: "When one of the Children of Noah resolves to fulfill the Seven Universal Laws, his or her soul is elevated. This person becomes one of the Chasidei Umot Haolam - Pious Ones of the Nations - and receives a share of the Eternal World. The Holy Scriptures calls one who accepts the yoke of fulfilling the Seven Universal Laws a Ger Toshav - a Proselyte of the Gate. This person is permitted to live in the land of Israel and to enter to the Holy Temple in Jerusalem and to offer sacrifices to the God of Israel."

As the Rambam explains, **the Ger Toshav is a person that actively accepted upon himself in front of a Jewish Bet Din to fulfill these Mitzvot, in a way that's similar to conversion.** [According to some opinions he undergoes Brit milah (circumcision or the drawing of blood from his penis as well already circumcised). As opposed to a regular goy that adheres to the 7 Noahide laws out of his or her own rational understanding, feeling that that's the "humane thing to do", and has not committed him/herself to keep these laws on a definite basis, the "Ger Toshav" consciously accepts that Hashem, our God, commanded him to keep them (through

Moshe) and for that basic reason, he/she is fully committed to fulfilling them. Moreover, if he is interested in keeping more than the basic seven laws, he can commit himself to more Mitzvot at the time of his "conversion", and can even accept upon himself Shmirat Shabbat- something that a regular goy is forbidden to do. A "Ger Toshav" can come to Bet din and decide upon any number of Mitzvot from the minimum seven up to a maximum of 613, and from that point on is obliged to keep them. A "Ger To Shav" cannot accept all 613 Mitzvot- because if he did, he'd simply be a... Jew! Here we find a non-Jew who not only accepts the Laws of Noah but understands and implements Isaiah 56 into his life and goes beyond the minimum observance as he "chooses those things that please God" as detailed in the texts of Isaiah 56.

By pledging that he will fulfill his obligation to be an ethical monotheist he enters Jewish society. He is not a convert and does not become Jewish. In fact, he can worship any monotheistic religion he chooses. He is, however, a righteous gentile and is gladly received into the Jewish community. He is welcome to live in Jewish neighborhoods (should he so choose), is supported by Jewish charities (if he so needs), and is considered part of the fabric of Jewish society in many ways [see Talmud Pesachim 21b; Talmud Avodah Zarah 65b; Nachmanides, Additions to Book of Commandments, 16; Maimonides, Mishneh Torah, Hilchot Zechi'ah Umattanah 3:11, Hilchot Melachim 10:12; Ra'avah of Posquieres, Comments to Mishneh Torah, Hilchot Issurei Biah 14:8]. Both the Ben Noach and the Ger Toshav are righteous gentiles. However, the Ben Noach has not entered Jewish society and perhaps does not wish to. Therefore, he is treated like a stranger. He is respected as a righteous human being, one who is fulfilling his divine purpose in the world. However, he is not part of the Jewish community.

GENTILES WHO ARE NOT MONOTHEISTS

The third category is of the gentile who is not an ethical monotheist. He is violating the covenant God made with Noah and his descendants and will be punished for those sins. It is with these people that Judaism has a very ambivalent attitude. On the one hand, they are acting contrary to God's purpose in the world. For this reason, Judaism tries to distance Jews from them. On the other hand, they are people created in God's image and must be respected as such. The compromise is that their positive traits, examples of which we will shortly see, are recognized and respected. However, their negative traits are never fully forgotten and full societal integration with such people is discouraged.

Those gentiles who have the status of Ger Toshav, who have requested acceptance into Jewish society and have pledged obedience to their commandments, are treated almost like Jews. Those who have the status of Ben Noach because they have not requested acceptance are respected but are not treated like brethren. They receive letter-of-the-law treatment because to treat them beyond that would be to detract from our brothers. What has a Ger Toshav gained if a Ben Noach is treated the same? What extra connection is there between fellow Jews and within the entire Jewish/Ger Toshav society if everyone is treated extra specially? Within the Jewish/Ger Toshav society all members, both Jewish and gentile, are joined together as a community united in its single goal of worshipping the one God. While Judaism treats all human beings with the respect due to someone created in the divine image, those within the Jewish/Ger Toshav society get slightly better treatment. They are handled above and beyond the letter of common human interaction.

There are those who point out these differences in treatment and wish to demonstrate that Judaism is anti-gentile. Quite the opposite. Judaism is one of the few religions that recognizes that even those outside its faith can be saved and allows them into its community. Righteous gentiles have a place in the world to come and can choose to join Jewish society if they wish. If they decline this invitation then they are given the full respect that these righteous people deserve. We shall show that the differences in treatment are reasonable and that all gentiles are treated honestly and respectfully.



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CONVERSION OF THE GENTILE

There is ample evidence of a widespread conversion to Judaism during the period of the Second Temple, especially the latter part of the period, and the word *ger*, which in biblical times meant a stranger, or an alien, became synonymous with a proselyte.

Among the notable converts to Judaism may be mentioned the royal family of Adiabene, Aquila and/or Onkelos, Flavius Clemens, the nephew of Vespasian, and Fulvia, wife of Saturninus, a Roman senator. Unique, as the only case of forced conversion in Judaism, was the mass conversion of the Edomites by John Hyrcanus.

In addition to those outstanding figures, however, it is obvious that proselytism was widespread among the ordinary people. The statement of the New Testament that the Pharisees "*compass sea and land to make one proselyte*" (Matt. 23:15), suggesting a vigorous and active proselytization may possibly be an exaggeration, but on the other hand, the near pride which the rabbis took in the claim that some of their greatest figures were descended from proselytes point to an openhanded policy toward their acceptance. Such incidents as the different approach of Shammai and Hillel to the request to be taught the principles of Judaism by a potential proselyte (Shabb. 31a) and the incidental mention of "Judah the Ammonite proselyte" (Ber. 28a) point to the fact that the movement was not confined to the upper classes. In fact Josephus states explicitly that in his day the inhabitants of both Greek and barbarian cities evinced a great zeal for Judaism (Contra Ap. 2. 39).

It was during this period that the detailed laws governing the acceptance of proselytes were discussed and codified, and they have remained standard in Orthodox Judaism.

LAWS OF CONVERSION

The procedure, established by the tannaim, according to which a non-Jew may be accepted into the Jewish faith, was elucidated as follows: "In our days, when a proselyte comes to be converted, we say to him: 'What is your objective? Is it not known to you that today the people of Israel are wretched, driven about, exiled, and in constant suffering?' If he says: 'I know of this and I do not have the merit,' we accept him immediately and we inform him of some of the lighter precepts and of some of the severer ones... we inform him of the chastisements for the transgression of these precepts... and we also inform him of the reward for observing these precepts... we should not overburden him nor be meticulous with him..." (Yev. 47a; cf. Ger. 1, in: M. Higger, Sheva Massekhtot Ketannot (1930), 68–69). This text refers to a person who converted through conviction. The halakhah also accepts a posteriori, proselytes who had converted in order to marry, to advance themselves, or out of fear (Yev. 24b, in the name of Rav, see TJ, Kid. 4:1, 65b–d; Maim. Yad, Issurei Bi'ah 13:17; Sh. Ar., YD 268:12). The acceptance of a proselyte "under the wings of the Divine Presence" is equivalent to Israel's entry into the covenant, i.e., with circumcision, immersion, and offering a sacrifice (Ger. 2:4, in: M. Higger; loc. cit. 72).

A proselyte had to sacrifice a burnt offering either of cattle or two young pigeons. R. Johanan b. Zakkai instituted that in those times when sacrifice was no longer possible, a proselyte was not obliged to set aside money for the sacrifice (Ker. 9a). Therefore, only circumcision and immersion remained. R. Eliezer and R.

Joshua disagreed as to whether someone who immersed himself but was not circumcised or vice versa could be considered a proselyte. According to R. Eliezer, he is a proselyte, even if he performed only one of these commandments. R. Joshua, however, maintained that immersion was indispensable. The halakhic conclusion is that "he is not a proselyte unless he has both been circumcised and has immersed himself" (Yev. 46). The act of conversion must take place before a bet din, consisting of three members; a conversion carried out by the proselyte when alone is invalid (Yev. 46b–47a). There is a suggestion that the three members of the bet din must be witnesses only to his acceptance of the precepts but not to the immersion. Maimonides, however, decided (Yad, Issurei Bi'ah 13:7), that a proselyte who immersed himself in the presence of two members only is not a proselyte. The schools of Shammai and Hillel differed on the issue of a proselyte who had already been circumcised at the time of his conversion: "Bet Shammai states: 'One must draw from him the blood of circumcision'; Bet Hillel states: 'One need not draw the blood of circumcision from him'" (Tosef., Shah. 15:9; TB, Shab. 135a). Most of the rabbinic authorities decide in favor of Bet Shammai (Tos. to Shab. 135a; Maim. Yad, Issurei Bi'ah 14:5; Sh. Ar., YD 268:1), and "who hast sanctified us with Thy commandments and hast commanded us to circumcise proselytes and to draw from them the blood of the covenant" (Shab. 137b) is said in the circumcision benediction of proselytes.

A proselyte must observe all the precepts that bind Jews. The statement: "There shall be one law for the citizen and for the stranger that dwelleth amongst you" (Ex. 12:49), which refers to the paschal lamb, the sages interpreted to mean that the stranger (proselyte) was the equal of the citizen concerning all the precepts of the Torah (Mekh. Pisha, 15). They tried to equalize the status of the proselyte and that of the Jew; certain differences stemming from the origin of the convert, however, remained. According to an anonymous Mishnah, a proselyte may not confess himself after taking out the tithes since the statement occurs in the confession "the land which Thou hast given to us"; nor does he read the section on the first fruits, where the statement is: "which the Lord hath sworn unto our fathers to give unto us." The proselyte, praying by himself must say: "the God of the Fathers of Israel"; in the synagogue he says: "the God of your Fathers" (Ma'as. Sh. 5:14; Bik. 1:4). According to one tradition, R. Judah permitted a proselyte to read the section on the first fruits, claiming that Abraham was the father of the whole world (TJ, Bik. 1:4, 64a; but in Tosef., Bik. 1:2 this permission is only extended to the Kenites). The Palestinian amoraim, R. Joshua b. Levi and R. Avihu, agreed with R. Judah. The authorities (particularly R. Samson in his commentary to Bikkurim (ibid.), and Maimonides in his letter to Obadiah the Proselyte, below) in permitting a proselyte to say "the God of our Fathers" in the prayers based themselves on the same rationale.

A proselyte terminates all former family ties upon conversion and **"is considered a newly born child (BORN AGAIN)."** His Jewish name is not associated with that of his father and he is referred to as "the son of Abraham (our father)." Later, it became the custom to name the proselyte himself after the first Jew who knew his Creator "Abraham the son of Abraham." According to the letter of the law, a proselyte may marry his relatives. The sages, however, decreed against this "So that they should not say: 'We have come from a greater sanctity to a lesser sanctity'" (Yev. 22a, Yad, Issurei Bi'ah 14:12). The disqualifications pertaining to testimony of relatives in judicial cases of family members do not apply to the proselyte; his relatives also may not inherit from him. If no heirs were born to him after his conversion, his property and his possessions are considered not to belong to anyone, and whoever takes hold of them becomes their owner (BB 3:3, 4:9; Git. 39a; Yad, Zekhi'ah u-Mattanah 1:6).

A proselyte may marry a Jewish woman, even the daughter of a priest (Kid. 73a; Yad, Issurei Bi'ah 19:11; Sh. Ar., EH 7:22). A female proselyte, however, cannot marry a kohen, unless she was converted during childhood, not later than the age of three years and one day (Yev. 60b; Kid. 78a). R. Yose permits the marriage of the daughter of a male or female proselyte to a kohen; R. Eliezer b. Jacob, however, disputes the matter. The statement "From the day of the destruction of the Temple, the kohanim have preserved their dignity and followed the opinion of R. Eliezer b. Jacob" shows that tradition tended toward the latter's opinion. The amoraim, however, decided that he be followed only in those cases where the marriage has not yet taken place. If a female proselyte is already married to a kohen, she is not bound to leave him (Kid. 4:7; TB, Kid. 78b; Yad, Issurei Bi'ah 19:12). A proselyte may also marry a mamzer ("bastard"). According to some opinions, the permission may extend over ten generations, while others claim it should be only until his heathen origin is

forgotten (Kid. 72b, 75a).

A proselyte cannot be appointed to any public office. The rabbis based their decision on the verse: "Thou shalt appoint over thee a king from among thy brothers—appointments shall be only from among thy brothers." This injunction does not apply to a proselyte whose mother or father are of Jewish origin (Yev. 45b; Kid. 76b; Tos. Sot. 41b, Yad, Melakhim 1:4). A proselyte may not hold the office of judge in a criminal court; he may act as such in a civil court (Sanh. 36b) and also judge a fellow proselyte, even in a criminal law case (Rashi to Yev. 102a). Unless one of his parents was born Jewish, most authorities bar a proselyte from acting as judge even in a civil court (Alfasi on Sanh. 4:2, Yad, Sanh. 2:9, 11:11). Others are of the opinion that even in a civil court he can only judge a fellow proselyte (Tos. Yev. 45b; Ra-Sh-BA on Yev. 102a).



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THE GRAFTING OF THE GENTILES INTO THE ISRAEL OF GOD #1

A sensible immigrant anywhere will normally accommodate himself to local custom. Unsubtle natives often demand such conformity, or else. Even cultured citizens regard it as a polite compliment. In either-case, the newcomer's speedy recognition of the beauty and wisdom of one's traditional ways is taken as a mark of the foreigner's perceptiveness and good taste. It is also a bid for warmer welcome and for better odds in favor of smooth integration. Such was God's perspective as well when He included the Gentile among His people... Israel.

To the natives of ancient Israel, even such mundane matters as what one ate (and when) or wore; how one plowed, planted, reaped, or built a house, came under priestly regulation (because God had commanded such in His Law at Sinai as well as later), was declared to be the law (Torah-instruction) of Israel's God.

Answer for yourself: Could the nice foreigner, eager to be the tactful guest, avoid involvement then in what we could call his hosts' religion?

It would not be easy. Perhaps he preferred participation. In that case he might come to share the natives' conviction that, for whatever success he enjoyed, he was beholden to their God whose "client" he had now become.

"Client" is a technical term for such a guest. The Hebrews had their own word for him-**ger**. Though most English versions of the Bible inveterately translate this word as "stranger," it often signifies "proselyte." For the utter alien whose dissociation from Israel's faith and fashion of life was total, Scripture employs more precise designations, such as the Hebrew words *ben (son of) nechar, nachri, zar, and acher*.

The ger was to "some degree" incorporated in the community of Israel. This implied religious affiliation. The varying degrees of affiliation were not clearly defined or categorized in Biblical antiquity, but would later become so. That came later.

Regardless of where he originated or what his ancestral faith, elementary morality was expected of every resident in ancient Israel. Monotheism might appeal to one ger; another might enjoy the Sabbath of the Hebrews or their holy dietary regimen but entertain reservations about circumcision. However, if and when a ger assumed all the group oblations (ethical, ethnic and ecclesiastic), he became a full-fledged member of the congregation of Israel (Grafted IN) and his progeny were legally indistinguishable from other Israelites.

Converts were probably not attracted to the religion of Israel primarily by its rituals. They might have been if these had been sacraments—as in the mystery cults and later in Christianity. Israel's religion offered no magical means of redemption; and never claimed "no salvation outside this church."

Answer for yourself: What then did appeal to men who had outgrown paganism?

The purity of Israel's God-concept; its freedom from idolatry, image worship and adoration of saints; its

sublime ethics; its rational hopes for the future; its faith in such a Kingdom of God as, under His guidance, men of flesh and blood could build on earth.

For the enlightened heathen seeking Israel's God, an ancient Temple prayer, (prayed during the time of Jesus) requests God's gracious concern, expressing the trust that thus others may similarly be drawn to Him:

As for the alien (stranger) who does not belong to Thy people Israel, but who comes from a distant land for Thy sake (for men shall hear of Thy great fame . . .), when he comes and turns in prayer toward this temple, then do Thou hearken to this alien's petition . . . so that all nations in the world may learn what Thou art and worship Thee as does Thy people (I Kings 8:41 ff).

The Holy Bible In Basic English

And as for the man from a strange land, who is not of your people Israel; when he comes from a far country because of the glory of your name: 8:42 (For they will have news of your great name and your strong hand and your out-stretched arm;) when he comes to make his prayer, turning to this house: 8:43 Give ear in heaven your living-place, and give him his desire, whatever it may be; so that all the peoples of the earth may have knowledge of your name, worshipping you as do your people Israel, and that they may see that this house which I have put up is truly named by your name.

Answer for yourself: What does all of this mean that we as non-Jews are to learn to worship God as does the Jewish people?

Let us examine some of the Hebrew meanings to words in the above verse:

I Kings 8:41-43 41 Moreover concerning a stranger, that is not of thy people Israel, but cometh out of a far country for thy name's sake; 42 (For they shall hear of thy great name, and of thy strong hand, and of thy stretched out arm;) when he shall come and pray toward this house; 43 Hear thou in heaven thy dwelling place, and do according to all that the stranger calleth to thee for: that all people of the earth may know thy name, to fear thee, as do thy people Israel; and that they may know that this house, which I have builded, is called by thy name. (KJV)

41 Moreover concerning the stranger that is not of Thy people Israel, when he shall come out of a far country for Thy name's sake-- 42 for they shall hear of Thy great name, and of Thy mighty hand, and of Thine outstretched arm--when he shall come and pray toward this house; 43 hear Thou in heaven Thy dwelling-place, and do according to all that the stranger calleth to Thee for; that all the peoples of the earth may know Thy name, to fear Thee, as doth Thy people Israel, and that they may know that Thy name is called upon this house which I have built.

The Hebrew word used for "to fear" is as follows:

Brown-Driver-Briggs Hebrew Lexicon: 3372 yare'- 1) to fear, to revere, to be afraid a) (Qal) 1) to fear, to be afraid 2) to stand in awe of, to be awed 3) to fear, to show reverence, to honor, to respect b) (Niphal) 1) to be fearful, to be dreadful, to be feared 2) to cause astonishment and awe, to be held in awe 3) to inspire reverence or godly fear or awe c) (Piel) to make afraid, to terrify 2) Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament: to shoot, to pour

Strong's Concordance: 3372 yare' (yaw-ray'); a primitive root; to fear; morally, to revere; cause to frighten: KJV-- affright, be (make) afraid, dread (-ful), (put in) fear (-ful, -fully, -ing), (be had in) reverence (-end), X

see, terrible (act, -ness, thing).

- **Answer for yourself:** Were prayers in the Temple, prayed by first century Jews as well as non-Jew for the Gentiles of the world to come to know God and worship Him and revere Him as did His people Israel?
- **Answer for yourself:** Were prayers in the Temple, prayed by first century Jews as well as non-Jews for the Gentiles of the world to come to understand God and acknowledge God in hopes that they would come to know of Him and ultimately revere and worship Him as did His people Israel?
- **3) Answer for yourself:** Were prayers in the Temple, prayed by first century Jews as well as non-Jews for the Gentiles of the world to perceive and see, and find out about the true worship of God?
- **Answer for yourself:** Were prayers in the Temple, prayed by first century Jews as well as non-Jews for the Gentiles of the world to come to know by experience God through the proper worship of Him as had Israel?
- **Answer for yourself:** Were prayers in the Temple, prayed by first century Jews in hopes that the Gentiles of the world might not only themselves come to know the true worship of God, but cause other fellow Gentiles as well to know God as they had?
- **Answer for yourself:** Were prayers in the Temple, prayed by first century Jews for the Gentiles of the world to come to revere (fear) and stand in awe of God, thus honoring Him and respecting Him?

Common to each of the above questions is the idea that Israel is the source as well as the example to all non-Jewish nations for the Revelation of God among mankind. We find this fact in both the Old and New Testaments as well.

Dearly beloved, I have begun to lead you to a path more pleasing to God than you have ever embarked before in your life. As we can see from the above examples **we as Christian Gentiles and followers of "the Christ" are to worship God as does the Jewish people.** They have the **"Pattern of Worship" for us even today which we need to learn and follow.** In this article, of which much is to follow, I will prove my point to you beyond any doubt: that as Christians we are to worship God according to the **"Pattern of Worship"** given by God for both the Jew as well as the Gentile.

LOOKING AT I CHRON. 28:11...A VERY IMPORTANT SCRIPTURE FOR OUR STUDY

1 Chr 28:10-15 10 Take heed now; for the LORD hath chosen thee to build an house for the sanctuary: be strong, and do it. 11 Then David gave to Solomon his son the pattern of the porch, and of the houses thereof, and of the treasuries thereof, and of the upper chambers thereof, and of the inner parlours thereof, and of the place of the mercy seat, 12 And the pattern of all that he had by the spirit, of the courts of the house of the LORD, and of all the chambers round about, of the treasuries of the house of God, and of the treasuries of the dedicated things: 13 Also for the courses of the priests and the Levites, and for all the work of the service of the house of the LORD, and for all the vessels of service in the house of the LORD.

Let us look and examine the the Hebrew word for :**service** and see what we find hidden in the Hebrew:

The Strong's Concordance teaches us that the Hebrew word for "pattern" is as follows:

8403 tabniyth (tab-neeth'); from 1129; structure; by implication, a model, resemblance: KJV-- figure, form, likeness, pattern, similitude.

Strong's Concordance teaches us that the Hebrew word for "service" is as follows:

5656 `abodah (ab-o-daw'); or `abowdah (ab-o-daw'); from 5647; work of any kind: KJV-- act, bondage, + bondservant, effect, labour, **ministering (-try)**, office, service (-ile, -itude), tillage, use, work, X wrought.

Brown-Driver-Briggs' Hebrew Lexicon: teaches us more as we look at the Hebrew word used for "service":

5656 `abodah or `abowdah- labor, service

- a) labor, work
- b) labor (of a servant or a slave)
- c) labor, service (of captives or subjects)
- d) **service (of God)**

Now let us look a little deeper into the **root word** for the Hebrew word "service" as taken from the **Strong's Concordance:**

5647 `abad (aw-bad'); a primitive root; to work (in any sense); by implication, to serve, till, (causatively) enslave, etc.: KJV-- X be, keep in bondage, be bondmen, bond-service, **compel**, do, dress, ear, execute, + husbandman, keep, labour (-ing man, bring to pass, (cause to, make to) serve (-ingself,)), (be, become) servant (-s), do (use) service, till (-er), transgress [from margin], (set a) work, be wrought, **worshipper**,

What we see from these words is that there is a "MINISTRY" and "SERVICE OF OR UNTO God" and a "worship of God" that was given by the Spirit of God according to a "PATTERN" that as bondservants of the Most High we are compelled to follow

Answer for yourself: Did you see the picture emerging from the above passages as these Hebrew words were explained in depth to you?

Now we see that there does for certain exist a "Pattern" of "service" or a "Pattern of ministry" of or unto God in the Hebrew Scriptures in the Old Testament but for our purposes we need to know if there exists such a "Pattern of service" or "Pattern of Worship" in the New Testament.

The sad fact of the matter is that as contemporary Christians we do not follow the pattern of worship which was given to David and which can be traced to continue until the 4th century, and our efforts at worship are often anything but reverence and honor toward God when we change HIS PATTERN OF WORSHIP and substitute man-made Sabbaths for the Sabbaths of God, substitute man-made holidays that originate from pagan sources and Sun Worship for the Almighty's Biblical Feast Days, and pervert the Tithe and Offerings as is being done by the vast majority of Christian Churches today. "It can't be" is probably your response. Let me assure you "we are Nadabs and Abihus in Christian garb." God is not pleased and you will not find out unless you study for yourself or you die, whatever comes first. It is our intention at Bet Emet Ministries to save you the shame destined for you in the world to come and lead you in a "more perfect way" as was Apollos by revealing to you these Biblical truths which have for too long been overlooked by too many. I ask you read this series of articles both with your mind and your heart. We at Bet Emet Ministries are eager to help you better understand the Hebraic meaning of the Scriptures which influence the most important part of your life...your worship and relationship with God. Now back to the teaching.

Jesus (Yeshua) prayed this Temple prayer often and it was, and still is his earnest desire and will that all Gentiles be reached with the message of God's salvation and come to the knowledge whereby they worship his Father in Spirit and in Truth. Notice, and this is very important, that the prayer is not only that we come to the knowledge of God and worship him, but **that we as non-Jews WORSHIP GOD AS DOES THE PEOPLE OF ISRAEL.**

Please understand that not all worship is accepted by God. You only have to ask [Nadab and Abihu and their stunning deaths in their first worship service speaks volumes that should alert us today to the fact that all worship is not accepted by God and even may be judged by God.](#) In other words, the Temple prayer prayed by multitudes of Jews, as well as Jesus and his Apostles (which would later take the message of Gentile Salvation into all the world) was for the Gentile to learn the correct forms of worship that both honor God and show Him respect.

Answer for yourself: Does the observance of Easter or Passover please God? Which did God and Jesus command be observed? I'll give you a hint, it is not Easter!

Answer for yourself: Are you aware which of the above two religious observances was given to us by God and which was given to us by pagans?

Answer for yourself: Having understood that Easter is a pagan fornication festival adopted by the ancient Catholic Christian Church (check me out in your Encyclopedia) to which they added the name of Jesus (notice that Easter and Passover are TWO different dates on your calendar....why?), can you any longer participate in such an observance once you understand that God hates such things as He says in the Bible?

This is exactly what I am trying to make you understand. Observance of pagan forms and manifestations of worship always led Israel to be judged and taken into captivity.

Answer for yourself: What will be the fruit of such observances by the Christian Churches come judgment day?

More to follow in the next article. Shalom.



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THE GRAFTING OF THE GENTILES INTO THE ISRAEL OF GOD #2

Having seen in the first of this series of articles that there is a pattern for our worship given by God to David which laid out the way the Jews and non-Jews are to worship God, and understanding that “the” pattern for such worship existed well into the fourth century for both Jews and Gentiles before it was changed by the pagan leadership of Rome, let us continue in our study into how Gentiles are ingrafted into Israel and the responsibilities that it entails.

One alien (Gentile) from a distant land was the Syrian general, Naaman. He came not, it is true, to the temple of God, but to the "man of God," Elisha, asking a cure for his leprosy. His mission accomplished, he confessed:

Now I know that there is no God in all the earth except in Israel (II Kings 5:15)

Elisha did not seek in any way to persuade Naaman to become a proselyte or a convert to Judaism. The prophet merely accepted his simple promise of faithfulness to God and blessed him at their leave-taking.

When, long centuries later, a antisemitic Gospel writer, ignoring his master's rule against anger and abusive name-calling, raged:

Woe to you scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you scour sea and land to make a single proselyte, and when he is converted you make him a son of hell twice as bad as yourselves. (Matthew 23:15)

Hidden in his haystack of hyperbole was one slim needle of truth. Converts were always welcome in Israel.

Answer for yourself: Does the New Testament teach that God shows no partiality, but welcomes the man of any nation who reveres Him and does what is right. (Acts 10:35)?

Acts 10:35 35 But in every nation he that feareth him, and worketh righteousness, is accepted with him. (KJV)

Answer for yourself: Did you notice that there is two requirements to be "accepted with God"?

What does the word "nation" mean in the above verse?

The Strong's Concordance teaches us that the Greek word for "nation" is as follows:

1484 ethnos (eth'-nos); probably from 1486; a race (as of the same habit), i.e. a tribe; specially, a foreign (non-Jewish) one (usually by implication, pagan): KJV-- Gentile, heathen, nation, people. So this is a picture of the non-Jewish nations of the world who can "be accepted" with God if they only "fear Him" and "worketh righteousness"! This is far cry from what most hear taught in their Christian Churches today where we

are taught that to be "saved" and "accepted with God" that we have to accept the latest creed of faith of our denomination or non-denomination regarding the identity of Jesus or his mission.

Answer for yourself: What does the Greek word for "feareth him", as in "fearing God" mean?

The Strong's Concordance teaches us that the Greek word for "feareth" means:

5399 phobeo (fob-eh'-o); from 5401; to frighten, i.e. (passively) to be alarmed; by analogy, to be in awe of, i.e. revere: KJV-- be (+sore) afraid, fear (exceedingly), **reverence**.

The Thayer's Greek Lexicon teaches us that the Greek word for "feareth" also means:

5399 phobeo- to put to flight by terrifying (to scare away)

- a) to put to flight, to flee b) to fear, to be afraid
 - 1) to be struck with fear, to be seized with alarm
- a) used of those startled by strange sights or occurrences
- b) used of those struck with amazement
 - 2) to fear, to be afraid of one
 - 3) to fear (that is, hesitate) to do something (for fear of harm)
- c) **to reverence, to venerate, to treat with deference or reverential obedience**

Answer for yourself: Do you notice that "reverence" of God is connected with "obedience"?

Answer for yourself: Does Paul use this term "nations" in the New Testament to refer to Gentiles, even Gentile Christians? He sure does.

Answer for yourself: Are you aware that in the Book of Numbers it says that Israel is NEVER to be numbered among the nations, thus when discussing "nations" the reference is always to non-Jews?

Answer for yourself: Are you aware that the phrase "in every nation" refers to non-Jews and not Jews?

Answer for yourself: Since Paul uses this term to refer to Gentiles, *even Gentile Christians*, is it possible that Gentile Christians can worship incorrectly and not worship in true worship of the true God? It may be hard for you to swallow, but the answer is "yes". Thus the need for Bet Emet and other ministries to warn the Christian of today.

Answer for yourself: Is Luke, the author of Acts, telling us that in every nation there are to be believing Gentiles who are reverencing, venerating, and responding to God with **reverential obedience** yet who might not be "Christians" but that they as well are **"accepted with God"**? He sure is! This just so happens to be what Judaism, the religion of Jesus, always taught as well.

Answer for yourself: We are told that we are to "work" righteousness.

Answer for yourself: What does the word "worketh" mean in the Greek language?

The **Strong's Concordance** teaches us that the Greek word for "worketh" means:

2038 ergazomai (er-gad'-zom-ah-ee); middle voice from 2041; **to toil (as a task, occupation, etc.)**, (by implication) effect, be engaged in or with, etc.: KJV-- **commit, do, labor for, minister about**, trade (by), work.

The "root" word **Strong's Concordance** also teaches us is taken from: 2041 ergon (er'-gon); from a primary (but obsolete) ergo (to work); toil (as an effort or occupation); by implication, an act: KJV-- **deed, doing, labour, work**.

The Thayer's Greek Lexicon adds:

2038 ergazomai- 1) to work, to labor, to do work 2) to trade, to make gains by trading, "do business" 3) to do, **to work out** a) to exercise, to perform, to commit b) **to cause to exist, to produce** 4) to work for, **to earn by working, to acquire**

Answer for yourself: Since we are to work "righteousness" then what does this word mean?

The Strong's Concordance teaches us that:

1343 dikaiosune (dik-ah-yos-oo'-nay); from 1342; equity (of character or act); specially (Christian) justification: KJV-- righteousness.

The above definition from **Strong's Concordance** is somewhat vague but the one from the **Thayer's Greek Lexicon** is not:

1342 dikaios-

a) in a wide sense, upright, righteous, virtuous, **keeping the commands of God**

- 1) used of those who seem to themselves to be righteous, who pride themselves to be righteous, who pride themselves in their virtues, whether real or imagined
- 2) innocent, faultless, guiltless
- 3) used of him whose way of thinking, feeling, and acting is wholly conformed to the will of God, and who therefore needs no rectification in the heart or life
- **4) approved by or acceptable by God**

b) in a narrower sense, rendering to each his due and that in a judicial sense, passing just judgment on others, whether expressed in words or shown by the manner of dealing with them

Answer for yourself: Did we just read that in every nation non-Jews who produce works of righteousness and labor in accomplishing righteous acts are "accepted with God"?

Answer for yourself: Did we equally see that we can not only can obtain and acquire works of righteousness by our obedience but we as non-Jews can also EARN by working a state of "acceptance by God"? It sure appears so and again this is what Biblical Judaism has taught from the beginning of time.

Answer for yourself: Understanding that Acts 10:35 is in the New Testament, did you see for yourself that the Law has not passed away, but instead, Peter testifies after the death of Jesus that in every nation of the world Gentiles (remember Paul uses the term for Gentile Christians in the New Testament) who reverence God and labor to be righteous (attaining a condition of acceptance with God by correct feelings that promote correct actions) by being upright and by **KEEPING THE COMMANDS OF GOD are accepted (saved) by God?**

Answer for yourself: Although it goes against the vast majority of Christian teaching today, did you notice that the words of your Bible, understood in their original language, describe **that there exists a condition whereby man can make himself acceptable with God and ATTAIN BY HIMSELF a condition of acceptance before God, even after the cross of Christ?**

Answer for yourself: Did you notice that if we are to "worketh righteousness" (labor to be righteous by obeying the commandments) that evidently there are things (obeying the commandments) by which man can do (not just believe) for himself to strengthen his relationship with God (make himself acceptable with God), thus meaning that "Jesus did not do it all" as we have been taught our whole lives?

Answer for yourself: Are you to believe preachers you have heard your whole life that reiterate the past preaching of a received "tradition" from the reformers of the middle ages, or will you allow the very inspired words of the Bible be your authority for what you are to believe?

We all want to be accepted with God and we were just told how; namely, to obey the Commandments of God that make up our Covenant and our Covenant stipulations. For the non-Jew it begins with 66 Commandments that frame the Covenant and Laws of Noah. For the Jew that number is 613.

The object of our obedience of the Commands of God is our demonstration of our love for and "*fear of God*" as required in the above passage. This also is how we "*work righteousness*" as we let these Commandments of God in our respective Covenants, Jewish and non-Jewish, dictate to us what we are to do and not do. This might be news to you but our Covenant stipulations, the Commandments and Laws that from our Covenants with God, when obeyed or disobeyed, determine our actual standing before God.

Answer for yourself: What does the word "accepted" mean in the Greek?

Let us first look at what the Strong's Concordance has to say:

1184 dektos (dek-tos'); from 1209; approved; (figuratively) propitious: KJV-- accepted (-table).

The "root word" means: 1209 dechomai (dekh'-om-ahee); *middle voice of a primary verb*; to receive (in various applications, literally or figuratively): KJV-- accept, receive, take.

Answer for yourself: Did you notice that this word, "accepted", is in the Middle voice? What does this mean in Greek grammar? Voice refers to the role of the subject in the action. Understand that since our verb is "active" in that "the person has to work righteousness" and performs some sort of action, then the verb is active which means that the subject is the performer or responsible for the action (the agent). So you and I are responsible to "fear God" and revere God in our actions as well as responsible to "do righteousness" and thereby acquire a condition of acceptability with God.

Answer for yourself: Having seen in prior articles dealing with Acts 15 and the Acts 15 Jerusalem Council where we saw the debate centered over what would be required of the non-Jew to be accepted among the Jews and the Israel of God then would it not apply that this passage detailing that the non-Jew must "fear God" and "work righteousness" would equally refer to the non-Jew "being accepted into the family of God as well (being grafted into Israel)? It sure would.

Answer for yourself: Can you think of a passage in the New Testament whereby we are warned that many mistakenly believing that they are accepted with God will come to God and Messiah and be rejected instead?

Matt 7:21-23 21 Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven. 22 Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works? 23 And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity. (KJV)

The death penalty...which is exactly "what" one earns for committing SIN, as Romans 6:23 says (THE WAGES OF SIN IS DEATH)...hung over us, just as it does for anyone who PRACTICES SIN (remember transgression of the LAW is defined as "sin" in the New Testament). Only those who *turn FROM sin, turn FROM breaking the Law, and turn TO Yahweh in OBEDIENCE to Yahweh's every Word*" will be given the gift only Yahweh can give...Eternal Life! We will be given access to the Tree of Life!

As we Read in Isaiah 59: 1-2, it is OUR SINS (INIQUITIES) that separate us from God.

Isa 59:1-2 1 Behold, the LORD's hand is not shortened, that it cannot save; neither his ear heavy, that it cannot hear: 2 But your iniquities have separated between you and your God, and your sins have hid his face from you, that he will not hear. (KJV)

Now back to the point; we can either "work righteousness" and be accepted with God or as Matt. 7:21-23 states we can "work iniquity" and be not accepted and be told to depart from God. The choice is ours; that is if we are instructed correctly by our Spiritual teachers. But that is not always the case.

Let us examine the Hebrew word for "iniquity" used by Isaiah the Prophet in Isa. 59:1-2:

Isa 59:1-2 1 Behold, the LORD's hand is not shortened, that it cannot save; neither his ear heavy, that it cannot hear: 2 But your iniquities have separated between you and your God, and your sins have hid his face from you, that he will not hear. (KJV)

The **Strong's Concordance** teaches us concerning the Hebrew word for "iniquities":

5771 `avon (aw-vone'); or `avown (2 Kings 7:9; Psalm 51:5 [7]) (aw-vone'); from 5753; **perversity, i.e. (moral) evil: KJV-- fault, iniquity, mischief, punishment (of iniquity), sin.**

The "root word" as taken from the **Strong's Concordance**:

5753 `avah (aw-vaw'); a primitive root; to crook, literally or figuratively (as follows): KJV-- do amiss, bow down, make crooked, commit iniquity, pervert, (**do**) **perverse (-ly), trouble, X turn, do wickedly, do wrong.**

This same English word is defined in the **Strong's Concordance** in the New Testament in Matt. 7:23 as **"those not submitted to Jewish LAW"** and it is **our breaking of Yahweh's Law**, that cuts us off from Yahweh. Let us now look at this in both the Greek and the English texts.

Let us examine the Greek word for "iniquities" as taken from the **Strong's Concordance** from Matt. 7:21-23.

458 anomia (an-om-ee'-ah); from 459; illegality, i.e. violation of law or (genitive case) wickedness: KJV-- iniquity, X transgress (-ion of) the law, unrighteousness.

The "root word" is Strong's number 459 anomos (an'-om-os); from 1 (as a negative particle) and 3551; **lawless, i.e. (negatively) not subject to (the Jewish) law; (by implication, a Gentile), or (positively) wicked: KJV-- without law, lawless, transgressor, unlawful, wicked.**

Answer for yourself: Did you notice that this passage Matt. 7:21-23 teaches that even Gentiles who work "iniquity" and who are **not subject to the Jewish Law are told to depart from God?**

These same Scriptures tell us that the REASON Yahweh will NOT listen to someone, is BECAUSE they are a SINNER...they practice sin. For your information this is the same word used by Yeshua [Jesus] in Matt. 7:23 where he tells "many" who come to him expecting "acceptance" to depart from him because they practice iniquity (**Strong's number 458 & 459 meaning "the practice of not submitting to Jewish Law"**).

Now let us examine what Thayer's Greek Lexicon has to teach us about the word "iniquity":

458 anomia-

- **1) the condition of without law**
- **a) because ignorant of it**
- **b) because of violating it**
- **2) contempt and violation of law, iniquity, wickedness**

This is a very frightening revelation for a Christian who has grown up in church his whole life and who has been taught that he is not under the Law but under grace as well as being taught disdain for the Holy Law of YHWH which is literally his Covenant stipulations.

Answer for yourself: Is transgression of the LAW of Moses, which contains within it the Gentile's Covenant and Laws of Noah as spoken of following the Cross in the New Testament considered "sin?" Definitely yes.

Answer for yourself: Please note that Ephesians 2:1 says that these converts "WERE" (past tense) cut off from Yahweh, having no hope because something had separated them from Yahweh. What does Isaiah tell us in 59:1-2 that separated the Gentiles from God? Our iniquities, our sin which is transgression of the Law.

Answer for yourself: The New Testament, in I John 3:4, defines "SIN" as what? Transgression of, violation of, and ignorance of the Mosaic Laws. So it is these transgression of our Covenant Laws and Commandments that separate us from God and do not allow us to be accepted because we spend our lives under incorrect teaching that assures we don't "work righteousness" which is demonstrated by obedience to these Commandments of God residing in our respective Covenants with God.

Answer for yourself: Does Matt. 7:21 teach us in the New Testament that those who are without the Law, or who are ignorant of the Law, or who violate the Law, or who are destitute of the Mosaic Law (usually Gentiles) are told by Yeshua to depart from him? Yes. Can you imagine the horror waking up "dead" and being told by the one you expect to receive you to "get out of here"?

Answer for yourself: Even worse does Matt. 7:21 teach us in the New Testament that those who depart from the law are "wicked?" Yes. Have you ever thought that accepting, believing Christian dogmas, and acting upon them in faith, in particular those regarding the Jewish Law, has made you "wicked" in the sight of God? The next time your preacher teaches you that the Law is done away with in Christ or that "Christ is the end of the Law" just remember that.

Answer for yourself: Does Matt. 7:21 teach us that if we are ignorant of the Law, thereby showing our contempt of it, should we expect to likewise hear "depart from me" from Yeshua in the world to come? Yes.

Answer for yourself: Does Matt. 7:21 teach us in the New Testament that those who violate the Law and are destitute of the Mosaic Law are told by Yeshua to depart from him. Yes.

Answer for yourself: If your church has taught you that the Law has passed away, thus making you destitute of the Law of Moses, should you expect that Yeshua will tell you to depart from him as well? Yes.

Answer for yourself: Do you realize that if the Law of God (Laws of Moses-Torah) is not valid today, then we are not sinners? Is that possible since that Yahweh teaches us that if we say "we have not sinned" then we are LIARS? No.

Answer for yourself: If I John 3:4 is a New Testament Scripture, then how is it possible that "sin" can be defined as "transgression against the LAW" if the LAW HAS PASSED AWAY AND WE ARE NO LONGER UNDER LAW BUT UNDER GRACE? It can't!

Answer for yourself: Is transgression of the LAW following the Cross in the New Testament considered "sin?" Yes.

Answer for yourself: Before the CONVERSION of these GENTILE EPHESIANS, they lived in SIN. What did one earn for committing SIN which is defined in the New Testament as transgression of the Law? Death and separation from God ("depart from me").

Answer for yourself: Romans 6:23 says THE WAGES OF SIN IS DEATH and death hung over all men, just as it does for anyone who PRACTICES SIN. Then is it a true statement that only those who turn FROM sin, turn FROM breaking the Law, and turn TO Yahweh in OBEDIENCE to Yahweh's Every Word" will be given the Gift only Yahweh can give...Eternal Life? Yes.

Answer for yourself: Do you find it difficult to believe that this is the same word used by Yeshua [Jesus] in Matt. 7:21 where he tells "many" who come to him expecting "acceptance" to depart from him because they practice iniquity (Strong's number 458 & 459 meaning the practice of not submitting to Jewish Law)? Not any longer.

Answer for yourself: Can you begin to see the importance of identifying with Israel who has always revered the Covenant Law instead of organizations (Churches) that teach the Law has passed away? I hope so.

Answer for yourself: Are you aware that it is within THE LAW of God where we find commandments concerning how we as Gentiles are to worship God according to "the pattern" given by David and handed down well into the fourth century? This website is showing you this.

Answer for yourself: Do you now better understand that since most of Christianity does not pay attention to the validity of the Law for their lives, that they overlook the pattern for how God is to be worshipped (Festivals and Sabbath and righteous giving of the Tithe instead of the way it is handled by most today), thus causing multitudes to worship God in vain?

It is with this understanding that ministries like Bet Emet and others are trying to reach Christians in the hope of revealing to them the beauty of the Hebraic Roots of their faith in hopes they will repent and worship God in Spirit and in Truth, for He is worthy of correct worship and love.

Please understand that before the Word of Yahweh was given to the Gentile People as a whole, they were *cut off* from Yahweh. Before this, ONLY the Tribes of the Children of Israel were given Yahweh's Laws, which GUIDED one to faith and obedience, thus culminating in Yahweh's SALVATION.

Bet Emet Ministries believes in examining our "belief systems" to see if we are in "the faith." We, at Bet Emet, through educational newsletters attempt to examine our "religious belief systems," our Bibles, concepts, religious doctrines, ancient meanings of biblical words, and the influence of ancient culture on the writers of the biblical text, and much more. After all, what are we to do one day when standing before God at the Judgment Seat and after confession that we have prophesied in his name, and in his name cast out demons and in his name done many wonderful works (we thought), and hear: *"I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity?"* This frightening example is to warn us that "many" will have a "religious belief system" that will guarantee their disqualification from entering the Kingdom of Heaven.

Answer for yourself: Is that you? Could that be You? How can you prevent yourself from awaking from the dead and finding that you are personally fulfilling Matt. 7? Don't you thing you better start examining YOUR "belief system" while you still can?

We at Bet Emet Ministries have had to repent of many doctrines we were taught in good faith that could not stand the text of critical examination. **God desires we have faith in "truth" and not faith in "error or lies."** We invite you to tell your friends that such an opportunity is available at Bet Emet Ministries. More to follow in article three. More to come in article three. Shalom.



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THE GRAFTING OF THE GENTILES INTO THE ISRAEL OF GOD #3

Many centuries before the earliest writings of the New Testament, Isaiah said: *"Israel shall with Egypt and Assyria form a triple alliance, a blessing to the world around and blessed by God Who said, 'Blessed be Egypt, My people; Assyria, the work of My hands; and Israel, My heritage.' (Isaiah 19:24f.)"*

In order for you to feel the full force of Isaiah's prophecy, imagine some preacher today proclaiming, "Blessed is Russia, God's people; Red China, the work of His hands; and America, His heritage." This does put some strain on the imagination. Yet Isaiah dared. Israel's prophets happened really to believe that we have indeed all one Father. The spirit of these prophets pervades the entire Torah, the entire Pentateuch. It is to these first five fundamental books of the Bible that we now turn.

TORAH

The traditional view of Biblical authorship is that the prophet Moses, in the thirteenth pre-Christian century, wrote down the Torah on Mount Sinai at the dictation of God. The Pentateuch (first 5 books of the Bible) contain the earliest literary records of the religion of Israel and are first in importance among the sacred texts of Biblical faith. "The Five Books of Moses" are the primary source of Israel's faith. To examine what the Pentateuch has to say about proselytes and the Gentiles coming into relationship with God and His people Israel is, therefore, of utmost importance for the Christian today in relation to his obedience or disobedience to the "pattern of worship" as shown in previous articles. To begin with Torah is truly to put first things first.

Many modern scholars believe that the stories of Creation, the Patriarchs and Joseph are legendary. They may be. But it is precisely in the realm of its folklore that a people reveals its elemental thought and feeling, its basic beliefs, its loftiest aspirations. The political history of Israel, as of other folk, was influenced by external circumstances—climate, geography, wars. Its myths and legends are the expression of its inward spiritual experience. Its folklore bespeaks a people's soul.

Literally, the first concern of the Hebrew Bible is not with Hebrews but with humanity. Scripture opens not with the birth of Abraham, traditional father of this folk, nor of Moses, historic founder of their faith, but significantly with the creation of the world and the advent of man.

In the religion of Israel so incomparably precious is man that whereas in Genesis God evokes every other component of His universe by mere command, saying, "Let there be" . . . light, land, sea, sky, sun, moon and stars; creatures of the waters, air and earth . . . "and so it was"—when He contemplates His masterpiece, He says not "Let there be man" but...

"Let Us make man in Our image . . ." Thus God molded-- from the dust of the ground . . . breathing from His nostrils the breath of life . . . (Genesis 1:26 and 2:7)

In the Creation story so holy is mankind that God broke with His own divine precedent of verbal command only to create man. Even the Almighty had to labor in the sweat of His brow, as it were, to fashion man. He made only man in His image; and, to do this, He literally inspired him with His own breath or spirit. That is how "man became a living being" (Genesis 2:7).

Do we have here a scientific, historically accurate account of man's origin? Hardly. But surely this is a completely accurate version of what the religion of Israel teaches about the supreme importance to God of man both during and after man's creation.

Obviously then, God is not Israel's exclusive deity. He is concerned with the fate of all mankind, even men as distant as those of India and as dissolute as those of Sodom. The peoples of Chaldea, Phoenicia, Philistia, and Ethiopia; of Tyre, Sidon, Cyprus, Rhodes and the distant isles are all part of His divine plan.

Answer for yourself: Does the Torah favor or forbid the admission of these diverse folk into the religion of Israel when formalized at Sinai when a "mixed multitude" of Gentiles stood with Jews? No.

Answer for yourself: Did Israel in Bible times discourage, tolerate or seek proselytes? That is a little harder for the situation was different at different times, but for the most part accepted Gentiles into the faith..

So much is certain: The Torah is source for the tradition that, from the inception of this folk and faith, the *religion of Israel was born with and borne by converts*. Julius Lewy, in his article "Origin and Signification of the Biblical Term 'Hebrew'" (*Hebrew Union College Annual*, 1957, pp. 1-13), has supplied some *evidence that etymologically the very word "Hebrew" is itself not a proper noun designating a specific people, but rather a widely used general Semitic term signifying a resident alien or ger.*

ABRAHAM

The first Hebrew was himself a convert. With his wife Sarah, Abraham left their Aramean kin and their home in Chaldea to found a new and blessed nation.

Abraham took Sarah his wife . . . and all the souls which they had made in Haran and they started off for Canaan, (Genesis 12:5)

Later rabbinic tradition has it that these "souls" were male and female converts which Abraham and Sarah respectively "made", i.e., brought to "spiritual birth" by initiation into the new Jewish faith.

Rebecca, the wife of Isaac, began life as a heathen in Syria. So did Rachel and Leah, the wives of Jacob, as well as his concubines, Bilhah and Zilpah. On their maternal side each of the traditional founders of the twelve tribes of Israel was the son of a convert. In addition, two of them, Judah and Simeon, married women of Canaan.

Also, the tradition that Israel's founder was not born an Israelite was never permitted to die or be forgotten. To this very day it is prescribed that at least twice a year—once in spring at the Haggadah which is the reading on Passover and again in late summer during the Sabbath Torah reading in the synagogue. Every Jew will recall this tradition by reciting the words

My father was a wandering Aramean. (Deuteronomy 26:5)

Abraham was alert to the contaminating pagan influence of the ethnic stock from which he came. As Christians and followers of Jesus and "the Christ" we should be as well. In commissioning his servant, Eliezer of Damascus, to journey to Syria to fetch "from my father's house" a bride for Isaac, he warned his steward:

Beware of taking my son back there, . . . God took me away from my father's house,, If the woman is unwilling to follow you, then you are free from this oath of mine (Genesis 24:6..ff)

That Abraham's fear was well founded is apparent from the account of Rachel's theft of her father's household gods when she fled from Syria with her husband Jacob (Genesis 31:19-35). Once they are removed from their idolatrous girlhood homes, these brides of the Patriarchs become exemplary matrons. From them issue sons who father the tribes of Israel.

The Torah (and, therefore, Judaism) regarded these men and women as the flesh and blood ancestors of Israel, their marital alliances as valid, their progeny not only as legitimate but also the bearers of the religious heritage of Israel. **The Torah teaches and wants its adherents to understand that non-Israelites can become members of Israel (ingrafted) and beget Israelites. Not only the Patriarchs and their Aramean consorts could do this, but peoples of any race, nation or religious origin.**

Moses' wife, Zipporah, by whom he had Gershom, was the daughter of a priest of Midian. David was the husband of Maacah, daughter of Talmai, king of Geshur, and mother of Absalom. The mother of Rehoboam, Solomon's son and successor to the Judean throne, was Naamah the Ammonite. **Just take a minutes to look the Gentile lineages and it quickly becomes apparent that Gentiles have been continually identifying with God and the faith He gave to all men.....which is best expressed as Biblical Judaism. It is this faith that obey the Commandments of God and sees no need to relegate them to antiquity as if they are "passed away." Let us never forget as Christians that it is these Commandments that reveal to us how we, as God's people, are to please Him in our responses to him. Such is called obedience and is expressed continually by following God and His plan and pattern given for not only worship, but life as well.**

CIRCUMCISION

That most converts to Judaism have been females may, in part at least, be ascribed to the traditional requirement that full conversion of males required circumcision. This has been the physical sign of the covenant between God and the men of Israel since Abraham's day. To an adult male this was no small decision and kept many from making formal identification with Israel.

The Lord appeared unto Abraham and said . . . "Every male among you is to be circumcised.... That is the sign of the covenant between us.... Every male ... is to be circumcised when he is eight days old, whether he be born in your household or acquired from any foreigner that is not of your race." (Genesis 17:1-12)

The covenant for the Non-Jew, the Covenant of Noah, does not consist of the rite of circumcision. The covenant is that the Jew and Gentile are to serve God and be holy as God is holy. Circumcision is but the external sign of this covenant. Analogously, the bow in the sky was merely the symbol of God's compact with Noah. As the rainbow antedated the Deluge, so circumcision was a common pre-Israelitish custom. But, whatever the incentive for the practice among other peoples, for Israel it signified consecration, the casting off of spiritual uncleanness as preparation for assumption of membership in this covenanted people.

PASSOVER

Besides native born Jewish males, including native born slaves, the ger (the Gentile who came to faith in God and accepted His religion) who wished to participate in the Passover had to be circumcised.

When a ger with you desires to keep the Lord's Passover, let all male members of his family be circumcised; then he shall count as a native. (Exodus 12:48)

Historically, Passover is the most ancient of Hebrew festivals. Religiously, the Exodus was the most significant event in the annals of Israel—so important that it is the only historical event included in the Decalogue and there mentioned in the very first sentence. It was the sign of the fulfillment of the covenant on God's part. To participate in the Paschal celebration whereby he partook of the lamb of the Passover a Non-Jew had to identify himself completely with Israel, the people of the covenant. Circumcision was the physical sign of this identification, the external fulfillment of the covenant on the part of each Israelite and any who wished to make full identification with Israel (being grafted into the Israel of God). It was a requirement for the full-fledged male ger, the complete convert. He must be circumcised to celebrate the Passover.

THE LAW

The “universalism” of the prophets runs through not only the legend and lore of the first book of the Pentateuch. It also animates the principles and policies outlined in the other four books. Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers and Deuteronomy lay down the general rules. No where is God's will that Gentiles and Jews both are required to obey the Laws of God is seen more clearly than in the following passages:

There shall be one and the same law for the native (Jew) and for the ger (Gentile). (Exodus 12:49; Leviticus 24:22; Numbers 9:14, 15:15, 16, 29; Deuteronomy 1:16)

As you (Jew) are so shall the ger be before God. (Numbers 15:15)

Answer for yourself: Does this in anyway sound as if the Gentile who comes to God has a completely different covenant or a different religion from the Jew?

The ger who dwells with you shall he to you as the homeborn and you shall love him as yourself. (Leviticus 19:34)

Specifically, the ger (Gentile) was to enjoy equal freedom from injustice and oppression. If indigent, he was entitled, with the poor, the orphan and the widow, to sustenance from the gleanings of grainfield, vineyard and olive orchard (Lev. 19:10; 23:22; Deut. 24:19ff), and to maintenance from loans, tithes and other public funds (Lev. 25:6; Deut. 14:28ff; 26:12ff). The cities of refuge, in which the native Israelite could obtain emergency asylum, were open to the ger as well (Numb. 35:14ff; Joshua 20:9).

The same moral prohibitions—against unchastity (Lev. 18:26), idolatry (Lev. 20:2; Ezekiel 14:7ff), blasphemy, murder, maiming of man or beast (Lev. 24:16-22; Numb 15:30)—applied to the ger as to the native Israelite.

Answer for yourself: In the above examples cited concerning the ger (Gentile) what is it that all the Scriptures have in common? These are manifestations of Commandments and the Law of Moses as well as the Laws of Noah. We see the Gentile being the recipient of blessings from the Jews as well as obeying the Law of God.

Along with the whole community he was invited to learn Torah (Deut. 31:12; Joshua 8:33ff) and to enter the covenant with God (Deut 29: 10ff)

Deut 31:12 12 Gather the people together, men, and women, and children, and thy stranger that is within thy gates, that they may hear, and that they may learn, and fear the LORD your God, and observe to do all the words of this law: (KJV)

Notice that the Gentile (stranger) who identified with Israel was to hear the words of the Law in order to learn, fear God, and observe, obey, and do all the commandments of the Law that pertained to him.

Let us turn to the Strong's Concordance and look at the Hebrew word for "hear" in this context:

8085 shama` (shaw-mah'); a primitive root; to hear intelligently (often with implication of attention, obedience, etc.; causatively, to tell, etc.): KJV-- X attentively, call (gather) together, X carefully, X certainly, consent, consider, be content, declare, X diligently, discern, give ear, (cause to, let, make to) hear (-ken, tell), X indeed, listen, make (a) noise, (be) obedient, obey, perceive, (make a) proclaim (-ation), publish, regard, report, shew (forth), (make a) sound, X surely, tell, understand, whosoever [heareth], witness.

Answer for yourself: Remembering that Jesus quoted from Deuteronomy quite a lot during his ministry, did God say that the Gentile was to hear the Law in order to understand the Law?

Answer for yourself: Does the Hebrew word for "hear" carry the implied meaning of obedience? Yes.

Answer for yourself: Does the Hebrew word for "hear" carry the implied responsibility that once you hear the Law you are obliged to proclaim, tell, and cause others to hear the Law as well? Yes

The Hebrew word for "hear" is in the Imperfect Tense.

The imperfect expresses an action, process or condition which is incomplete, suggesting a "process" preliminary to its completion. In other words the Law was to be taught to the Gentile back then and CONTINUALLY as well as a process that began in the past but has current effects. The sad fact of the matter is that little "current effects" of teaching the Law as a continual process to the Gentile is seldom seen today because the church has misinterpreted the English New Testament so often that we have lost its meaning and are totally devoid of the true message intended for Gentile believers today.

The truth is that the Gentiles were "to begin to 'hear'" the Law and Commandments and were to continually hear them because up to the time of the giving of the Law, the Gentiles of the world had fallen into sin and spiritual darkness and had lost the revelation of God. Thus, they were living as pagans and needed the Revelation of God at Sinai to begin their restoration.

The writer of the Epistle of the Ephesians sums up the condition of the Non-Jewish Gentile in the world when he said:

Eph 2:12 12 That at that time ye were without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope, and without God in the world: (KJV)

A phrase such as "Hear", refers not only to the present (Gentiles are to hear and obey the Law), but assumes

that the search has continued for some time. The Imperfect Tense relates not so much as to one occasion, as to a continued condition.

Answer for yourself: Please answer honestly. Can you say that your experience as a Christian has been one of a “continued condition” whereby you have continually heard and understood the Law in preparation for your obedience to it? Most likely not.

The Imperfect Tense also stresses an action (hearing, learning in preparation of obeying the commandments) that consist in its frequent repetition.

Answer for yourself: Has your Pastor studied the original languages of the Bible to get to the real meaning of the words of God and Jesus, or has he leaned on his own understanding and interpreted the English of his Bible based on his own cultural experiences? Most likely the latter.

The imperfect Tense is used to express the "future", referring to an action which is about to be accomplished.

Answer for yourself: How many of you can truthfully say that you expect your church this next Sunday to begin to understand these passages and begin to teach you the Law and Commandments regarding such things as how a Gentile is to worship God, what God will receive as worship and what is vanity to Him? Remember dear brothers and sisters, the whole purpose of our obedience to the Law is to please and love God in the manner He requires, and it is precisely these issues which are commanded by God in His Law for both the Jew and Gentile as I have shown so far. Lastly, remember the Law was to be taught in the future to Gentiles of all generations.

Answer for yourself: Have you been taught yet concerning the Laws and Commandments which frame your Covenant with God and which, when obeyed, determine your standing before God?

Let us continue our study.



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THE GRAFTING OF THE GENTILES INTO THE ISRAEL OF GOD #4

THIS IS STARTLING WHEN YOU FINALLY SEE IT!

The same RITUAL requirements were made of Gentile believer as was the Jewish believer. He incurred the same taboos (Numb. 19:10)...

Num 19:10 10 And he that gathereth the ashes of the heifer shall wash his clothes, and be unclean until the even: and it shall be unto the children of Israel, and unto the stranger that sojourneth among them, for a statute for ever. (KJV)

This passage opens up a line of study that seems to have no end. Let us look at the word in the Hebrew in the above passage which is translated in the English as "statute":

Strong's Concordance:

2708 **chuqqah** (khook-kaw'); feminine of 2706, and meaning substantially the same: KJV-- **appointed, custom, manner, ordinance, site, statute**. 2706 choq (khoke); from 2710; an enactment; hence, an **appointment (of time, space, quantity, labor or usage)**: KJV-- **appointed, bound, commandment, convenient, custom, decree** (-d), due, **law**, measure, X **necessary, ordinance** (-nary), portion, **set time, statute, task**.

Brown-Driver-Briggs Hebrew Lexicon:

2706 choq- a statute, an ordinance, a limit, something prescribed, due

- a) a prescribed task
- b) a prescribed portion
- c) an action prescribed (for oneself), resolve
- d) a prescribed due
- e) a prescribed limit, a boundary
- f) an enactment, a decree, an ordinance
 - 1) specific decree
 - 2) **law in general**
- g) enactments, statutes
 - 1) conditions
 - 2) enactments
 - 3) decrees

◦ 4) the civil enactments prescribed by God

If we look over the above definition which is for the word "statute" we see that God gave both the Jew and the Non-Jew Laws, Commandments, ordinances, necessary ordinances, tasks, manners, customs, appointed times and set times, as well as boundaries where one Law stops and another continues. This is a perfect picture of the similarity as well as dissimilarities between the Covenant and Laws of Noah and the Covenant and Laws of Moses. **And to top it all off God says that these "set times, appointed times, and tasks" are Eternal and forever!**

Answer for yourself: Are you aware that another name for "chuggah" is festival? That is right. God gave tasks and prescribed ordinances and Laws and Commandments that are Eternal and forever regarding His Holy Days and Appointed Set Times to both Non-Jews and Gentiles. We saw about the stipulation and commandment that for a Non-Jew to observe the Passover that he had to be circumcised. This is but one of many examples.

Answer for yourself: Did God give the Gentile believer (stranger) customs, manners, statutes, enactments, specific decrees, laws in general and commandments FOREVER? He sure did.

Answer for yourself: Just do to the nature of the question, did you see that a ceremonially condition of uncleanness can affect the Gentile as well as the Jew? Wow that is quite a revelation is it now when we thought that uncleanness affected only the Jew!

Answer for yourself: Are you beginning to understand that we as Christians are often "unclean" before God, and are for the most part unaware because our actions and behaviors are sin before God? The sad fact of the matter is that we are unaware of our real spiritual condition before God because we lack the hearing of the Law and Commandments which would teach us the errors of our ways.

Answer for yourself: Are you aware that the condition of "uncleanness will limit God's presence in your life?

Let us look at the Hebrew word for "unclean" as used in this verse.

The Strong's Concordance:

2930 tame' (taw-may'); a primitive root; to be foul, especially in a **ceremonial or moral sense** (contaminated): KJV-- defile (self), pollute (self), be (make, makeself, pronounce) unclean, X utterly.

Brown-Driver-Briggs Hebrew Lexicon:

2930 tame'- to be unclean, to become unclean, to become impure a) (Qal) to be or become unclean 1) sexually 2) **religiously 3) ceremonially** b) (Niphal) 1) **to defile oneself, to be defiled a) sexually b) by idolatry c) ceremonially 2) to be regarded as unclean** c) (Piel) 1) to defile a) sexually b) religiously c) ceremonially 2) to pronounce unclean, to declare unclean (ceremonially) 3) **to profane (God's name)** d) (Pual) to be defiled e) (Hithpael) to be unclean f) (Hothpael) to be defiled

Answer for yourself: According to the Scriptures shown to you, can Gentile believers like you and me "become unclean" RELIGIOUSLY and CEREMONIALLY? Sure can.

Answer for yourself: As Gentile believers, can we by actions done in a religious context profane God's Name instead of exalt it? Sure can.

Answer for yourself: Can you begin to see that because we as contemporary Christians are basically unlearned about the Law (defined as Torah, Instruction, Teaching in Hebrew), and since unlearned, often fail to obey customs, ordinances, statutes, and enactments which were given to us by God but of which we are unaware? In so doing do we render ourselves unclean and profane the Name of God and not even know it? We sure do!

Gentiles could not eat blood (Lev. 17:10) or animals that died of natural causes or was killed by other predators (Lev. 17:15).

Answer for yourself: Why is this important and what should it teach us?

What is of major importance to us is that the Gentile Observed the same sacrificial procedures (Lev. 17:8; 22:18; Numb. 15:14,26) and the Passover prohibition of leaven (Ex. 12:19) and partook of the Paschal meal (Ex. 12:48; II Chronicles 30:25)as did the Jews.

Lev 17:8 8 And thou shalt say unto them, Whatsoever man there be of the house of Israel, or of the strangers which sojourn among you, that offereth a burnt offering or sacrifice, (KJV)

Answer for yourself: Can you see for yourself that God intended and desired that Gentiles worship THE SAME WAY AS THE JEWS by bring the same offerings?

Answer for yourself: Can you begin to relate what you have learned to the worship of God as seen in the Gentile believer's participation in the Festivals and Sabbaths of God as well let alone the Sacrificial System of Israel? It would appear, and is so. that one law was given and shared often between the Jew and the Non-Jew.

Exod 12:49 49 One law shall be to him that is homeborn, and unto the stranger that sojourneth among you. (KJV)

Num 15:16 16 One law and one manner shall be for you, and for the stranger that sojourneth with you. (KJV)

Num 15:29 29 Ye shall have one law for him that sinneth through ignorance, both for him that is born among the children of Israel, and for the stranger that sojourneth among them. (KJV)

Answer for yourself: Can you begin to see that since we as Gentile believers don't worship God according to "the pattern" as does the Jews (they never changed it) that this goes a long way in explaining how and why we have a Replacement Religion today in Gentile Christianity and a "replacement theology" which often has led us to worship God in vain? I hope so. *It is time to return to our Hebrew Roots of the Christian Church for, as I have shown you, there is another message in the original language of our Bibles that you don't get when you only read it in English.*

Lev 22:18 18 Speak unto Aaron, and to his sons, and unto all the children of Israel, and say unto them, Whatsoever he be of the house of Israel, or of the strangers in Israel, that will offer his oblation for all his vows, and for all his freewill offerings, which they will offer unto the LORD for a burnt offering; (KJV)

Num 15:14 14 And if a stranger sojourn with you, or whosoever be among

you in your generations, and will offer an offering made by fire, of a sweet savour unto the LORD; as ye do, so he shall do. (KJV)

Answer for yourself: Does Numbers 15:14 indicate that the Gentile is to worship (“do as the Jew does”)? It sure does.

Answer for yourself: Since God is the same yesterday, today, and tomorrow, does your church lead you in worship of God in Jewish (understood as a synonym for Biblical) ways?

Answer for yourself: If now why not since that is what the Bible teaches in both the Old and New Testaments? If that is not your experience I and others at Bet Emet call upon you to seriously consider your options since having come to the truth?

Num 15:15 15 One ordinance shall be both for you of the congregation, and also for the stranger that sojourneth with you, an ordinance for ever in your generations: as ye are, so shall the stranger be before the LORD. (KJV)

Answer for yourself: Since we are dealing in the passage in the context of sacrifices and worship, did you notice that God said FOREVER the Gentile and Jew are to have the same ordinance, same custom, and the same appointed times (Biblical Feasts)?

Answer for yourself: Is the above your experience or have you wasted much of your life worshipping God in vanity?

Num 15:26 26 And it shall be forgiven all the congregation of the children of Israel, and the stranger that sojourneth among them; seeing all the people were in ignorance. (KJV)

The Gentile believers were commanded to observe the Passover with the Jews according to the Pattern of Worship (Exodus 12:19). We will see that not only the Passover but God commanded forever that the Non-Jew observe with the Jew the Day of Atonement; Yom Kippur, according to the pattern for worship (Lev. 16:29).

Exod 12:19 19 Seven days shall there be no leaven found in your houses: for whosoever eateth that which is leavened, even that soul shall be cut off from the congregation of Israel, whether he be a stranger, or born in the land. (KJV)

Answer for yourself: Can you see for yourself that Gentile believers are to worship God by observing and celebrating the Biblical Feast of Passover and Unleavened Bread? Is that your experience as a Christian and do we follow Paul's admonition to the Gentile Corinthian Church to observe the Passover as well?

1 Cor 5:8 8 Therefore let us keep the feast, not with old leaven, neither with the leaven of malice and wickedness; but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth. (KJV)

Answer for yourself: Again, does your church mobilize yearly to have their Gentile congregation obey God by observing the Passover and the Festival of Unleavened Bread (one Law for both remember)?

Exod 12:48 48 And when a stranger shall sojourn with thee, and will keep the passover to the LORD, let all his males be circumcised, and then let him come near and keep it; and he shall be as one that is born in the land: for no uncircumcised person shall eat thereof. (KJV)

2 Chr 30:21-25 21 And the children of Israel that were present at Jerusalem kept the feast of unleavened bread seven days with great gladness: and the Levites and the priests praised the LORD day by day, singing with loud instruments unto the LORD. 22 And Hezekiah spake comfortably unto all the Levites that taught the good knowledge of the LORD: and they did eat throughout the feast seven days, offering peace offerings, and making confession to the LORD God of their fathers. 23 And the whole assembly took counsel to keep other seven days: and they kept other seven days with gladness. 24 For Hezekiah king of Judah did give to the congregation a thousand bullocks and seven thousand sheep; and the princes gave to the congregation a thousand bullocks and ten thousand sheep: and a great number of priests sanctified themselves. 25 And all the congregation of Judah, with the priests and the Levites, and all the congregation that came out of Israel, and the strangers that came out of the land of Israel, and that dwelt in Judah, rejoiced. (KJV)

Answer for yourself: Did you notice that not only in the times of Moses did Gentile identify with Israel and keep the Biblical Feasts, but continued to do so ***[remember the Imperfect Tense that said it was a continuing process of teaching Gentiles to hear and obey]*** for hundreds of years, even up to and through the days of Hezekiah?

The Gentile believers, like the Jews, were commanded to observe the Sabbath rest along with the Jews according to the Pattern of Worship (Ex. 20:10; 23:12; Deut. 5:14)...

Exod 20:10 10 But the seventh day is the sabbath of the LORD thy God: in it thou shalt not do any work, thou, nor thy son, nor thy daughter, thy manservant, nor thy maidservant, nor thy cattle, nor thy stranger that is within thy gates: (KJV)

Exod 23:12 12 Six days thou shalt do thy work, and on the seventh day thou shalt rest: that thine ox and thine ass may rest, and the son of thy handmaid, and the stranger, may be refreshed. (KJV)

Deut 5:12-14 12 Keep the sabbath day to sanctify it, as the LORD thy God hath commanded thee. 13 Six days thou shalt labour, and do all thy work: 14 But the seventh day is the sabbath of the LORD thy God: in it thou shalt not do any work, thou, nor thy son, nor thy daughter, nor thy manservant, nor thy maidservant, nor thine ox, nor thine ass, nor any of thy cattle, nor thy stranger that is within thy gates; that thy manservant and thy maidservant may rest as well as thou. (KJV)

Answer for yourself: Did you notice that the Gentile believers were commanded to keep the 7th day Sabbath (not Sunday) as did the Jews?

The Gentile believers were commanded to observe forever the Day of Atonement; Yom Kippur, according to the pattern for worship (Lev. 16:29).

Lev 16:29 29 And this shall be a statute for ever unto you: that in the seventh month, on the tenth day of the month (Yom Kippur-Day of Atonement), ye shall afflict your souls, and do no work at all, whether it be one of your own country, or a stranger that sojourneth among you: (KJV)

Answer for yourself: Did you in your Christian Church observe Yom Kippur, the Day of Atonement, last year?

Answer for yourself: Did you notice that the pattern for worship which lasts FOREVER for both the Jew and Gentile required the believing Gentile to observe the Day of Atonement on the 10th of seventh Hebrew month of Tishri?

The Gentile believers were commanded to celebrate and observe the Feasts of Tabernacles along with the Jews according to the pattern for worship (Deut 16:13).

Deut 16:13-14 13 Thou shalt observe the feast of tabernacles seven days, after that thou hast gathered in thy corn and thy wine: 14 And thou shalt rejoice in thy feast, thou, and thy son, and thy daughter, and thy manservant, and thy maidservant, and the Levite, the stranger, and the fatherless, and the widow, that are within thy gates. (KJV)

Answer for yourself: Again, do we find the Gentile believer keeping the Feast of Tabernacles “like” the Jews?

The Gentile believers were commanded to celebrate and observe the Feast of Pentecost along with the Jews according to the Pattern of Worship (Deut. 16:9-11).

Deut 16:9-11 9 Seven weeks shalt thou number unto thee: begin to number the seven weeks from such time as thou beginnest to put the sickle to the corn. 10 And thou shalt keep the feast of weeks unto the LORD thy God with a tribute of a freewill offering of thine hand, which thou shalt give unto the LORD thy God, according as the LORD thy God hath blessed thee: 11 And thou shalt rejoice before the LORD thy God, thou, and thy son, and thy daughter, and thy manservant, and thy maidservant, and the Levite that is within thy gates, and the stranger, and the fatherless, and the widow, that are among you, in the place which the LORD thy God hath chosen to place his name there. (KJV)

Answer for yourself: Again, do we find the Gentile worshipping God according to the Jewish (Biblical) pattern

in keeping the Festival of Weeks (Pentecost)?

GRAFTING OF THE NON-JEW INTO THE ISRAEL OF GOD

Answer for yourself: By now the picture should be becoming very clear; as Gentiles grafted into the Israel of God by faith in God through Christ, are we then, as believing Gentiles, to worship God “AS DO THE JEWISH PEOPLE” by adopting the Biblical Pattern of Worship? It sure would seem so!

No class-conscious discrimination existed in the minds of the authors of the Bible as to the kind of proselyte sought or acceptable. The "mixed multitude" (Exodus 12:38) of non-Israelites who fled Egypt during the Exodus were among the gerim included in the address delivered by Moses to his people at the end of their forty years' wilderness wandering:

You stand all of you today before the Lord your God . . . the men of Israel together with . . . the ger who is in the midst of the camp . . . that you may enter into the covenant of the Lord your God, that He may confirm your position this day as His people and that He may be your God, as He swore to your fathers, to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. (Deuteronomy 29:9-12)

In the mind of the Deuteronomist, the ger was an integral part of the compact made between God and the Patriarchs, His own first gerim. To the ger, as well as to the native Israelite, Abraham, Isaac and Jacob are “your fathers.”

In the sight of God, the ger was the same as any other Israelite.

For the Lord your God is never partial. He secures justice for the orphan and the widow and He loves the ger . . . (Deuteronomy 10:17ff)

Not only does God love the ger. He calls upon Israel to do likewise. For parents He demands honor

Honor your father and your mother . . . (Exodus 20:12)

and reverence

Everyone shall revere his mother and his father. (Leviticus 19:3);

for His prophets He requires proper respect and protection

Touch not My anointed ones, and do My prophets no harm. (Psalm 105:15)

The ger who dwells with you shall be treated like a native; and you must love him as much as you love yourself. (Leviticus 19:34).

More to follow in lesson 5. Shalom.



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THE GRAFTING OF THE GENTILES INTO THE ISRAEL OF GOD #5

The Prophets of Israel also have much to say about the inclusion of Gentiles into Israel and the people of God. The universalistic expressions of the post-Pentateuchal portion of Scripture are, if anything, even more ardent and eloquent in advancing the ideal of mission and espousing the cause of the convert than the writings attributed to Moses.

The author of the remarkable tenth chapter of Genesis believed all the peoples of the civilized world to be a single family. The prophet Isaiah foresaw a time when all men would be reunited through the influence of Judaism. They will converge on Zion encouraging each other to make this pilgrimage to become God's disciples.

In after days, it shall be that the Lord's hill shall rise towering over other heights; to which all nations shall stream and many fold proclaim, "Come, let us go up, to the Lord's hill, to the house of Jacob's God, and He may instruct us in His ways and we may walk in His path; for revelation comes from Zion, and from Jerusalem God's word.: (Isa. 2:2ff).

Isa 2:2-5 2 And it shall come to pass in the last days, that the mountain of the LORD's house shall be established in the top of the mountains, and shall be exalted above the hills; and all nations shall flow unto it. 3 And many people shall go and say, Come ye, and let us go up to the mountain of the LORD, to the house of the God of Jacob; and he will teach us of his ways, and we will walk in his paths: for out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of the LORD from Jerusalem. 4 And he shall judge among the nations, and shall rebuke many people: and they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruninghooks: nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more. 5 O house of Jacob, come ye, and let us walk in the light of the LORD. (KJV)

Let us look at the Hebrew word for "ways" in verse 3 above:

Brown-Driver-Briggs Hebrew Lexicon:

1870 derek- a way, a road, a distance, a journey, a manner a) a road, a way, a path b) a journey c) a direction d) a manner, a habit, a way e) used of the course of life (figurative) f) used of moral character (figurative)

Strong's Concordance:

1870 derek (deh'-rek); from 1869; a road (as trodden); figuratively, **a course of life or mode of action**, often adverb: KJV-- along, away, because of, + by, conversation, **custom**, [east-] ward, journey, manner, passenger, through, toward, [high-] [path-] way [-side], whither [-soever].

Answer for yourself: Does the Bible teach that prophetically in the future all the Gentile nations will learn to walk in the ways and paths of God whereby they learn God's way for living one's life by instruction by the Jew and the House of Jacob? Yes.

Answer for yourself: Does Isaiah tell us that the way God has arranged for that to happen is for His Law, the Torah, and His Commandments of Deuteronomic and Mosaic Law consisting of instruction and directions to go out from Zion through the teaching of the House of Jacob unto all the Gentile nations? Yes.

Answer for yourself: Didn't someone fail to tell Isaiah that the Law and Commandments, many of which require certain actions from Gentile believers, was to pass away and allow Gentiles believers, like today, to express their worship in over 2,000 different varieties of Christian denominations, where there is little unity and agreement?

Answer for yourself: More than that, who failed to tell Isaiah that the Gentile Christian Church was to replace Israel and that the Gentile no longer needs to heed the admonition of Yeshua: Salvation is of the Jews?

Answer for yourself: Don't you think that is almost impossible since most Christian Churches teach that the Law has passed away or is replaced by grace?

Answer for yourself: Dear Christian brothers and sisters, are you coming to the awareness that you if you adhere to men's doctrines in the church instead of the Apostles Doctrine and continue to be involved in a "replacement worship" instead of "true Biblical Worship" which God gave to both Jews and Gentiles, then you have the sure rebuke of God staring you in the face because you failed to study to show yourself approved before God? These things I have discovered came only from years and years of dedicated and in-depth Bible study and inquire. While other Pastors played golf I studied because of my intense love for God and His Word. In such committed efforts I discovered these things I present to you today.

The same hope, expressed in almost identical words, occurs in the book of Isaiah's younger contemporary, Micah (Micah 4:1ff).

Isaiah preached in a period of profound tension and anxiety. His homeland, Judea, was recurrently under threat from its powerful neighbors. Yet he looked beyond that era of impending disaster, imminent conquest and ultimate exile, to the day when allies and enemies alike would join Israel as proselytes

Isa 14:1 1 For the LORD will have mercy on Jacob, and will yet choose Israel, and set them in their own land: and the strangers shall be joined with them, and they shall cleave to the house of Jacob. (KJV)

Of course this was once prophecy but is being fulfilled daily by the Christian's repentance and return to the Jewish Roots of his Christian faith.

Let us look at the word "joined" above:

Strong's Concordance:

3867 lavah (law-vaw'); a primitive root; properly, to twine, i.e. (by implication) **to unite**, to remain; also to borrow (as a form of obligation) or (caus.) to lend: KJV-- **abide with**, borrow (-er), cleave, join (self), lend (-er).

Thayer's Greek Lexicon:

3867 lavah- 1) to join, to be joined a) (Qal) to join, to be joined, **to attend** b) (Niphal) **to join oneself to, to be joined unto** 2) to borrow, to lend a) (Qal) to borrow b) (Hiphil) to cause to borrow, to lend to

Answer for yourself: Did you notice that his "joining" of the Non-Jew to the Israel of God and the House of Jacob is not done by God but by one's own efforts whereby "one joins himself" by his own efforts as seen in study and repentance and obedience to what he learns is required of the "Pattern of Worship" given to Israel by God?

Answer for yourself: Can you honestly say that in your Christian walk that your experience has been to be joined with Israel in Praise and Worship according to the "Pattern of Worship" I have shown you in the previous article when we saw the many examples of Non-Jews being commanded and expected by God to observe and keep the Biblical Sabbaths and Festivals as detailed in the Hebrew Scriptures?

Answer for yourself: If you cannot say "yes," then don't you think it is about time to review your commitment to God once you have come to this new knowledge and truth? I hope so.

The prophets generally did not separate their hope of Returning Israel to God's will and their dream of converting the gentile to Biblical Faith. Both are the goal of God. To them, both were aspects of one mission, parts of the same endeavor to turn the wayward—whatever their origin—toward God. So, when Isaiah pleads for the conversion of Israel, he submits that scarlet sins cannot become snowy white as pure innocence, but repentance and obedience have redemptive Power not merely for the seed of Abraham but for any man, for all mankind.

Micah, uttering his sublime definition of ethical monotheism, invites not Israel alone but all humanity

It has been told you, O man [Jew and Gentile], what is good and what God demands of you—only to do justice and cherish kindness and live in tranquil fellowship with your God. (Micah 6:8)

"The Phoenicians," says William Addis, in Peake's Commentary on the Bible, "were familiar with the idea that a man might become the client of a god and so put himself under divine protection. They used the same word for 'client' as the Hebrews, viz., ger (Gentile). Hence we have such names in Phoenician as Gerastart, 'client of Astarte,' Gerhekal, 'client of the temple,' etc. But to be the client of Israel's God, moral qualities are necessary."

Eph 2:12 12 That at that time ye were without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope, and without God in the world: (KJV)

The above description is a perfect description of the standing of the Non-Jew outside the Israel of God. In order for one having no inherited rights in the community of Israel to enjoy the privileges of membership, to "sojourn in God's tent," he must lead a blameless life; do right; speak truth; honor other yirey Adonai, **"God-fearers"** like himself; stand by his oath without retracting no matter what the consequences; refuse to take a bribe or interest on a loan. So it is written in the fifteenth Psalm. ***He who would "ascend God's hill" must have "clean hands and a pure heart" and "never break his word."*** So it is written in the third and fourth verses of the twenty-fourth Psalm.

Despite their close acquaintance with man's inhumanity to man, prophet and psalmist devoutly believed that their ethical faith was within the spiritual grasp of all mankind. When Scythian hordes were ravaging the whole

Near East from Egypt to Babylon, a prophet whose words are included in the book of Zephaniah announced total conversion of the world as God's final judgment

I will grant the nations a purified speech so that all of them will call upon God's name and serve Him unanimously. From beyond the rivers of Ethiopia to the farthest reaches of the north My worshippers shall come bringing Me their offerings. (Zephaniah 3:9,10)

The prophet Jeremiah's career coincided with a period first of great peril--the invasion of Palestine by Pharaoh Psammetichus II and the siege of Jerusalem by Nebuchadnezzar--and then of calamity--the extinction of the 400-year-old Davidic monarchy and the subsequent Babylonian exile. Yet Jeremiah looked forward to a time when Jerusalem would be the center of a religiously regenerated world

In those days they will call Jerusalem "the throne of God" and all nations shall gather to it living no longer by the superstitions of their benighted minds (Jer.3:17).

Jer 4:1-2 1 If thou wilt return, O Israel, saith the LORD, return unto me: and if thou wilt put away thine abominations out of my sight, then shalt thou not remove. 2 And thou shalt swear, The LORD liveth, in truth, in judgment, and in righteousness; and the nations shall bless themselves in him, and in him shall they glory. (KJV)

Not Israel alone, but also its hostile neighbors—nomadic marauders from Syria, Moab and Ammon—will suffer exile; but when in their captivity these people adopt the religion of Israel and Israel's God they be returned to their respective countries.

Jer 12:14-16 14 Thus saith the LORD against all mine evil neighbors, that touch the inheritance which I have caused my people Israel to inherit; Behold, I will pluck them out of their land, and pluck out the house of Judah from among them. 15 And it shall come to pass, after that I have plucked them out I will return, and have compassion on them, and will bring them again, every man to his heritage, and every man to his land. 16 And it shall come to pass, if they will (these former evil Gentile neighbors) diligently learn the ways of my people, to swear by my name, The LORD liveth; as they taught my people to swear by Baal; then shall they be built in the midst of my people. (KJV)

Answer for yourself: Does God expect Gentiles to learn the way of His people Israel or the ways of the Catholic Church, the Baptist Church, or the Methodist Church?

Answer for yourself: Do you know more about living in the paths and ways of your denomination than the ways of the Jewish People, the real people of God?

To the exiles in Babylon, Ezekiel preached that, no matter what had befallen them at the hands of foreigners,

they were never to forget their religious obligation to the client of God, the ger who voluntarily sought admission into the religious community of Israel. Even in captivity, perhaps more especially there, they were to have compassion on him, remembering always that one and the same law held both for him and the native Israelites. Ezekiel rebuked his people for their ill-treatment of proselytes.

I leave you to the scorn of nations and the mockery of the world.... Gerim are oppressed, widows and orphans abused . . . You scorn what is sacred to Me. Natives wrong the weak and wretched and indict injustice upon gerim. (Ezekiel 22:4, 7-8, 29)

Answer for yourself: Have you as a typical Christian unaware of facts such as I have shown you, without intent SCORNE WHAT IS SACRED TO GOD and esteemed over His Word what men have deemed important?

He reiterated the prohibition against idolatry. *Half-hearted worship of God, whether by native Israelite or convert, is equally reprehensible.*

Ezek 14:7-8 7 For every one of the house of Israel, or of the stranger that sojourneth in Israel, which separateth himself from me, and setteth up his idols in his heart, and putteth the stumblingblock of his iniquity before his face, and cometh to a prophet to inquire of him concerning me; I the LORD will answer him by myself: 8 And I will set my face against that man, and will make him a sign and a proverb, and I will cut him off from the midst of my people; and ye shall know that I am the LORD. (KJV)

We need to look at the word "cut off" in the above verse.

Strong's Concordance:

3772 karath (kaw-rath'); a primitive root; to cut (off, down or asunder); by implication, **to destroy or consume**; specifically, to covenant (i.e. make an alliance or bargain, originally by cutting flesh and passing between the pieces): KJV-- be chewed, be con- [feder-] ate, covenant, cut (down, off), destroy, fail, feller, be freed, hew (down), make a league ([covenant]), X lose, perish, X utterly, X want.

Answer for yourself: If we as Christians separate ourselves from God because we don't adhere to the "Pattern of Worship" given to both Jews and Gentiles in the Bible, and accept an alternate and well-intentioned substitute which God has told us He cannot accept, then will we be the Bride of God and Messiah in the world to come?

Answer for yourself: If we as Christians separate ourselves from God because we don't adhere to the "Pattern of Worship" given to both Jews and Gentiles in the Bible, and accept in our mind and understanding an alternate and well-intentioned substitute which God has told us He cannot accept, *then will be cut off from God's covenant and people in the world to come?* It may be hard for you to accept considering what you have heard preached most of your lives, but this is what the Bible teaches!

Answer for yourself: If we as Christians separate ourselves from God because we don't adhere to the pattern of worship given to both Jews and Gentiles of Israel in the Bible, and accept an alternate and well-intentioned

substitute which God has told us He cannot accept, then how can we expect to be the Bride of Christ one day when God specifically through the Prophets warns us that if we separate from Him [in replacing Biblical Holy Days with Christianized paganism and their holidays, substitute Sabbaths of men's creation for the Sabbaths of God's Commandments, and replace righteous giving of the Tithe for the perversions done in the name of God today where the tithe is used for everything under the sun], then God will cut and separate those who do those things from the Israel of God, and **please remember it is only to Israel that He promised to marry at Sinai.** Granted, Gentiles and Jews made up the "mixed multitude" at Sinai, but the bigger question for you is "will you be in that number when the roll call is made in Heaven for the Marriage Supper, or will by fulfill Matt. 7 personally when told to "depart-be cut off from Israel-from Yeshua because you practice iniquity?" **Please refer to an earlier article when I showed you the non-compliance to the Mosaic Laws [containing Laws for worship such as Festivals, Sabbaths, and giving] are neglected, not obeyed, or just plain ignorance of them is maintained by the believer.**

God's prophet envisioned the day when every knee would bend in homage to God and every tongue swear in His name, when He would be acknowledged sole, universal Lord of all mankind. God, he said, calls upon Israel to make His glory manifest to the gentiles (today this includes the Christians as well).

Here is the message of God the Lord . . . I, the Eternal, have called you . . . I formed you . . . to be a light unto the nations, to open eyes that are blind and to free captives from their bondage. (Isaiah 42:5)

Israel's task is to be a light in the darkness of religious ignorance, to give vision to eyes blinded by superstition, to free minds enslaved to idolatry. Such is the call of Bet Emet Ministries

Second Isaiah felt that the divine work of salvation, encompassing both Jews and gentiles, had already begun. He saw in Cyrus, though not a conscious convert, a worshiper of Israel's God who would spread His religion among all mankind. But far more than Cyrus, **it is Israel, possessor of the true religion, which is to be the instrument for the conversion of the gentile.** Unto Israel shall come men from all nations giving their adherence to God and marking on their hands the inscription "the Lord's" as a sign that they have become proselytes, naturalized Israelites.

Turn to Me and you are saved, all the ends of the earth!. . . Every knee must bend to Me and every tongue vow loyalty. (Isaiah 45 22-23)

Isa 49:6 6 And he said (speaking of Israel), It is a light thing that thou shouldest be my servant to raise up the tribes of Jacob, and to restore the preserved of Israel: I will also give thee for a light to the Gentiles, that thou mayest be my salvation unto the end of the earth. (KJV)

Answer for yourself: Did God say that the Jews, as the true worshippers of God because the Gentiles were not, were given to the Gentiles to illuminate their way

Answer for yourself: Did God say that the Jews, as the true worshippers of God were to illuminate the eyes of the Gentiles to God's Law, thereby facilitating their return back to God in repentance and the truths that their forefathers had but lost? He sure did!

It is too small a service for the God of all the world merely to set the clans of Jacob up again....I now appoint you to bring' light unto the nations that My

salvations may reach the world's end (Isa. 49:6)

After the return from exile the Jerusalem community will be restored, not only by the return of dispersed native Jews, but also, according to Isaiah, *by the addition of new converts...*

Let not the descendant of a foreigner say "God will excommunicate me"...Foreigners who joint the Lord, to worship Him and love Him...will I bring to My holy hill, and make joyful in My house of prayer...My temple shall be called a house of prayer for every nation. Here is what God says, Who gathers Israel's outcasts in: "I will gather yet others in besides those already gathered." (Isa. 56:3-8)

Answer for yourself: Did you again notice that personal action is required to join oneself to the Lord? This of course means actions like study, repentance upon study, and then the positive action to implement into one's life what he learned from his study in areas like recovering "the Pattern of Worship" for ones life. The destiny of the gentiles in the glorious future is seen in that many nations will join themselves to God and will become His people

Citizens of great cities shall yet come, saying,

*"Let us go up at once to pay homage to God and to seek the Lord of hosts . . ."
." Many a people and mighty nation shall come to seek God in Jerusalem, to do obeisance to the Eternal. "In those days," the Lord of hosts declares, "ten men from nations of every language will seize the robe of a single Jew and say 'We will go with you, for we have heard that God is with you!'"
(Zechariah 8:21-23).*

Dearly beloved, this is prophetic of the Jews instructing the Gentiles of the world in the proper paths of God because they don't have it, even in the Christian Church there is great errors taught along with truth. Rest assured, as Bet Emet does her part, and others contribute their efforts, we will one day see the truth of God's Word cover the earth as the waters cover the sea.

Of these prophetic passages, Fleming James has written, in his Personalities of the Old Testament, *"The Gentiles must become converts to Judaism . . . but are not to be coerced; they will come of their own free will, come because they see the need of divine help, come with love and expectancy. And they will be welcomed, will be made God's people just as much as the Jews themselves. True, there will be an exaltation of the Jew, but a noble one. For the saying lays on him a responsibility; if they wish to go with him he must receive them, must teach them and make room for them.... He must share his God with all peoples."*

THE PSALMS

The psalmists, whose "delight is in the Law of the Lord" and who lament when "there is no more any prophet," piously follow the letter of the Law and give exultant expression to the spirit and vision of the prophets in their hymned references to the proselyte. Like the priest and the prophet, the psalmists too believed that God is

specially concerned for the welfare of proselytes and that all the world will come to serve Him.

"How precious is Thy love, O Lord; the children of men take refuge under the shadow of Thy wing . . . Unto Thee shall all men [Gentiles] come . . . Dwellers at the world's far edge are awed at the proofs of Thy power . . . Sing homage, all the earth, to God . . . Bless us, O God, till men [Gentiles] worship Thee at the world's farthest end . . . All nations Thou best made shall come and bow before Thee . . . Thou, only Thou, art God . . . Let every nation know His wondrous deeds . . . Praise the Lord, O families of the nations . . . Confess that the Lord. He is God . . . Laud Him, all ye races . . .

The testimony of the psalmist is not for Israel alone. What God has done for Israel, He can and will do for all the nations, since His sovereignty is worldwide. It is not enough for Israel to acknowledge the incomparable greatness of God. In fulfillment of prophecy, the psalmists invited all peoples of the world to join Israel in the True Worship of the one and only God. God's goodness to Israel is but a revelation to all mankind of His ways in dealing with those who "fear" Him. The psalmist felt that the nations, by whatever names they call their gods, were potentially "fearers" of the Lord.

"God-fearers," yirey Adonai, represent to the psalmist worshipers of God who are not of Jacob's seed. Such "fearers of the Lord" seem to be a fourth category of religious communicant in Israel, the other three, of course, being priest, Levite and native Israelite.

Bless the Lord, Israel's household; Bless the Lord, Aaron's household; Bless the Lord, Levi's household; Bless the Lord, O fearers of the Lord (Gentiles).
(Psalm 135:19-20)

Israel trusts in the Lord . . . Aaron's household trust in the Lord . . . Fearers of the Lord trust in the Lord . . . The Lord remembers us and will bless Israel and Aaron's household; He will bless the fearers of the Lord (Gentiles), the humble with the great. (Psalm 115:9-13)

Fearers of the Lord, praise Him; Glorify Him, ye seed of Jacob. (Psalm 22:24)

There are Psalms which seem to have been specially composed for, and perhaps by, such Lord-fearers or proselytes.

I sought the Lord and He answered me, He rescued me from all my superstitious fears... The angels of the Lord camp around His "fearers" and save them. Try the Lord; you will find Him good; happy the man who take shelter with Him. "Fear" the Lord, ye saints of His. His "fearers" never want for anything. Apostates may be famishing and starving, but those who

seek the Lord lack no good thing. Come, listen to me, my children; I will teach you the "fear of the Lord...." None who take shelter with Him shall be desolate. (Psalm 34:5, 8-12, 23)

On Thee, O God, I set my heart . . . Show me Thy ways, O Lord, Teach me Thy paths . . . Remember not the errors of my youth . . . Any man who "fears" God He will teach the right course to take. His own life will continue prosperous and his posterity will inherit his property. The secret of God is for them that "fear" Him and His compact is to instruct them . . . Preserve and deliver me, disappoint me not as I find refuge with Thee. May my devotion and my loyalty preserve me, for I hope in Thee. (Psalm 25:1,4,12-14,20-21).

More to follow. Shalom



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THE GRAFTING OF THE GENTILES INTO THE ISRAEL OF GOD #6

On the theme of proselytism, apparently the only negative note in all of Scripture is that sounded by Ezra-Nehemiah, which, until modern times, was combined into one book in the Hebrew Bible. Upon seizing control of the Babylonian empire, Cyrus decreed that the Jewish exiles in Babylon might return home to Judea. His successor, Artaxerxes Longimanus, commissioned Nehemiah as civil governor and Ezra as spiritual mentor to reconstruct the national and religious life in the Jewish homeland. On their arrival in Judea, they found a general decline and decay in religious observance. They were particularly distressed that certain of their coreligionists had *"married women of Ashdod, Ammon and Moab," and that "their children . . . could not speak in the Jewish language (Nehemiah 13 :23-24)."*

Nehemiah cursed the Jewish husbands -and made them swear by God that they *would not marry their daughter to the sons of foreigners, nor marry their sons to their daughters, nor marry foreigners themselves. Was this not the sin of Solomon? . . . There was no king like him . . . beloved by his God . . . Yet even he was led to sin by his foreign wives. (Nehemiah 13:25-26)*

"Divorce yourselves from the people of the land," Ezra commended, "and from the foreign women" (Ezra 10:11).

Upon receiving this order, "the crowd wept bitterly." And, while Shechaniah ben Jehiel agreed with Ezra, saying,

We have broken faith with our God by marrying foreign women.... Come, let us make a compact with our God to put away all thee wives and their children. (Ezra 10:2-3)

Jonathan ben Asahel and Jaziah ben Tikva were opposed to this and they were supported by Meshullam and by Shabbethai the Levite. (Ezra 10:15)

It must be offered in extenuation of Ezra-Nehemiah's drastic measures that these were dictated by desperate circumstances; the survival of their people and its way of life were at stake.

Also worth noting are these items: Ezra-Nehemiah had nothing at all to say for or against converting these women and children to Judaism. The prophetic ideal of proselytism just does not seem to have entered their sharply focused minds.... The entire situation is unique. Nothing of the sort occurs elsewhere in the Bible nor, for that matter, in all subsequent Jewish history. The stand which Ezra-Nehemiah took against foreigners as such is contrary to that of their Biblical predecessors, and it did not go unchallenged by their literary successors.

Which brings us, albeit briefly, to the books of Job, Jonah, Esther and Ruth.

JOB

Job was a citizen of Uz. His philosophy, conduct and character are exemplary Jewish, as his vindication by God, to say nothing of the inclusion of this book in the Biblical canon, makes abundantly clear. **Yet Job is not ethnically a Jew.** Significantly, the Jewish author of this Hebrew masterpiece presents his great hero, a towering spiritual giant, as a non-Jew. What the author must have thought of Ezra-Nehemiah and their attitude toward their non-Jewish neighbors, can easily be guessed. It was just as well left unrecorded.

JONAH

In that prophetic gem, the book of Jonah, God rebukes the title-figure for his Ezra-like chauvinism and his reluctance to help save the sinful pagan city of Ninevah, capital city of Babylon, "wherein are more than 120,000 persons who know not right from wrong, and also much cattle." Per contra, the heathen sailors show themselves exceedingly reluctant to jettison a worshiper of Israel's God. They strain every sinew to row Jonah to a haven of safety. When they have exhausted every humane possibility, are finally compelled to cast him into the sea, and behold the resultant calm, then **"they 'feared' the Lord exceedingly, sacrificed and made vows to Him."**

Jonah had been unwilling to convey God's message to the Ninevites because, among other consequences from his point of view undesirable, their repentance would reflect unfavorably on his often admonished but still unrepentant fellow Israelites. His worst fear was realized. The heathen Ninevites repent of their wickedness and, from the king on down to the last man in the kingdom,

call earnestly on God. Everyone must turn from his evil life. . . Who knows if God will not relent . . . and save us (Jonah 3:8-9)

They turn, God does relent and they are saved. In direct contrast with Ezra-Nehemiah, this wonderful story would have men believe two things about the heathen: **They are endowed by their Creator with potentially high moral and religious fervor; and they are ready to turn to Him if given the chance, if only invited to do so.**

ESTHER

The blood thirsty Persian king, Ahasuerus, having already executed his first wife, Vashti, is induced by his vizier, Haman, to order the massacre of all his Jewish subjects, His Jewish queen, Esther, points out that this will mean her own death, "If it please the king," she pleads, "let the decree be reversed," For gore-loving Ahasuerus, this will not suffice, First, Haman must hang, Then, instead of peaceably revoking the original order, the king commands the Jews to slay their attackers (Esther 8:10-14), ***To save their lives, "many pagans became Jews" (Esther 8:17),***

What interests us here is the use, in Esther 8:17, of the Hebrew term *mit'yahadim*, **"to become Jews," the only place in the Bible where this word occurs. Yet, in the author's time, it must have been a sufficiently well understood term indicative of the current day practice of Gentiles identifying with Israel.** What is more important, he approved of the conversion to Judaism of heathen enemies. **He evidently enjoyed thoroughly the idea of men who had sought to take the lives of Jews being transformed into men who sought to live their lives as Jews.**

RUTH

Some Biblical scholars believe that the book of Ruth was deliberately intended as a rebuttal to Ezra-Nehemiah, as a specific propaganda piece favoring conversion. Consider the names of its characters: Ruth—"the companion"; Naomi—"my sweet one"; Mahlon—"sickness"; Chilion—"wasting"; Boaz—"in him is strength"! It is nonetheless a charming narrative about a beautiful and loyal heroine, the Moabite girl who married the boy from Judea whose family had migrated to Moab because, ironically enough, here was a famine in Bethlehem, which means literally "the food house." Ruth's in-laws were apparently welcomed with kindness in the land of their traditional enemies, the Moabites, of whom it is written, in the book of Deuteronomy . . . *No Moabite shall be admitted into the congregation of Me Lord; none of his descendants even to the tenth generation shall be admitted into the congregation of the Lord . . . (Deuteronomy 23:4).*

Ruth herself became so deeply attached to the Jewish faith and the Jewish way of life that, after her husband died, she insisted on accompanying her widowed mother-in-law back to Bethlehem. In exquisite and memorable words that are a model of fealty and have since become a widely used formula in the Jewish conversion ceremony for women, Ruth made her declaration and her vow

Entreat me not to leave you.... Wherever you go will I go; whet ever you stay will I stay; your people shall be my people and you God, my God. Wherever you die will I die and there will I be boned. May God destroy me and worse if aught but death part you and me. (Ruth 1:16-17)

Encouraged by Naomi's sage counsel and Boaz' affection and diligence, Ruth fulfills the ritual requirements for marriage to Boaz. In due course she bears him a son who becomes the father of Jessie, in turn, begets King David, from whose line, according to later tradition, the Messiah will come.

Whatever else the author of this story may have had in mind, he surely cherished the hope that there would be Jews who would concur in his belief that a woman of worth, even though of the specifically proscribed people of Moab, could nonetheless become a valiant Jew, a loving wife and mother in Israel, a progenitress of Judean kings. There were such Jews. Among them were those sages who considered this lovely little book worthy of inclusion in Holy Writ; and also those who ordained that the scroll of Ruth be read by all Jews everywhere at Pentecost when they recall the Giving of the Law at Sinai where, like Ruth pledging her fidelity to Judaism, *"The people of Israel together with the ger" had covenanted with God, saying, "All that the Lord has spoken, we will do and obey."*

Answer for yourself: What of the rest, the rank and file in ancient Israel, the plebeian populace? Did the ordinary citizen of Tekoah or Jerusalem, the man-on-the-street in Anathoth or Bethel, the average dweller at Ramah, Gilead or Galilee swallow whole the propaganda, intended or incidental, of the books of Ruth and Jonah? Did they really believe that Moabites and Ninevites were deservedly as cherished by God as were Israelites? Did they entirely agree with Amos that the Hebrew was in God's sight merely the equal of the Ethiopian, the Phoenician and the Syrian? With Isaiah, that Egypt was also His people and Assyria the work of His hands? With the psalmist that anyone with clean hands and a pure heart may ascend the hill of the Lord? How popular among the returning Jewish exiles was Ezekiel's scheme of counting proselytes as natives and assigning them land of their own in Judea? Or the priestly injunction that the ger must be to you as the native, and you are to love him as you love yourself? How enthusiastically did they take up their divinely appointed task of being "a light to the gentiles"? Or observe the ordinance that there be one and the same law for the native and the convert?

That there was, on the part of common men, some resistance even to the simplest of these requirements we may suspect from the curious circumstance that the elementary rule, "You must not injure or maltreat a ger" occurs no less than six times in the Law and very frequently in the Prophets. The commandment *"There shall be one and the same law for homeborn and ger"* also occurs six times. If these rules were generally observed in the performance rather than in the breach, what need for all this

emphatic reiteration? Telltale also is the fact that, when the Torah commends the ger to the people's compassion, he is so often placed in the sad company of those traditional objects of pity and exemplifications of defenselessness, the poor, the widow and the orphan. What the plight of an ordinary, poor proselyte's widow or orphan must have been is not pleasant to consider.

But, then, xenophobia, the dislike of the unlike, was present in Abraham's day and has not died in ours. If the ancients found it difficult to love the proselyte as they loved themselves, moderns do not find it easy to love even their homeborn neighbor that much either—the native Negro, for example, or the Puerto Rican fellow citizen. The prophets' fellow countrymen were not all prophets or psalmists or even priests. And it was not only the dream of mission and the obligations of religious hospitality set forth by their spiritual guides that the commoners resisted. There were certainly other features of prophetic preaching which also failed of complete fulfillment among the general populace.

It was never easy to squeeze a grand ideal into a small soul. Little men found it passing hard to share their divine legacy with others. Their minds were not yet big enough to encompass the breadth or the depth of their spiritual treasures. They simply did not realize how very much there was to share. They did not fully comprehend how limitless is God's love. Nor did they understand that human love is no commodity or store of energy that is consumed with use, but rather a plant that deepens and grows stronger and ever more beautiful as it expands and reaches outward and upward.

The teachers of the religion of Israel kept repeating, in an endless variety of ways: There is hope for the salvation of the homeborn and there is equal hope for the salvation of the outlander! Prophet, priest and psalmist possessed a patient, tireless courage that made them remind Israel ever and again: *You are all gerim before God.... He loves the alien.... Therefore, you, too, must love the Ger.... Let him be unto you as the homeborn and love him as you love yourselves . . . for many nations will join themselves to the Eternal and become His people.... He Who gathers Israel's exiles in says, "I will yet gather to them those who were gathered against them."*

Doubtless there were in Bible times Jewish leaders whose limited philosophy and pattern of existence would have pleased Ezra. But we like to think, and have some reason to believe, that many in that far distant age were prouder of their prophets who taught that life is more nobly lived when it pleases God. After all, this is the people who produced these prophets and preserved their teachings.

The memoirs of Ezra-Nehemiah furnish one magnifying mirror to reflect the surface coarseness of some men in Biblical days. But a host of prophets, psalmists and priests provide an abundance of spiritual telescopes through which men may look out upon nobler goals and acceptance of the Non-Jew within the Israel of God was one of them.



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THE “GRAFTING IN” OF THE GENTILE INTO ISRAEL & THE ROLE OF YESHUA'S DEATH

After Jesus'/Yeshua's death and "believed" resurrection and the subsequent evangelization of the non-Jewish world, no longer would the Gentile HATE the LAW (613 Commandments) which was, in and of itself, a major obstacle in his coming to MONOTHEISM and turning from IDOLS and PAGANISM.

Answer for yourself: How was that accomplished?

With circumcision as the first obstacle to overcome for the adult Gentile male, this was quite a hurdle for a grown man to overcome who had engaged in idolatrous-fornication-worship his whole life. Besides circumcision, there were LAWS concerning and regulating one's whole life which Gentile multitudes deemed much too difficult and restrictive to accept (kosher food laws for example), thus relegating them to remain as Pagans, ignorant of pleasing God and suffering separation from God as their inheritance after death.

I want you to please read this whole article very carefully because I wish to show you how Jesus, through his death and the resultant ministry of his followers who took the Laws and Covenant of Noah to the Gentile world, reaffirmed the right of the Gentile to inherit Eternal Life and opened the way for the Gentile to become part of THE ISRAEL OF GOD by establishing within Judaism a Messianic movement that would allow for Gentile inclusion [at the time of Jesus in the first century there was NOT a concerted effort by Israel to REACH the Gentile]. This is seen dramatically by James' declaration in the Acts 15 Church Council where he stated that ALL that was necessary for the Gentile to be part of Israel was adherence and obedience to the Laws of Noah (not 613 laws but only 66 laws given to Adam and Noah which were prior to the Laws of Moses at Sinai for Gentile Salvation).

This opportunity of faith and repentance has not been made to the non-Jew by the vast majority of Israel unless the Gentile male would first undergo "conversion requiring circumcision" and this was purposefully done in order to keep these "unclean dogs" at arms-length from the Jews. How convenient!

WAS THIS A NEW GOSPEL...OR WAS PART OF ISRAEL REPENTING AND RETURNING TO THE FAITH ONCE GIVEN TO THE SAINTS BY YHVH?

Guess what? This was not new to James, the Messianic Community within Judaism or Judaism itself. This had been understood and known since Noah and the Covenant given to Noah. The problem was that as Gentiles had repeatedly been used by YHVH to judge His people Israel through war and captivity, the Jews harbored resentments and hatred to the Gentiles, which culminated in their withholding ETERNAL LIFE from Gentiles by not giving them the knowledge and invitation to the Covenants, the Torah and Monotheism.

Just look at Jonah who refused to go the Ninevites (Assyrians) who had attacked and killed his forefathers. In

Acts 15, James quotes 4 of the 7 Laws of Noah which were understood by Jews of his time as necessary for Gentile acceptance with God. The problem was that the Jewish establishment of Sadducees and Shammai's Pharisees would not take this message to the Gentiles and in fact persecuted them as seen in the early church after the Gentiles entered. It was the Hillel School of Phariseism (of which Jesus would be a the leading spokesman in his day) that the message of repentance and faith in the One God of Israel was taken to the Gentiles through the **FIRST Great Commission in 20 B.C.E.** Later Jesus' Great Commission in Matt. 28, would be a **SECOND call to world evangelism** and we see the fruit of it in the Apostle's journeys and Paul's journeys.

Paul was NOT saying that "Yeshua abolished the Laws of Yahweh", he was SAYING that Yeshua had abolished the ENMITY—the HATRED and OPPOSITION—to all of Yahweh's Laws (ESPECIALLY FOR THE GENTILES—after all who wants to be circumcised as an adult male where often, without the antibodies of the mother that the baby has in the first six months of his life, many men died following circumcision? Also, who would desire to abide by 613 laws anyway if you never understood them since you had no prior knowledge of them....sounds like the church doesn't it?).

*Yeshua abolished , through his his death and subsequent ministry of his apostles, the "enmity" that brings "death" by alleviating the **PRIOR NECESSITY OF ALL GENTILES TO BE CIRCUMCISED AND CONVERT TO JUDAISM AND THUS BEING FORCED TO ACCEPT ALL 613 LAWS OR MITZVOTH FOR ACCEPTANCE AND INCLUSION IN ISRAEL** (the redeemed of the LORD). Accepting 66 Laws of Noah for Eternal Life is much easier and appealing to Gentiles than accepting 613 Laws (especially if circumcision is not among them!). This was the "mission" and "Gospel" as originally taught by the Jerusalem Church before the "Pauline altered message" would take hold long after his death. Scholars today estimate that in the first century Paul more than likely had no more than 50 converts his whole life; the reason being the Apostles and their associates followed him everywhere and tried to "undo" his false teachings of a "lawless Gospel." One only needs to read the New Testament to see these "Jews" are a constant plague against Paul and "my gospel". Little does Christianity today understand the dynamics involved in the Paul problem of the first century where he preached "another gospel" while blaming the Apostles that they were guilty of the same. Ironical, isn't it?*

Let the reader understand...no Jew ever hated the Law...they all loved the Law for it was Yahweh's Word to them. So any hostility to the Law was from the Gentile who lacked proper understanding of the Law as does the Gentile Christian Church of today. Just look to David as a type of Messiah and try to understand how he could "delight in the Law day and night."

Answer for yourself: Does this sound like someone who saw the Law of God as bondage?

AN IRONIC PARADOX:

Just the opposite of what is taught today by mainline Gentile Christianity did Yeshua accomplish on the Cross.

Instead of ABOLISHING THE LAWS, JESUS REALLY PROMOTED THE LAW (THE LAWS OF NOAH TO THE GENTILES (through the Great Commission) although not realized in full at the time of the Cross, but UNDERSTOOD COMPLETELY BY JAMES (HIS HAND-PICKED PASTOR) AT THE ACTS 15 CHURCH COUNCIL IN 50 A.D.). It would take 20 years for it to happen, but when it did, the flood-gates were opened for Gentile inclusion and acceptance in the Israel of God. Notice this flood-gate would come through the Messianic Branch of Judaism, and not the mainstream Sadducean or Pharisaical Judaism.

HAVING THIS BACKGROUND let us read these troublesome Ephesian Scriptures NOW CORRECTLY TRANSLATED AND UNDERSTOOD, LEAVING OUT THE ADDED WORDS:

Eph 2:15

Having abolished In his flesh the enmity, *even* the law of commandments *contained* in ordinances, for us to make in himself of twain one new man, *so* making peace;

First of all know for certain that in the Greek of Eph. 2 there are no such words as "even," "contained," or "so" in the verse; they have been added by the editors of your New Testament and are identified as such by their being in italics in the verses. We must read these verses without such additions if we ever hope to arrive at the truth of the verse and what was intended to be understood by the original writer.

- 15 Abolishing the ENMITY (toward the Law-the only translation after removing the word "even" which is not in the best manuscripts); *the hatred and opposition* to the Law, the Commandments, and the Ordinances, through His own flesh, in order to create in Himself one new man from the two; making peace,

Thayer's Greek Lexicon:

2189 echthra- 1) enmity 2) **cause** of enmity

To be correct then we must understand that **Jesus' death abolished the CAUSE of this hatred and enmity toward the Law of Commandments as seen by the Gentiles at that time in Israel.** To say that Jesus abolished the Law or Commandments by his death is a **TOTALLY INCORRECT UNDERSTANDING OF THE VERSE; BUT SUCH AS BEEN DONE TO MAKE SURE THAT THE READER COMES AWAY FROM THE PASSAGE NO LONGER UNDER THE LAW!**

By adding words to the New Testament we end up with false doctrines that lead us into sin. Almost no greater lie could be told that that which we have here; supposedly that Jesus' death abolished the law and commandments in ordinances. Rightfully understood his death abolished the hatred toward the Law by the non-Jew because in time the ministry of Jesus will no longer require enforced circumcision for inclusion of the non-Jew and the relaxation of such bigotry of the Jews toward the non-Jews and we see this fact in James' ruling at the Jerusalem Council in Acts 15 where only the Laws of Noah are required for Gentile inclusion into the Israel of God.

- 16 That would reconcile both in ONE BODY TO YAHWEH...having **KILLED THE ENMITY through himself.**

Answer for yourself: Understanding now how Jesus abolished the hatred and opposition toward the Law for the Gentiles by removing the "death penalty" for transgression of the Law [by his disciples' mission to the Gentile world following his death whereby the Laws and Covenant of Noah was taken to the pagan world in which faith and obedience to the laws of God and repentance of them when transgressed was taught ensuring Eternal Life to the non-Jews] and [nailing those handwriting or ordinances **WHICH WERE AGAINST US**...the death penalty was against us but blessing for obedience to the Law was not...which would be the fruit of the non-Jew receiving the Laws of Noah and the Covenant of Noah from teachings that accompanied the Great Commission], then why do you most likely have such opposition toward the LAW in your religious belief system in your Christian Church today as you hear it preached by multitudes of preachers today?

Answer for yourself: Can you not see not that your New Testament has been forged in order to teach just opposite to what Jesus wanted you to know and live out?

There are two reasons:

- First, most are not aware or have forgotten that yes; disobedience to the Law brings death but obedience to the Law brings blessings. So the death penalty is imposed by God because we fail to obey His Word.

The non-Jews of the world at the time of Yeshua were not being taught about God nor was His Word being brought to them. They were not taught about the Covenant of Noah and the Laws of Noah as their Covenant with God. Thus, they had no knowledge of the Laws of God and the Covenant of Noah with its covenant stipulations and the responsibilities they had before God to obey His Commandments. They did not know how to make themselves acceptable to God. Therefore, living in ignorance of the Laws of God guarantee that out of ignorance alone they would be violators of God's Laws and this brings the Heavenly Death Penalty. But when known and observed, the Laws of God bring blessings from God. Understand that those "ordinances and Laws" which were not against us remain and were not nullified by Yeshua's death, but ironically promoted as they would later be taken to the non-Jewish world through the Great Commission. The sure death penalty was abolished....at least hopefully providing that these Laws were taught and given and accepted by the non-Jewish races of the world. One more thing; when the passage speaks of "being made nigh by the blood of Jesus" this is nothing more than an allegory or picture for his death that would later catalyze a movement out of a Gentile hating Judaism that would go to the Gentile world. Had Jesus not died then there would not have been an outreach, there would not have been an Acts 15 and 16, and the world would have dwelled in darkness up to today! To attach to Jesus' blood some mystical atonement reveals one's complete lack of understanding the Jewish Sacrificial system and reveals just how much paganism has crept into the Jesus' stories and how Jesus has been modeled after pagan sun-gods and sun-godmen!

- Secondly, because you read a Bible that has words added to it that the earliest Greek manuscripts did not thereby changing what the earliest manuscripts taught and what the earliest believers held dear to their faith. Our "corrupted" New Testament translations have literally brainwashed us. Our corrupted Christian Bibles and translations with added italicized words is all we have ever read and heard and have not studied the subject for ourselves. Besides that, we were taught that these "added words" only help to bring out the intended meaning of the text better. Such is a lie. More correctly, such "italicized passages" serve the agenda of the translators in making sure you receive their "theological position". Unsuspecting and not knowing that such words in "italics" in our Bibles were not in the earliest Greek texts, millions are persuaded to the theological position of the translators of their Bible instead of the apostles.

Answer for yourself: In light of what I have shown you, should you not began to re-think your religious belief system concerning the Law of God and the attending obedience to those Laws pertaining to the Gentile believer in God? Definitely!

[This opens a can of worms when you begin to study Paul and the Paul problem in-depth!](#)

This is important for these "same laws" command a type of worship that is not only neglected in Christianity today, but outright rejected and replaced by Gentile paganism in the disguise of "orthodoxy."

Ephesians 2:15-16 NOW AGREES perfectly with all the other Scriptures of Yahweh, which command His People to Keep His Laws. In Romans 8:6-7 we again read about ENMITY and Yahweh's LAW, which says:

- 6 For to be CARNALLY MINDED is death; but to be spiritually minded is life and peace.
- 7 Because the CARNAL MIND is ENMITY AGAINST—bitterly opposed to—YAHWEH: for it is not subject to the Law of Yahweh, nor indeed can be.

Answer for yourself: Is being "carnally minded" being NOT subject to the Law of God?

Yes. I cannot say for you but surely you understand that "carnally minded" which is the fruit of not subjecting yourself to the Laws of God is not a condition you want to be in when you die and meet your Creator.

Answer for yourself: Don't you find it rather odd that Paul would speak of "not being submitted to the Laws of God" in the book of Romans long after the Cross while yet maintaining that the "Law has passed away" and that we are "no longer under the Law"? **[THINK]**

Answer for yourself: Don't you find it rather surprising that the Law of God existed for Paul after the cross when he wrote the book of Romans? You should considering what you have been taught most likely and begin to open your mind to the "double-speak" of the New Testament. Is contains a "mixed" message; one of Paul, or those who altered him and Rome along with the true message of Yeshua and the early church.

Answer for yourself: Are preachers who teach the LAW has passed away considered carnal minded by God? Sure are! Maybe you should ask your Pastor this Sunday if he is carnally minded.

Lets examine the text in the Greek Scriptures:

6 For <1063> to be <5427> <0> **carnally <4561> minded <5427>** [is] death <2288>; but <1161> to be <5427> <0> spiritually <4151> minded <5427> [is] life <2222> and <2532> peace <1515>. {to be carnally...: Gr. the minding of the flesh} {to be spiritually...: Gr. the minding of the Spirit} 7 Because <1360> the carnal <4561> mind <5427> [is] enmity <2189> against <1519> God <2316>: for <1063> it is <5293> <0> **not <3756> subject <5293> (5743) to the law <3551>** of God <2316>, neither <3761> indeed <1063> can be <1410> (5736). {the carnal...: Gr. the minding of the flesh}

BDB/Thayers # **4561 [carnally]**

4561 sarx {sarx} probably from the base of 4563; TDNT - 7:98,1000; n f AV - flesh 147, carnal 2, carnally minded + 5427 1, fleshly 1; 151

- 1) flesh (the soft substance of the living body, which covers the bones and is permeated with blood) of both man and beasts
- 2) the body
 - 2a) the body of a man
 - 2b) used of natural or physical origin, generation or relationship
 - 2b1) born of natural generation
 - 2c) the sensuous nature of man, "the animal nature"
 - 2c1) without any suggestion of depravity
 - 2c2) the animal nature with cravings which incite to sin
 - 2c3) the physical nature of man as subject to suffering
- 3) a living creature (because possessed of a body of flesh) whether man or beast
- 4) the flesh, denotes mere human nature, the earthly nature of man apart from divine influence, and therefore prone to sin and **opposed to God**

BDB/Thayers # **5427 [minded]**

5427 phronema {fror-ay-mah} from 5426; TDNT - 9:220,1277; n n AV - mind 2, carnally minded + 4561 1, spiritually minded + 4151 1; 4

1) what one has in the mind, the thoughts and purposes

BDB/Thayers # **5293 [subject]** 5293 hupotasso {hoop-ot-as'-so} from 5259 and 5021; TDNT - 8:39,1156; v AV - put under 6, be subject unto 6, be subject to 5, submit (one's) self unto 5, submit (one's) self to 3, be in subjection unto 2, put in subjection under 1, misc 12; 40

- **1) to arrange under, to subordinate**
- **2) to subject, put in subjection**
- **3) to subject one's self, obey**

- 4) to submit to one's control
- 5) to yield to one's admonition or advice
- 6) to obey, be subject

BDB/Thayers # 3551 [law] 3551 nomos {nom'-os} AV - law 197; 197

- 1) anything established, anything received by usage, a custom, a law, a command
 - 1a) of any law whatsoever
 - 1a1) a law or rule producing a state approved of God
 - 1a1a) by the observance of which is approved of God
 - 1a2) a precept or injunction
 - 1a3) the rule of action prescribed by reason
- 1b) of the Mosaic law, and referring, acc. to the context. either to the volume of the law or to its contents
- 1c) the name of the more important part (the Pentateuch-first 5 books of the Bible-the Law), is put for the entire collection of the sacred books of the OT

Answer for yourself: Did Paul teach the Gentile believers in Rome long after the cross that they were carnally minded and opposed to God if they were NOT subordinate and in subjection to the Law of God after the cross? Yes. Confusing isn't it?

Answer for yourself: Did Paul teach after the cross that the Gentile believers in Rome were carnally minded and opposed to God if they were NOT obedient and subject to the Law and observances which are approved of God [would include such things as the Sabbath and the Biblical Festivals]? Yes.

Answer for yourself: Did Paul teach the Gentile believers in Rome that they were carnally minded and opposed to God if they were NOT obedient and subject to Mosaic Law which referred to the volume of Law and its contents in the Pentateuch (the first 5 books of the Bible)? Yes.

Answer for yourself: Do you realize dear child of God that you are “carnally minded” and “opposed to God” if you agree with and subscribe to the majority of the Gentile Christian Church’s teachings concerning the Torah and the Law today? You should by now, or at least coming to that awareness.

The writings of Paul in Ephesians 2:15-16 and in Romans 8:6-7 are in perfect accord with his writings in Romans 3:31, which says:

Are we then doing away with the Law through the faith? BY NO MEANS! Rather, we ESTABLISH THE LAW!

31 Do we <2673> <0> then <3767> **make void <2673> (5719) the law <3551> through <1223> faith <4102>? God forbid <3361> <1096> (5636): yea <235>, we establish <2476> (5719) the law <3551>.**

BDB/Thayers # 2673 [make void]

2673 katargeo {kat-arg-eh'-o} from 2596 and 691; TDNT - 1:452,76; v AV - destroy 5, do away 3, abolish 3, cumber 1, loose 1, cease 1, fall 1, deliver 1, misc 11; 27

- 1) to render idle, unemployed, inactivate, inoperative
 - 1a) to cause a person or thing to have no further efficiency
 - 1b) to deprive of force, influence, power
- 2) to cause to cease, put an end to, do away with, annul, abolish
 - 2a) to cease, to pass away, be done away
 - 2b) to be severed from, separated from, discharged from, loosed from any one

- 2c) to terminate all intercourse with one

BDB/Thayers # 2476 [establish]

2476 histemi {his'-tay-mee} a prolonged form of a primary stao {stah'-o} (of the same meaning, and used for it in certain tenses); TDNT - 7:638,1082; v AV - stand 116, set 11, establish 5, stand still 4, stand by 3, misc 17, vr stand 2; 158

- 1) to cause or make to stand, to place, put, set
 - 1a) to bid to stand by, [set up]
 - 1a1) in the presence of others, in the midst, before judges, before members of the Sanhedrin;
 - 1a2) to place
 - 1b) to make firm, fix establish
 - 1b1) to cause a person or a thing to keep his or its place
 - 1b2) to stand, be kept intact (of family, a kingdom), to escape in safety
 - 1b3) to establish a thing, cause it to stand
 - 1b31) to uphold or sustain the authority or force of anything
- 2) to stand. to stand by or near
 - 2a1) to stop, stand still, to stand immovable, stand firm
 - 2a1a) of the foundation of a building
 - 2b) to stand
 - 2b1) continue safe and sound, stand unharmed, to stand ready or prepared
 - 2b2) to be of a steadfast mind
 - 2b3) of quality, one who does not hesitate.

Answer for yourself: Did Paul teach the Gentiles in the church of Rome (according to the Greek words he used) that we are NOT to render idle, inactivate, destroy, abolish the Law thereby causing it to be deprived of its influence or power? He sure did.

Answer for yourself: Did Paul teach the Gentiles in the church of Rome that we are NOT to cause to cease, put an end to, do away with, annul, abolish the Law of God contained in the first 5 books of the Bible (Torah), or cause to cease or to cause the Law to pass away or cease? He sure did.

Answer for yourself: Did Paul teach the Gentiles in the church of Rome that we are NOT to be separated, severed, or be loosed from the Law contained in the Pentateuch? He sure did.

Answer for yourself: Did Paul teach the Gentiles in the church of Rome that INSTEAD of abolishing the Laws and Commandments of God, we are to rather ESTABLISH THEM? He sure did.

Answer for yourself: Did Paul teach the Gentiles in the church of Rome that INSTEAD of abolishing the Laws and Commandments of God, we are to rather cause or make the Law and Torah to stand firm, to be kept intact thereby sustaining the authority or force of the Law? He sure did.

Paul, if he were a good Jew, would never "say" that Yahweh's Laws were abolished! It was his teaching, that: "The Law is HOLY, and the Commandments Holy, and Just, and Righteous," saying this in Romans 7:12. It would be elsewhere in the New Testament where he would later say that as his theology would evolve to such a point. We take up this sad issue at:

<http://www.faithofyeshua.faithweb.com/>

Of course, all YOU have to do to translate Ephesians 2:15-16 CORRECTLY, is just to take OUT the words that have been added to it by DECEIVING, LYING translators...who had CARNAL MINDS, and who had ENMITY AGAINST (hatred and opposition TO) Yahweh's Laws. Yeshua abolished that enmity; that hatred

and opposition to Yahweh's Laws, through himself...for those who would OBEY. Your only problem is that no one every interpreted the Bible correctly for you by doing in-depth study of the original languages in which the Bible was originally written.

OTHER TWISTED SCRIPTURE EXPOSED: "BLOTTING OUT THE HANDWRITING OF ORDINANCES THAT WAS AGAINST US"

False teachers and lying preachers today proclaim to you, if you will listen to them, that "all those old Jewish laws are all done away with, that they were 'nailed to the cross'".

Colossians chapter 2, verse 14 is possibly on of the most misunderstood passages in all of the New Testament. For years I was taught that THE LAW was nailed to the cross and now we are UNDER GRACE.

Answer for yourself: Can you not agree that for the most part that is the message you have heard from the pulpit of your church most of your life?

We at Bet Emet Ministries can find no Scripture in the Bible which commands one NOT TO THINK FOR THEMSELVES. So with that in mind, let us rightly divide this Scripture from Colossians. The Apostle Paul begins to tell us in verse Colossians 2:10 that we are complete in Messiah, through identification with him through Mikveh (baptism) and are quickened and made alive with him through his resurrection following his crucifixion. So far..so good. In verse 14 he states "Blotting out the handwriting of ordinances that was against us, which was contrary to us, and took it out of the way by nailing it to the cross."

As stated earlier as I grew up in church I was taught that the WHOLE LAW was done away with in Yeshua's death. Is that so?

Answer for yourself: Can you tell me what part of the Law is written against you? Is learning that we are not to murder something God told us to hurt us?

Answer for yourself: What part of the Law is contrary to you? Is learning not be live in idolatry meant to harm us?

Remember that it is "those parts of the Law which were contrary and written against us that Jesus' death, as explained above whereby the Covenant and Laws of Noah, with their Covenant responsibilities, were taken to the non-Jews. In this way the "death" penalty incurred by non-Covenanted and obedient people was taken FIGURATIVELY away and was, in the terms of Paul, 'nailed' to the cross through the results of Jesus' death and the subsequent resulting mission to the non-Jewish world by the Messianic fraction of Judaism in the first century."

Answer for yourself: But what if what "hurts" us within the "Law" was just "part" of the Law and not all of the Law?

Answer for yourself: Are you familiar with Hebrews where it states that when there is a change of the Priesthood that is of necessity a change in the Law?

THE MELCHIZEDEK PRIESTHOOD

First of all one must begin with the understanding that Melchizedek was a non-Jew; he was a Gentile and his ministry at that time was to non-Jews. Let us not forget that Jesus never had a ministry to non-Jews; only his followers would following his death after they were dispersed from Jerusalem. In a rather ironic way Jesus'

death propelled from within Biblical Judaism a mission to the non-Jew as mentioned previously. In this way conversion with mandatory circumcision was not required any longer for non-Jews to come to God and be a member in good standing in the Israel of God. No longer was the Aaronic Priesthood the method whereby one was to approach God (again figuratively), but through the Melchizedek Priesthood (a non-Jewish ministry and Priesthood), and as stated, there was a change in the Law. That part of the Law was that no-longer non-Jews had to be circumcised. When this important point of contention becomes "real" for you then you can understand that in the whole of the book of Galatians written by Paul the ONLY LAW he was taking against and reiterating that the non-Jew was no longer "under" is the Law of Circumcision; all other Laws within the Covenant of Noah were BINDING! But notice, it does not say that there was the ABOLITION OF THE LAW OR THE CESSATION OF THE LAW!

Answer for yourself: We begin again, what part of the Law was contrary to you?

Answer for yourself: When Yahweh said "Thou shall not kill"....was that given as a commandment against you or to help you by warning you of what to avoid in order that He can bless you?

Answer for yourself: When Yahweh said "Thou shall not commit adultery"...was that given as a commandment against you or to help you by protecting you from destroying your family or getting a communicable disease, or worse...aids?

Answer for yourself: When Yahweh said "Thou shall honor thy father and thy mother"...was that given as a commandment contrary to you or was it because in obeying it you receive the manifestation of the promise that you will live long and prosper?

It seems to me, as to any parent who has children, you give your children "do's" and "don't's" BECAUSE YOU LOVE THEM AND WISH THEY BE KEPT FROM HARM AND RECEIVE BLESSING INSTEAD OF HARM.

Answer for yourself: Can you not see the intent of each of Yahweh's commandments is to bless you and not curse you? I hope so. Since these were never "required" to be kept without breaking for SALVATION, ONLY A GOAL TO BE STRIVED FOR BECAUSE OF GOD'S MERCY IN SALVATION BY FAITH, THEN HOW COULD YOU EVER ENVISION THESE COULD CEASE AND PASS AWAY AS MANY ARE TAUGHT IN THE CHRISTIAN CHURCH TODAY?

Answer for yourself: Can you find one commandment which was given "against" you by Yahweh? There is none.

Answer for yourself: Can you name one commandment which is impossible to keep or obey? There is none. If you will be honest with yourself there are many commandments you might not want to obey but not one, not one is too difficult to do. In reality it is a matter of the heart.

SO WHAT IS CONTRARY TOWARD US IN THE LAW?

So, as Paul stated there must be something in the Law which was contrary to us and we must find out. This one is easy. The soul that sinneth shall die! Included in the Law are both blessings and curses. The curse of the Law is the death penalty for our disobedience of the Law. We have all sinned and come short of the glory of God.

Yet, the handwriting of ordinances written contrary to us [in the Law] are not the blessings when we obey the Law and Commandments of God....but rather...the curse of the DEATH PENALTY when we disobey the Law.

The DEATH PENALTY for sin is definitely written in the Law and it is CONTRARY TO US...and it was metaphorically nailed to the cross in Yeshua's (body) death became the stimulus for the mission to the non-Jewish world whereby the non-Jews would be taken the revelation of God, the Word of God, and the Covenants of God was the result. This is all hind-sight. Again it bears repeating that up to this time little concern had been given the non-Jewish world by mainline Judaism as it had fallen under the influence of Rabbis which harbored hatred for non-Jews. In would be in this "renewed" revelation from God taken to the non-Jewish world that the gift of salvation would be made available to the non-Jewish people of the world along with the resultant responsibilities toward or "Saving" God. In this way, by coming to saving faith along with accountability to God the non-Jews would come to understand how they were once under the death penalty from God and how now though faith and repentance that such a death penalty was to be removed.

Answer for yourself: Dear non-Jewish believer, who was once alienated from God and the commonwealth of Israel, who was once a stranger to the Covenant promises, who was once without God in the world, is it not true that directly linked to Jesus' death is your current relationship to God, for had it not been for this tragic event, which Rabbi other than Jesus has come to you with the knowledge of the Covenants of God, faith, and repentance except him and those who come in his name (even thought much else shared at times by them is terribly wrong...the basics are right)?

If you will be honest so much is directly attributable to Yeshua's death, and again, this event ultimately caused his followers to repent of their "biased" anti-Gentile religious belief system and take salvation to the world; and in this way the death penalty that rested on the non-Jewish world was to be removed.

Thus, the only thing nailed to the cross was the judgment rightly coming to me and you, but not our eternal responsibilities to imitate Yeshua's message and Yahweh to the best of our abilities by obeying the commandments which are in reality various attributes of God acted outonly manifestations of Yahweh's attributes

The Positive Commandments, which you have been taught you are "not under and have passed away" are nothing more that attributes of God and what He is and what He does; the Negative Commandments only the attributes of God and what He is not and what He does not do. To be like God, to be Holy for He is Holy, then we must model our lives around them regardless of how Paul has been interpreted; for in last analysis, your standing today before God is solely determined not on your faith to disobey, but your faith in God to obey as you "reach for the mark of the high calling in God" as you learned by Yeshua's example and in his name. This tragic message of the Law not valid today is the result of the two differing Gospels in the New Testament.

It is in obeying the commandments we become like God. Yahweh would never take away the pattern, only the Gentile Christian Church who misinterpreted the pattern as bondage would, and did for over 1800 years. They forgot that Yeshua said "my burden is easy and my yoke is light." Let us never forget that.

SO WHAT IS THE BOTTOM LINE FOR THE GENTILE BELIEVER?

Ephesians 2:11-18, CORRECTLY INTERPRETED tells us:

- 11 Therefore, remember that in times past you *were* Gentiles; who are called The Uncircumcised by those who are called The Circumcision made in the flesh by hands
- 12 Remember that at that time you were without Messiah, being aliens outside the citizenship of Israel,

strangers to the covenants based upon promises, having NO HOPE and WITHOUT YAHWEH in the world.

- 13 But now, in Christ Jesus, you who were once far off, have been BROUGHT NEAR THROUGH the blood of Messiah (in early Christian Gnosticism the reference to "Jesus Christ" was an allegory to the rising/dying godman in you as you awaken to the Divine within yourself...see <http://firstnewtestament.netfirms.com>)
- 14 For He is our peace, Who has MADE BOTH ONE, and has broken down the dividing wall separating us (ONLY IF YOU UNDERSTAND THE MESSAGE IN THIS ARTICLE)
- 15 Abolishing the ENMITY; [the hatred and the opposition] TOWARD the Law, the Commandments, and the Ordinances, through His own flesh, in order to create in Himself ONE NEW MAN from the two; making peace.
- 16 That would RECONCILE both in ONE BODY TO YAHWEH through the sacrifice...having KILLED) THE ENMITY THROUGH HIMSELF.
- 17 And he came and preached peace to you who were afar off, and to those who were near:
- 18 Because through Him we both have access to the Father by ONE SPIRIT.

See and UNDERSTAND that the carnal mind is AGAINST Yahweh's Laws! It is BITTERLY OPPOSED TO THEM! Therefore, the "ENMITY" THAT WAS DESTROYED BY THE CROSS IS NOT THE LAWS OF YAHWEH THEMSELVES—as the carnal minded, worldly, LYING preachers would have YOU to believe. The "ENMITY" THAT WAS DESTROYED BY THE CROSS IS THE HATRED AND THE OPPOSITION TOWARD YAHWEH'S LAWS—which the Carnal Mind harbors.

Answer for yourself: As a Christian will you allow the Yeshua's death work in your heart, what it accomplished in the first century, and let it destroy the "lies you accepted as truth" from well meaning preachers (kind of like the Rabbis of the first century if you can see the analogy) who know no better because they have let themselves be brainwashed and failed to study better?

Answer for yourself: Will you repent of this false doctrine that destroyed the manifestation of your love for God...obedience to His word?

Please understand, that you probably obey many of God's Laws without even knowing, but many you don't know which God holds you accountable for those you don't; regardless of conscious disobedience or ignorance. Sadly in the Christian Church today there is rampant paganism masquerading as righteousness. Such beliefs, conducts, and behaviors, whether done knowingly or unknowingly, along with many other Christian religious beliefs are contrary to the written Word of God and are sin because they cause you to disobey not obey the Commands of God given since the beginning but taint your worship of the Creator

We at Bet Emet Ministries call upon you and ask you to reconsider the Sabbath commandment, the multitude of commandments concerning the Festivals of the Lord, as well as the commandments concerning both how and where you are to Tithe. It only begins here. It gets much harder when you look into the truth that has been kept from you about who Jesus really was; was he God, is he to be prayed to, is he to be sung to, what is the mass, what is communion, are we to take the Eucharist, how much Sun-Worship is revered in Christianity today and passed off as pleasing to God? It get real hard real quick if you truly want to come to the truth concerning Jesus and really return to his faith, the faith that once went into all the world before it was corrupted and changed ultimately by Rome. This is where you should start your study and your repentance, for these issues lie at the very heart of whether your worship is in Truth and in the Spirit of Truth, or else falls into the category of Nadab and Abihu. They did not know their worship was displeasing to God until they were dead. This is what I desperately am trying as the Pastor of Bet Emet Ministries to prevent happening to millions of good people whose only sin is the sin of not knowing the truth because they trusted "unworthy shepherds" to lead them.

Now, having a much better understanding of the condition of the Gentile-Christian believer after repentance and faith in Yeshua's real Gospel and message of the first century, we find the Gentiles coming into spiritual union with the root of the Olive Tree (Israel), and where they previously had been considered a "Gentile" who was at one time separated from God, excluded from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers to the covenants of promise, having no hope, without (any knowledge) of God in the world (Ephesians 2:12), **now they had become fellow-heirs (of Abraham), fellow-members and citizens of Israel and the Israel of God, and fellow-partakers of the promise** (made to Abraham).

More to follow as we continue to rightly divide the Word of God as we seek our place as Gentile believers in the Olive Tree of Israel as well as adhering to the Covenant of Noah.



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WILD OLIVE BRANCHES-GENTILES GRAFTED INTO ISRAEL...DO YOU "LOOK" LIKE ISRAEL?

Maybe some of you remember in junior high school in your science classes studying plants and grafting into the stem of a plant a "twig" from the plant or possibly another plant related to the primary plant. In doing so you grafted into a plant a "foreign" plant and the two became one. This new "implanted foreign" plant would take hold and grow and use the food of the mother plant for its nutrients. Soon we have a healthy "engraft" which took on the visible characteristics of the mother plant. This is exactly what Paul is saying to the Christian Church today. If we are grafted into Israel we should resemble Israel. Whether we do or not is for you to decide after you continue your study into these areas.

Now the Apostle Paul, in his epistle to the church at Ephesus, was speaking to the Gentile-Ephesian "believers" (WILD OLIVE BRANCHES WHO HAD BEEN GRAFTED INTO ISRAEL), who WERE *strangers* before Yahweh's Word was delivered to them.

FROM STRANGERS TO FELLOW CITIZENS OF ISRAEL

When the Gentiles came to faith in God (Yahweh), they were no longer "strangers"! They had accepted Yahweh's Holy Laws as well as Yeshua's religion which contained laws and commandments, which they had broken in times past, and they were given the opportunity to be JUSTIFIED through faith in and obedience to the Laws of Yahweh. In Ephesians 2:19, KJV:

19 Now <3767> therefore <686> ye are <2075> (5748) no more <3765> strangers <3581> and <2532> foreigners <3941>, but <235> fellowcitizens <4847> with the saints <40>, and <2532> of the household <3609> of God <2316>;

Lexicon Greek 4847

4847 sumpolites {soom-pol-ee'-tace} from 4862 and 4177; AV - fellowcitizens 1; 1

1) possessing the same citizenship with others, a fellow citizen

1a) of Gentiles as received into communion of the saints

1b) of the people consecrated to God

Lexicon Greek 4862

4862 sun {soon} a primary preposition denoting union; TDNT - 7:766,1102; prep AV - with 123, beside 1, accompany + 2064 1; 125

1) with

Lexicon Greek 4177 4177 polites {pol-ee'-tace} from 4172; TDNT - 6:516,906; n m AV - citizen 3; 3

- 1) a citizen
- 1a) the inhabitant of any city or country
- **1b) the association of another in citizenship**
- **1b1) a fellow citizen, fellow countryman**

Answer for yourself: As fellow citizens with Israel (Gentile believer), does the word in the Greek Scriptures mean we are in union with the Jews? Yes.

Answer for yourself: Does the Bible, that we accept as the supreme authority for faith and practice of our faith, say that Gentiles like you and I who come to faith in the God of Israel attain the same citizenship with others in Israel, thus calling us fellow citizens of Israel? Yes.

Answer for yourself: As Gentiles who have been received into the fellowship, commonwealth, and communion of the saints of Jewish Israel, are we considered as fellow-citizens of Israel and the people of God? Yes.

Answer for yourself: Are fellow citizens of the SAME NATION (both Jew and Gentile) under the same LAWS of that nation? Sure are!

Answer for yourself: As Gentiles, who have come to faith in the One God of Israel through the endeavors of the followers of Yeshua following his death, did these non-Jews think at that time that they belonged to a "separate religious affiliation" from the Israel of God or did they understand that they were to identify, as did the Jews, with the Israel of God since they were grafted into the same religion as the Jews, only with slightly different responsibilities and covenants, thereby making them FELLOW CITIZENS OF ISRAEL? That should be easy...they did not think that they had created a new religion.

Answer for yourself: Now the Apostle Paul was speaking to the Ephesians (WILD OLIVE BRANCHES WHO HAD BEEN GRAFTED INTO ISRAEL), who WERE strangers before Yahweh's Word was delivered to them. When they received Yahweh, they were no longer "strangers"! They had accepted Yahweh's Holy Laws, which they had broken in times past, and they were given the opportunity to be JUSTIFIED through repentance and obedience to the Commandments of God as found in the Torah. In Ephesians 2:19, they are no longer called strangers because they had become what? Fellow citizens of Israel

Answer for yourself: These Gentile believers were equals citizens with who in the Israel of God, and of the household of God? The Jews

Answer for yourself: Are fellow citizens who are of the SAME NATION (both Jew and Gentile) under the same LAWS of that nation? Yes of course.

Answer for yourself: Sadly, today the vast majority of Christian Churches find their identity in their denomination or non-denomination and do not see themselves as a part of what? Fellow citizens of Israel.

Answer for yourself: By failing to recognize that as Gentiles we are part of Israel, most Christians identify with their denomination and non-denomination. This is in direct opposition to the Scriptures in the New Testament as well as the Old Testament which clearly instructs that the believing Gentile finds his position in the Household of God as part of whom along with the Jews? Fellow citizens of Israel.

Answer for yourself: What was the denomination of the church which Yeshua founded and which was led by James in the first century which took the Great Commission unto the world? It was Biblical Judaism, and this may startle you, but if you were to research the topic like I and multitudes have, you will see that believing Gentiles like you and me kept the Saturday Sabbath, the Biblical Feast days well into the fourth century until they were changed by Gentile paganism in the Christian Church/State of Rome.

Answer for yourself: As we have seen, can you now understand why there was to be ONE LAW for the Jew

born in the land and the stranger (Gentile) that lived among them? I hope so.

Answer for yourself: Did the Apostolic church set the correct example by not promoting numerous “sects” and “denominations” with multitudes of conflicting doctrines, statutes, and commandments like we see today in Christianity with over 2,000 different denominations? They sure were.

Let us continue with Ephesians 2:6 as we see our Biblical position as Gentile believers:

- 6 And hath raised [us] up together, and made [us] sit together in heavenly [places] in Christ Jesus:
- 7 That in the ages to come he might shew the exceeding riches of his grace in [his] kindness toward us through Christ Jesus.
- 8 For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: [it is] the gift of God:
- 9 Not of works, lest any man should boast.
- 10 For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them. ordained: or, prepared}

Take notice of the change that follows in the thought processes of the Apostle Paul where he contrasts what we were before Yeshua's ministers revealed to us Yahweh and what our standing is now since receiving “the” faith of Yeshua and coming to faith in Yahweh.

11 Wherefore remember, that ye [being] in time past Gentiles in the flesh (before faith, repentance and acceptance of the Covenant given to Gentiles with its corresponding Laws and Commandments within the Torah), who are called Uncircumcision (it was customary for all Gentile males to remain uncircumcised) by that which is called the Circumcision in the flesh made by hands (the Jews);

Notice again the previous condition of all Gentiles (called the "uncircumcised") who had never converted to Judaism and were without faith "in" and knowledge "of" Yahweh.

Then we read in Ephesians 2:12, KJV:

12 That *AT THAT TIME* you were without the Messiah (his faith), being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the COVENANTS OF PROMISE (plural),

12 That <3754> at <1722> that <1565> time <2540> ye were <2258> (5713) without <5565> Christ <5547>, being aliens <526> (5772) from the commonwealth <4174> of Israel <2474>, and <2532>strangers <3581> from the covenants <1242>of promise <1860>, having <2192> (5723) no <3361> hope <1680>, and <2532> without God <112> in <1722> the world <2889>:

"At that time"...what TIME was the Apostle Paul speaking of to these Ephesians? As Ephesians 2:2 says: "at the time they were walking in DISOBEDIENCE TO THE LAWS OF GOD."

Lexicon Greek 526 [being aliens] 526 apallotrioo {ap-al-lot-ree-o'-o} from 575 and a derivative of 245; TDNT - 1:265,43; v AV - be alienated with + 5607 2, be alien 1; 3

- 1) to alienate, estrange
- 2) to be shut out from one's fellowship and intimacy

Answer for yourself: Before faith in Yahweh and obedience to His Torah which allowed for Fellow-citizenship with the saints of Israel, were the Gentiles shut out from fellowship and intimacy with both God and the Jews? Yes.

Lexicon Greek 575 [root word for #526]

575 apo {apo'}a primary particle;; preposition AV - from 392, of 129, out of 48, for 10, off 10, by 9, at 9, in 6,

since + 3739 5, on 5, not tr. 15, misc. 31; 669

- 1) of separation
 - 1a) of local separation, after verbs of motion from a place i.e. of departing, of fleeing, ...
 - **1b) of separation of a part from the whole**
 - 1b1) where of a whole some part is taken
 - **1c) of any kind of separation of one thing from another by which the union or fellowship of the two is destroyed**
 - 1d) of a state of separation, that is of distance
 - 1d1) physical, of distance of place
 - 1d2) temporal, of distance of time
- 2) of origin
 - 2a) of the place whence anything is, comes, befalls, is taken
 - 2b) of origin of a cause

Lexicon Greek **4174 [commonwealth]** 4174 politeia {pol-ee-ti'-ah} from 4177 ("polity"); TDNT - 6:516,906; n f AV - freedom 1, commonwealth 1; 2

- 1) the administration of civil affairs
- 2) a state or commonwealth
- 3) citizenship, the rights of a citizen

Answer for yourself: Being aliens to the commonwealth of Israel, the Gentile had not rights of citizenship. However, following the faith of Yeshua, did the Gentile believer in Yahweh become **"fellow citizens with the Jews of Israel" or "Christians separated from the Jews of Israel"?**

We may be called "Christians," but the Bible informs us that God calls us "Israel."

Let us examine the Greek word for "stranger":

Lexicon Greek **3581 [stranger]** 3581 xenos {xen'-os} apparently a primary word; TDNT - 5:1,661; adj AV - stranger 10, strange 3, host 1; 14

- 1) a foreigner, a stranger
 - 1a) alien (from a person or a thing)
 - **1b) without the knowledge of, without a share in**
 - 1c) new, unheard of
- 2) one who receives and entertains another hospitably
 - 2a) with whom he stays or lodges, a host

Lexicon Greek **1242 [covenants]** 1242 diatheke {dee-ath-ay'-kay} from 1303; TDNT - 2:106,157; n f AV - covenant 20, testament 13; 33

- 1) a disposition, arrangement, of any sort, which one wishes to be valid, the last disposition which one makes of his earthly possessions after his death, a testament or will
- 2) a compact, a covenant, a testament
 - 2a) **God's covenant with Noah, etc.**

Lexicon Greek **1303 [root word for #1242]** 1303 diatithemai {dee-at-ith'-em-ahee} middle voice from 1223 and 5087; TDNT - 2:104,157; v AV - make 3, testator 2, appoint 2; 7

- 1) to arrange, dispose of, one's own affairs
 - 1a) of something that belongs to one
 - 1b) to dispose of by will, make a testament
- 2) to make a covenant, to enter into a Covenant with one,

These DISOBEDIENT Gentile-Ephesians were "strangers" to the citizenship of Israel, as well as to the Covenants of Promise BECAUSE THEY WERE ESTRANGED BY DISOBEDIENCE TO THE LAWS OF GOD

Yahweh only makes a COVENANT with those who OBEY HIM.

The Lordship of Yeshua is only valid to the degree you submit to his rule in your life and that means obedience to His Father's Laws that pertain to you. Read for yourself the Blessings for obedience to GOD'S LAWS and the Cursings for disobedience to GOD'S LAWS, which are recorded in Deuteronomy 28:1-24 and Deuteronomy 29:15-19 for your instruction.

Let us summarize and notice that because of the ministry of Yeshua:

1. Gentile "believers" were no longer aliens from the commonwealth of Israel
2. Gentile "believers" were no longer strangers from the covenants of promise (remember the Abrahamic covenant has promised that through Abraham all the nations (Gentiles) would be blessed (with the opportunity of eternal life)
3. Gentile "believers" no longer lived without hope of life after death
4. Gentile "believers" no longer lived without the knowledge of the True God of all life as the Covenant of Noah along with the Laws of Noah were extended to them for their acceptance

Answer for yourself: Does Yahweh wish the Jew to pattern himself after the Gentile or the Gentile after the Jew? In the Bible it is always the Gentile who is to follow the Jew for salvation is of the Jew, and will always be of the Jew.

Ephesians 2:13-14:

13 But now in Christ Jesus ye who sometimes were far off are made nigh by the blood of Christ (let us understand that through the death of Yeshua was catalyzed the taking of the Torah to the Gentile world, whereas before his death, no attempts were being made to give eternal life to the Gentile world).

14 For he is our peace, who hath **MADE BOTH ONE, AND HATH BROKEN DOWN THE MIDDLE WALL OF PARTITION [between us-Jew and Gentile];**

13 But <1161> now <3570> in <1722> Christ <5547> Jesus <2424> ye <5210> who <3588> sometimes <4218> were <5607> (5752) far off <3112> are made <1096> (5675) nigh <1451> by <1722> the blood <129> of Christ <5547>. 14 For <1063> he is <2076> (5748) our <2257> peace <1515>, who <3588> hath made <4160> (5660) both <297> one <1520>, and <2532> **hath broken down <3089>** (5660) the middle wall <3320> of partition <5418> [between us]

Lexicon Greek **3089 [hath broken down]**

3089 luo {loo'-o} a root word; TDNT - 2:60 & 4:328,543; v AV - loose 27, break 5, unloose 3, destroy 2, dissolve 2, put off 1, melt 1, break up 1, break down 1; 43

- 1) to loose any person (or thing) tied or fastened
 - 1a) bandages of the feet, the shoes,
 - 1b) of a husband and wife joined together by the bond of matrimony
 - 1c) of a single man, whether he has already had a wife or has not yet married
- 2) to loose one bound, i.e. to unbind, release from bonds, set free

- 2a) of one bound up (swathed in bandages)
- 2b) bound with chains (a prisoner), discharge from prison, let go
- 3) to loosen, undo, dissolve, anything bound, tied, or compacted together
 - 3a) an assembly, i.e. to dismiss, break up
 - 3b) laws, as having a binding force, are likened to bonds
 - 3c) to annul, subvert
 - 3d) to do away with, to deprive of authority, whether by precept or act
 - 3e) to declare unlawful
 - 3f) to loose what is compacted or built together, to break up, demolish, destroy
 - 3g) to dissolve something coherent into parts, to destroy
 - 3h) metaph., to overthrow, to do away with

Please notice that in verse 14 that the Gentile and the Jew had come into unity and the middle wall of separation between Jew and Gentile that consisted of such things as hatred, misunderstanding, prejudice, conflicting beliefs, doctrines, and religious rituals and ceremonies had been removed in order that both Jew and Gentile could find harmony in unity in the worship of God.

Answer for yourself: Let me ask you...does that condition of mutual acceptance and unity between Jews and Christians exist today in your church or in this world?

Answer for yourself: Where can you find this today? Why and how did we lose it (one new man in Messiah), since it is evident that it existed in the first century?

Answer for yourself: Does Yahweh wish the Jew to pattern himself after the Gentile or the Gentile after the Jew? You will have that answer after you finish these articles.

TWISTING SCRIPTURES TO OUR DESTRUCTION

The Book of Ephesians chapter two and verse 15 states:

- 15 Having abolished in his flesh the enmity, [even] the law of commandments [contained] in ordinances; for to make in himself of twain one new man, [so] making peace;
- 16 And that he might reconcile both unto God in one body by the cross, having slain the enmity thereby: (thereby: or, in himself)
- 17 And came and preached peace to you which were afar off, and to them that were nigh.
- 18 For through him we both have access by one Spirit unto the Father.
- 19 Now therefore ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellowcitizens with the saints, and of the household of God;
- 20 And are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner [stone];

Possibly there is no greater error in Scriptural interpretation than the TWISTED Scripture in Ephesians 2: 15-16 where we find that multitudes "claim" that Yeshua "nailed the Law of Commandments to the cross" thereby giving mankind (the Gentile church) freedom from the LAW! That is the premise and quite understandable from a quick reading in English version of the text. Such a mistaken understanding is because our English Bibles contain added words which were never there in the Greek Scriptures which influence our reading to perceive the Law was abolished. If you will begin to study for yourself instead of trusting that your preacher has preached to you I promise you that you will come to many Bible truths that have for too long been overlooked. If you will do this then you would discover what I did that completely altered the direction of my life and SHOULD ALTER YOURS IF YOU ARE A TRUE LOVER OF GOD!

HOW COME THE CHURCH HAS MISSED THIS?

Today the vast majority of Christian Churches find their identity in the denomination or non-denomination and not as a part of Israel. This is in direct opposition to the Scriptures in the New Testament as well as the Old Testament which clearly instructs that the Gentile finds his position in the Household of God as part of Israel along with the Jew. The reason for so much misunderstanding today in the Christian Church concerning their relationship with the Israel of God is because there have been words ADDED to Ephesians 2:15-16 (as well as other passages in the New Testament) which have TWISTED THE MEANING OF THE GREEK SCRIPTURES thereby falsely leading multitudes to believe the Law has passed away! Following is a copy from the King James Version, with the added words underlined:

Ephesians 2:

- 15 Having abolished in his flesh the enmity, even the law of commandments contained in ordinances; for to make in himself of twain one new man so making peace;
- 16 And that he might reconcile both unto God in one body by the cross, having slain the enmity thereby:

LET US BE CAREFUL IN OUR STUDY

As you can see from a close and careful reading of Ephesians 2:15-16 that the translators of the King James Version, by the USE of ADDED WORDS, PURPOSELY, with the INTENT TO FALSIFY, deceived THIS WORLD into "thinking" that Yeshua came to do away with the Law as we shall more clearly see later in this article! If we read the above Scripture and INCLUDE the words "even" and "contained" we come to the conclusion that Yeshua abolished in his flesh the law, commandments and ordinances through the cross. But dearly beloved "even" and "contained" are added to the Greek manuscripts before translating into English by the publishers of our Bibles.

Take time to read this text of the New Testament and leave out the italicized words and listen to the new meaning it brings to your awareness

Dear child of God, these words are not in the Greek texts recovered from ages of antiquity by archeologists. But by these "additions" by men "who want you to know their theology" we are unsuspectingly led astray from the real message God intended us to have.

If you remove these two "added" words we find that the ONLY THING ABOLISHED BY YESHUA AND THE CROSS IS THE "ENMITY." More on this later...let us continue with Ephesians.

Answer for yourself: As you can see from a close and careful reading of Ephesians 2:15-16 that the translators of the King James Version, by the USE of ADDED WORDS, PURPOSELY, with the INTENT TO FALSIFY, deceived THIS WORLD into "thinking" that Yeshua came to do what in regards to the Law? Nail the Law to the cross which he did not.

As stated earlier Yeshua's death and presumed resurrection were understood as a catalyst to motivate a Gentile-hating Judaism to repent in part (the followers of Yeshua) and take to the non-Jews of the world not "conversion", which required circumcision which for an adult was an effective deterrent to his acceptance of Biblical Faith, but the Laws of Noah which originally God gave to the non-Jew (did not require circumcision). No longer were 613 commandments placed upon the non-Jew along with circumcision for acceptance by the Jews; rather, 66 commandments dealing mainly with moral issues were his to keep and observe. Such repentance by Israel (the followers of Yeshua) in their attitude to the non-Jew was instrumental with the doing away with the hatred and opposition toward the Law on the part of the Gentiles by removing forced circumcision as a prerequisite. This

main fact is the whole reason for the writing of the book of Galatians where Paul speaks only about one law not given to the non-Jew....circumcision. Paul never intended, in Galatians, that the Law pass away. He was only saying that the non-Jew was never under the Law of CIRCUMCISION as it was not part of the Covenant of Noah or the Law of Noah, but was conveniently used by the Jews to keep the non-Jew from fellowship and inclusion with them as they considered the non-Jew unclean and basically "dogs." I sure wish Christianity would study their history more and see such truths as this which have been overlooked for almost 2000 years.

Answer for yourself: If we read the above Scripture and INCLUDE the words "even" and "contained" we come to the conclusion that Yeshua abolished in his flesh the law, commandments and ordinances through the cross. But dearly beloved "even" and "contained" is added to the Greek manuscripts before translated into English. If you remove these two "added" words we find that the ONLY THING ABOLISHED BY YESHUA AND THE CROSS IS NOT THE LAWbut what? Hatred toward the Law by the Gentiles, since now they could come to saving faith without the need for circumcision as an adult male, and so goes the husband and father, so went the family.

Answer for yourself: Since Paul wrote the book of Ephesians, and taught Yahweh's LAWS to these same Ephesians (chapter 6:2-3) well after Yeshua's death and presumed resurrection, WOULD Paul teach that these SAME LAWS were "'nailed to a cross", and not to be KEPT'? The answer is, DEFINITELY NOT!

BE ON ALERT FOR ITALICIZED WORDS IN YOUR BIBLES

First, I would like to remind you of the fact that when one reads the Greek Scriptures (the New Testament) and finds WORDS IN ITALICS, that means: the italicized words have been ADDED TO THE SCRIPTURES in translation WHICH WERE NOT THERE IN THE BEGINNING! In other words, it was not given by Yahweh, was not in the Greek manuscripts, and is not intended to be added to the context for often it ALTERS THE TRUE MEANING OF THE PASSAGE AND WE ARE LED INTO ERROR AND SIN WITHOUT KNOWING IT BY SUCH PLACEMENT OF ITALICIZED WORDS. Such is the erroneous teaching that the LAW HAS PASSED AWAY. This is just such the case in Ephesians 2:15-16: The ADDED WORDS in these Scriptures in the King James Version have DECEIVED millions of people for HUNDREDS of years! Let us investigate once again Ephesians 2:15-16, KJV, [added words bracketed]!

SO NOW WE SEE MORE CLEARLY

15 Having abolished in his flesh the ENMITY [hatred toward something] (EVEN) the law of commandments (CONTAINED) in ordinances; for to make in himself of twain one new man, (so) making peace;

16 And that he might reconcile both unto Yahweh in one body by the "cross", having slain the ENMITY [hatred toward something] thereby.

Answer for yourself: What was abolished by the Cross (understood to mean the death of Yeshua)?

Understand the Jews loved the Law and did not hate it. The hatred toward the Law by the Gentiles was canceled by the death of Yeshua on the Cross as subsequent to his death whereby his followers would go into all the world thereby reaching the non-Jewish peoples of the world with the message of monotheism and the resulting responsibilities necessary for those coming to God to obtain salvation. No longer was the Gentile forced to "convert" and undergo circumcision to receive God's gracious gift of salvation. Circumcision had been used as a tool by Jews who hated Gentiles to discourage their coming to God and they used it effectively as they wished to have little or no contact with them since considering them unclean and not worthy of Eternal life (one only needs to read the accounts of Shammai to understand this situation). Circumcision was used to prevent the non-Jewish adult male from making conversion to Judaism. As an infant circumcision was no big thing as the baby carries the mother's antibodies against infection which lasts up to six months in the baby's

blood. But for an adult this was a real problem as many died of the procedure due to infection. Now understand that by removing such an obstacle then the "death penalty" for transgression of the Law was removed for the non-Jew as he could now repent and come to saving faith without the need for circumcision. Not all of Israel was ecstatic over such actions taken by the Messianic community of Israel. It was even a slow procedure for the Apostles themselves as it literally took years and persecution to get them to respond in this manner. But no longer were the non-Jew kept from salvation as the Messianic part of Israel repented and began once again to be a "light to the Gentile" by directing them to God without all the excess baggage which had up to that time had effectively been used to prevent the conversion of the non-Jewish world. Now though faith, repentance, obedience, and observance of the Covenant of Noah along with its Commandments and Covenant stipulations, the non-Jew would have the "death penalty" which stood over his life removed and all this is traced to Yeshua's death on the cross and "believed resurrection" by his followers. In would be in the wake of Yeshua' death and the resulting ministry of his followers which developed afterwards that, in the fulfillment of the Great Commission, that the Jews, or at least some of them, would break from Jewish bigotry and go into all the world with the "good news" of faith in God and repentance to the non-Jewish world.

Let us regress for just a moment. First, we have established the FACT that there have been words ADDED at very critical places in these Scriptures. Now your pastors and preachers, most likely, have told you that the "ENMITY" in the verse refers to Yahweh's Law itself. As you can now see for yourself such is not the case.

Answer for yourself: Having seen for yourself the truth about these added words and that the Greek Scriptures do not contain them, are these Christian Pastors and Teachers correct in their interpretation or have they committed a grievous error and led you into sin (rejection of the Law and your covenant stipulations as non-Jews) without your knowledge? You be the judge!

Yahweh's LAW, however, is not the "ENMITY" slain as mentioned in the verse. Yeshua "abolished" on the cross the ENMITY (better understood as hatred toward something), for Paul has plainly said so in Romans 2:13, Romans 3:31, Romans 7:7, and Romans 7:12.

Romans 2:13

For NOT the "hearers" of the Law are just before Yahweh, *but* the "DOERS OF THE LAW" will be justified.

Answer for yourself: Did Paul teach "doing the Law" for justification AFTER THE CROSS? DEFINITELY YES!

Romans 3:31

Are we then "doing away with the Law through faith? BY NO MEANS! Rather, we ESTABLISH the Law!

Answer for yourself: Did Paul abolish or establish the Law in the Gentile churches (like yours) in Rome before or after the cross? The Law was established in Paul's preaching definitely after the cross!

Romans 7:7

Shall we therefore "say that the Law is 'SIN'? NO! By no means! But to the contrary, I did not know SIN (transgression of The Law) except THROUGH THE LAW, for I did not know lust, unless the Law had said (in Exodus 20:17 and Deuteronomy 5:21) Do not covet."

Romans 7:12

Therefore the LAW is HOLY, and the COMMANDMENTS holy, and Just,

and Righteous.

Answer for yourself: Did Paul say this before or after the Cross of Christ? Definitely after!

Answer for yourself: Did the Jews love the Law or hate the Law? They loved the Law.

Answer for yourself: Then who do you suppose hated the Law (having not grown up with it and understood it properly like you and me)? The Gentiles for the reasons given above.

The Apostle Paul taught The Ten Commandment Law to the Ephesians, as proven by Ephesians 6:2-3, which says:

- 2 Honor your father and mother, which is the first Commandment with a promise:
- 3 That it may be well with you, and you may live long on the earth.

The LAW to honor one's father and mother, in order that your days may be long upon the land, is Commandment Number Five of The Ten Commandments, found in Exodus 20:12, and repeated in Deuteronomy 5:16.

Notice that the Apostle Paul was NOT teaching the "abolishment" of The Commandments (correctly understood as the ten categories that organized all the LAWS OF YAHWEH), or he would NOT have been teaching the Ephesians to OBEY the 5th Commandment!

This is made all the more difficult because Paul tells us in Romans that the "Law is holy, just and righteous."

Answer for yourself: So "what" was the ENMITY that Paul said was "abolished" on the Yeshua's cross if it is not the LAW?

To understand, we must look at the status and situation of the Gentile in first century Israel.

WHAT IS THE "ENMITY" WHICH WAS ABOLISHED & WHY IS IT VERY IMPORTANT FOR THE CHRISTIAN TODAY?

In Ephesians 2:15-16 we find the Greek word which is translated as "**ENMITY**". This word comes from the Greek word "echthra", word #2189 in *Strong's Greek Dictionary*, which is a derivative of word #2190 which means "**hostility toward something.**:"

Thus, **the word ENMITY in Ephesians 2:15-16, should have been WRITTEN: enmity TOWARD something or enmity TO something.**

A Critical Lexicon and Concordance To The English and Greek New Testament, by Ethelbert W. Bullinger, Zondervan Publishing, Grand Rapids, MI., pps. 250-251, corroborates the FACT that **the word ENMITY means: OPPOSITE TO, hating another, and adverse to Him:**

"The ENMITY is TOWARD something, which in this case is hatred toward The Law of Yahweh!" So dear Christian, Yeshua's death and subsequent events traced to his death destroyed the hatred toward the Law by the non-Jew and not the Law...by catalyzing a movement to the non-Jewish world where the Laws of Noah...66 Commandments and not 613 were given to the Gentile without the requirement of circumcision...no longer conversion and forced circumcision on adult males was required for acceptance into the Israel Of God!

I bet that is a real revelation to most of you, especially considering you have been taught to hate the Law since you were children in Sunday school. *Yeshua destroyed the hatred and opposition to Yahweh's LAW by catalyzing a Messianic movement whereby the non-Jews of the world were brought to God without the obstacle of circumcision, therefore making "peace" between the Gentile and the Jews...thus making the two...one...thereby breaking down the middle wall of opposition and separation between them. Now it was possible that both the Jew and the non-Jew would LOVE THE SAME THING: BOTH JEW AND GENTILE COULD LOVE THE LAWS OF YAHWEH! (The Laws of Noah are so simple..any non-Jew could easily live by them and most already were if they were righteous beings).*

Answer for yourself: How so? By re-establishing the Laws of Noah for the Gentile as seen in Acts 15 (Messianic branch of Judaism in the second Temple period of which Yeshua belonged).

More on that later in forthcoming articles in this series.



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THE GENTILE GOD-FEARER AND DIFFERENT LEVELS OF COMMITMENT TO GOD

The conviction that Judaism was the one true religion given by God for all men and that it was destined to become the universal religion for all mankind was a peculiarity of the Jews. No other religion in the world and time made any such pretensions or cherished such aspirations. It was an exclusiveness the rest of mankind did not understand and therefore doubly resented. It is today as well. Such a belief in the future universality of the "true religion," the coming of an age when *"the Lord shall be King over all the earth," when "the Lord shall be one and His name One,"* led to efforts to convert the Gentiles to the worship of the one true God and to adherence to both faith and obedience according to the revelation He had given. Thus Judaism became the first great missionary religion of the Mediterranean world.

THE VEHICLE FOR INSTRUCTION:

Judaism's religious influence was exerted chiefly through the synagogues, which the Jews set up for themselves, but which were open to all whom interest or curiosity drew to their services. To Gentiles, in whose mind these services, consisting essentially of readings from the Scriptures and a discourse, along with prayers and hymns of praise, were inviting. In that time period in the Hellenistic world (Greek influenced), polytheism (belief in many gods) and idolatry was so decisively prevalent, that the souls of men cried out for something more. Such was the difference between the Gentile and the Jew. As a Gentile came to renounce heathenism and adopt Judaism along with observations such as the Sabbath, Festivals, and conformity to the rules of clean and unclean foods which were necessary conditions of social intercourse, it was seen to be a respectable degree of commitment and conversion on behalf of the Gentile that he be accepted alongside the Jew as God's people. This was before faith in Christ which only solidified such a commitment. The rejection of idolatry by the Gentile was an acknowledgment of the whole law, since one who renounces idolatry is called in Scripture a "Jew."

CONVERTS & VARIETIES OF COMMITMENT OF THE GENTILE

Gentile "believers" were called religious persons who "worship, or revere God," although in a strict sense they resided both inside and outside of the mainstream of Judaism. Yet, they were expected to share with "Jews by birth" the favor of the God they had adopted, and were encouraged in this hope by their Jewish teachers. It was not uncommon for the next generation to seek incorporation in the Jewish people by circumcision, thus becoming a full-fledged "convert to Judaism." These Gentiles were seen as the ones *"clinging to the skirt (prayer shawl) of the Jew"* (Zech. 8:23).

Zech 8:23 23 Thus saith the LORD of hosts; In those days it shall come to pass, that ten men shall take hold out of all languages of the nations, even shall take hold of the skirt of him that is a Jew, saying, We will go with you: for we have heard that God is with you. (KJV)

Oh, by the way, this passage is prophetic and is yet to occur.

Answer for yourself: How is it that Gentiles will follow the Jews to Zion to learn of God if we Protestants and Catholics have all truth? Why are we trying to convert Jews to Christianity when the picture of the world to come is that Gentiles will come up to Zion and set at the feet of the Jews and Rabbis as we learn of God from them? Maybe Israel is the light unto the Gentiles after all! Think on that for a while.

Much confusion has arisen from the habit of describing such Gentile adherents of the synagogue as a class of proselytes or semi-proselytes, and trying to find a category for them in Jewish law. Jewish law knows no such semi-proselytes, nor any other kind of proselytes than such as have, by conversion and immersion/mikvah, not only become members of the Jewish church but has been naturalized in the Jewish nation. One should NOT make a distinction where none existed.

PHILO'S DEFINITION OF A PROSELYTE:

"Proselytes are such as have resolved to change over to the true religion, and are called proselytes because they have become naturalized in a new and godly commonwealth, renouncing the mythical fictions and adhering to the unadulterated truth." Under the Laws of Noah (7 commandments containing some but not all the Laws of Moses unless fully converted), proselytes enjoy equal rights in all respects with the native born Jews, as is only just, inasmuch as they have left country, friends, and kinfolk for the sake of virtue and holiness. There can be no question that Philo means by "proselyte" one who has deserted his false gods and his people to cast in his lot with the Jews.

OTHER VIEWS ON THE PROSELYTE:

Tacitus (a roman historian) speaks of proselytes as such as "practice circumcision like the Jews." A proselyte is not one who had merely embraced the monotheistic theology of Judaism, but has addicted himself to the Jewish ordinances and customs, and in doing so severed himself from his people, friends, and kinsmen; for which reason he is to be treated with peculiar benevolence. He has become a naturalized citizen of a new religious commonwealth in which he has a full quality of rights and duties with born Jews. NOTICE a proselyte was considered as part of Israel!

THE "GER" -HEBREW FOR PROSELYTE:

In the Greek Bible, "proselyte" is the usual translation of the Hebrew "ger." The older associations of this word were both civil and social. The "ger" was an alien immigrant, or the descendant of such an immigrant, resident in Israelite territory by permission, without any civil rights. This is the position of the "ger" in the older Hebrew legislation and in Deuteronomy. They are distinguished from foreigners (nokrim), who may be casually and temporarily in the country, and from the descendants of the ancient Canaanites. Israelites are commanded not to oppress these aliens, who had no legal protection; and they are frequently presented as objects of charity.

Later, in the Persian period, the word "ger" comes to be applied to foreigners (men of other than Jewish descent) who join themselves to Jehovah, or to Israel as the worshippers of Jehovah. Thus in Isaiah 14:1, in the restoration, when God reestablished Israel in its own land, *"the 'ger' (converts the Jews have made in the exile) will join themselves to them and attach themselves to the house of Jacob."* Such converts are described in Isa. 56:6ff.

"The aliens who join themselves to Jehovah to minister unto him, and to love the name of Jehovah, to be his servants, every one that keeps the Sabbath from profaning it, and hold firmly to my covenant

(laws), I will bring them to my holy mountain and make them rejoice in my house of prayer; their burnt offerings and their sacrifices shall be acceptable upon my altar, for my house shall be called a house of prayer for all peoples. Thus saith the Lord Jehovah who gathers the dispersed of Israel, yet will gather others unto him (Israel), besides those that are gathered of (Israel) himself."

The laws for the "ger" (Gentile proselyte) or "gerim" (Gentile proselytes) in Lev. 17-25 put them, so far as religious duties and privileges go, in all respects on the same footing with Israelites by birth; they are subject to all the obligations of the Law, precisely as the "gerim" (proselytes) in the rabbinical law are. This is true, not only of religious commandments and prohibitions but also civil law: "You shall have one civil law; the proselyte (ger) shall be treated like the native born, for I am the Lord your God." For living as a resident alien ("ger," in the original civil sense) in the land of Israel the verb is "gur," as in sojourn; for conversion to Judaism and adoption into the people as well as their religion a new form was needed and created, the "ger in a religious sense" understood as "becoming a proselyte."

THE GER - GENTILE CONVERT RESTS BENEATH THE WINGS OF THE ALMIGHTY:

A favorite figure in the Psalms for the confident security of the religious man is having a refuge, or shelter, beneath the wings of God, or beneath the shade of his wings, as the young of birds do under their mother's wings for safety from danger. The same figure is frequently employed of conversion. The proselyte came beneath the wings of the Shekinah; one who converts a Gentile brings him under the wings of the Shekinah. The origin of this use is doubtless Ruth 2:12, where Boaz speaks for the Moabitish convert the reward for her goodness to Naomi from *"the God of Israel, beneath whose wings thou art come to take refuge."*

The legislation in the middle books of the Pentateuch (first 5 books of the Bible) thus puts the "gerim" on the same footing with native Israelites, not only before the civil law, but in religious duties and privileges, and Philo repeatedly emphasizes this parity of the naturalized and the native Jew as one of the notable features of the Mosaic Law.

DISTINCTIONS DO EXIST HOWEVER:

The Passover was the most distinctively national of all the festivals, but the law admits the proselyte to it, though no foreigner, no settler, no hired servant may eat of it. For such participation it is necessary that one be circumcised, "for no uncircumcised man shall eat of it" (Ex. 12:48). In Num. 9:14 it is assumed that the proselyte is circumcised, and the only requirement is that he shall conform strictly to the ritual of the Passover: *"Whether proselyte or native, you shall have the same ordinance."* This Scripture puts the proselyte on the same footing as the native in all the commandments contained in the Law. "As the native born Jew takes upon himself to obey all the words of the Law," so the proselyte takes upon him all the words of the Law. The authorities said, *"if a proselyte takes upon himself to obey all the words of the Law except one single commandment, he is not to be received."* Thus Paul would say in Gal. 5:2 to the Galatians: *"I solemnly warn every man that gets himself circumcised (Paul was referring to conversion to Judaism) that he is under obligation to fulfill the whole law (613 commandments)".* Since Paul was reared as a Pharisee, he made reference to both the Written Law and the Oral Law in this passage.

REQUIREMENTS FOR CONVERSION & "BEING BORN AGAIN"

The initiatory rite by which a man was made a proselyte comprised three parts: circumcision, immersion in water (mikvah/baptism) and the presentation of an offering in the Temple. In the case of a woman there was no circumcision, and after the destruction of the Temple no offering could be made. Circumcision alone is prescribed in the Written Law. The offering of a sacrifice is, thus, not one of the conditions of becoming a proselyte, but only a condition precedent to the exercise of one of the rights which belong to him as a sacrificial meal. As soon as he was circumcised and immersed, he was in full standing in the religious community, having all the legal rights and powers and being subject to all the obligations of the Jew by birth. He had "entered the covenant." It is interesting to note that this immersion of conversion was different from other immersions of purification in that the presence of official witnesses was required for conversion. Two scholars would stand by him and rehearse to him orally some of the lighter and some of the weightier commandments. When he had been immersed and had come up from the water (following circumcision if a male), one is like an Israelite in all that he does. In the case of the woman proselyte, women made her sit in the water up to her neck, while two scholars recited the same commandments, both positive and negative and it was assumed that the initiant assumed "the yoke of the commandments." As the Israelite came into the covenant only by three things, circumcision, immersion, and sacrifice, precisely so the proselyte comes into the covenant by the same three things. Israel was circumcised before leaving Egypt, they were baptized in the Sinai desert, and after they pledged themselves to keep all God's commandments they were sprinkled with the blood of the covenant sacrifice.

Now listen well. The status of a proselyte who embraces Judaism is at the moment of his reception like that of a "new born child" or as if "born again." Being "born again" is not a Christian concept by and of itself.

Answer for yourself: Don't you find it rather strange that Christianity has stolen the term and uses it but has dropped the original meaning which meant one's conversion and acceptance of the 613 Commandments for full conversion to Judaism? That is but one example of Replacement Religion for you.

It goes without saying that before a Gentile proselyte converted to Judaism that it was customary that before his initiation that he adhere to the seven Laws of Noah which were given to all heathen to observe if they lived within the land of Israel. The laws of Noah were the foundation from which one pursued righteousness.

The sincere and genuine proselyte (fully converted through circumcision, immersion, and having brought a sacrifice) is called "ger zedek," or "righteous proselyte" (Psalm 118:20). They are such as embrace the religion from religious motives, "for the sake of God," and therefore live in conformity to His will revealed in the Oral and Written Laws as they pledged themselves at their reception. Another name for such converts is the "get emet," or "true proselyte." To the righteous proselytes are sometimes applied texts in the Old Testament which speak of the righteous, or of such as fear God, the "truly righteous." We call them those who fear God or God-fearers. In the daily prayers in the Temple petitions for God's blessings upon the righteous proselyte are invoked.

The word "ger" by itself having come to mean proselyte or convert to Judaism who has received circumcision and baptism not only into the religion of Judaism but into the Jewish people, occasioned the necessity to find a distinctive term for the resident alien.

DISTINCTION BETWEEN RIGHTEOUS GENTILES: GER ZEDEK VS GER TOSHAB

The "ger toshab" was an alien but not a full convert to Judaism. He was a resident in Jewish lands by permission on the condition that while he resides that he would:

- **Not engage in the worship of other gods or in idolatrous practices,**
- **Not blaspheme the name of God.**
- **He had to pledge himself in the presence of 3 observant persons to abstain from idolatry.**
- **He was to be subject to the jurisdiction of Jewish courts**
- **He had to keep free of flagrant crimes, homicide, robbery, theft, adultery and fornication.**
- **He also had to abstain from eating flesh with the blood or "life" in it (part of the Laws of Noah).**
- **He had to observe and commit to observance of the Seven Commandments that God gave to Adam and Noah and were consequently binding upon all mankind.**
- **He was not required to join in the worship of Israel nor to take upon himself any further obligations to observe the commandments of God to Israel (Mosaic Law), although these were optional to him ([Isa. 56](#)).**
- **He was not required to observe and keep the Sabbath but he enjoyed the exemption from labor on the Sabbath which gives rest on that day to slaves and hirelings of every race, as well as animals.**
- **He was not required to be circumcised.**

Upon his circumcision he would become fully Israel and a full convert and his status would then change from a "ger toshab" to a "ger tzedek".

The "ger toshab" is not a proselyte or a "semi-proselyte" and was not considered a convert to Judaism at all. The "ger toshab" as **uncircumcised**, also was called the "ger arel," and is not to be confused with **the circumcised proselyte "ger ben berit" who has come into the covenant of God with Israel (ger mahul).** The "ger toshab" was a heathen and was allowed to eat "carrion" or the flesh of animals not correctly slaughtered which no Israelite or proselyte could partake. The "ger" to whom an Israelite may give it in Deut. 14:21 is the "ger toshab". Also, it was permissible to take usury from a "ger toshab" as with any heathen, but forbidden to take usury from an Israelite or "true proselyte;" the "ger zedek."

Since the 18th century another category of proselytes emerged, the **"Ger sh'ar" or the "proselyte of the gate"** which is **distinct from the "ger zedek," or full proselyte or God-fearing Gentile.** The "ger sha'ar" or "proselyte of the gate" suggests converts who **lingered at the door of the synagogue** as derived from passages in the Bible which speak of the ***"ger (alien) who is in thy gates"*** or residents in Israelite towns and cities (Ex. 20:10, Deut. 5:14).

In the 4th century a question arose as to whom the 4th Commandment concerning the Sabbath applied to, the "ger zedek" or "ger sha'ar" and the former opinion prevailed. **In other words the full-convert is required to observe and keep the Sabbath, having become as one born in the land, while the ger toshab was not, yet he still could choose those things that pleased God if he so desired ([Isa. 56](#)).** Often such "strangers" are listed with names in Deut. along with the widows, orphans, and the landless Levites. Here we find the proselyte of the gate who was likewise often the object of charity.

ATTITUDES TOWARD PROSELYTES:

The attitude of the religious leaders of Judaism toward proselytes differed in different circumstances, and individual teachers had their own beliefs. Rabbi Shammai would have nothing to do with one who was not prepared to give implicit assent, before knowing its contents to the unwritten Law as well as the written Law. Many had bad opinions of all proselytes, fearing that with persecution that they would fall back into their old ways because they were naturally bad people. It is for this reason the Scriptures had so often admonished Israelites not to give them offense by word or deed. **The School of Hillel, unlike the School of Shammai, welcomed converts, and admitted them even though their knowledge was imperfect and the observance of Judaism faulty.** Hillel, to whom Jesus agreed, coined a motto: ***"Be one of the disciples of Aaron, a lover of peace, following after peace, loving mankind, and drawing them to the Law"***

(religion)." A tradition illustrating the different temper of the two masters states that a foreigner came to Shammai saying, **"Make a proselyte of me, on condition that you teach me the whole of the Law while I stand on one foot."** Shammai drove him off, beating him with a measuring stick, whereupon he gave Hillel the same proposition. Hillel received him as a proselyte and taught him: **"What you do not like to have done to you, do not do to your fellow man. This is the whole of the Law; the rest is explanation of it. Go and study and learn it."**

NO DIFFERENCE BETWEEN JEW AND GENTILE PROSELYTE:

Proselytes are dear to God, for you will find that the same things are said about them as about Israel:

- the Israelites are servants (Lev. 25:23) and proselytes are called servants, as it is said, **"To love the name of the Lord and to be servants to him"** (Isa. 56:60);
- the Israelites are called ministers, as it is said, **"And ye shall be called the priests of the Lord, ministers to our God shall be said of you"** (Isa. 61:1), and the proselytes are called ministers, as it is said, **"The foreigners who attach themselves to the Lord to minister unto him"** (Isa. 56:6);
- the Israelites are called friends, as it is said, **"The offspring of Abraham, my friend"** (Isa. 41:8) and the proselytes are called friends, as it is said (of God), **"Friend of the proselyte"** (Deut. 10:18).
- The word "covenant" is used of the Israelites in Gen. 17:13 and so it is used of proselytes **"Who hold fast my covenant"** (Isa. 56:6).

The parallels are striking and it shows that God puts no difference between them in a spiritual sense.

IN CONCLUSION:

The preaching of Christianity made converts among proselytes to Judaism as well as among the looser adherents of the synagogue. There was such, according to Acts 2 and Acts 10, among the converts on the Day of Pentecost as Gentile converts from all 70 nations had come up to celebrate the Festival of Shavuot (Pentecost).

There were, on the other hand, proselytes to Judaism who came over from the Gentile church at times. In times of persecution Christians sometimes joined the Jews to evade the test applied by the Roman officials to adore the emperor, to which Jews were not subject. Later, Christian emperors would make conversion of Christians to Judaism a crime in itself with severe penalties both for the Christian convert and the Jew who converted him. Against all such attempts of pagan or Christian rulers to shut up Judaism in itself and prevent its spread in the first three centuries the Jews persisted in their missionary efforts to **make the religion God had revealed to their fathers the religion of all mankind.** It is with this understanding that we will continue in the next newsletter our study in the Book of Acts.

As a Gentile Christian you find the example of what is required of you as:

- **Adhering to the Laws of Noah which is the minimum requirement**
- **Choosing those things that please God which go beyond the minimum commandments of our Noahide Covenant which demonstrate your love for God and your fellowman created in His image.**



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EARLY GENTILE BELIEVERS WERE TO OBEY THE TORAH

We need first to get acquainted with the term used in the Jewish Scriptures for the non-Jew: **"stranger."**

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- **a) a temporary inhabitant, a newcomer lacking inherited rights**
- **b) used of foreigners within Israel, though they had conceded rights**

Answer for yourself: Do you remember that we just read about the "ger" and the "ger toshav" in the prior articles? Do you remember that the Ger Toshav goes beyond the Laws of Noah (66 Commandments) and choose other mitzvoth to include into his life? I would hope so and by now you should be familiar with this term and the responsibilities that it entails.

In order to understand what comes next it would be important to begin to look for a "pattern" in the verses that follow not only in this article but the rest in this series as you will come to see that God included the non-Jews in the giving of the Torah. The reason for this is simple; before Moses gave the Jewish people the Torah God had given by revelation the Torah to the non-Jew and we find that Joshua and others presented the Torah and opportunity to enter the Covenant to the non-Jew throughout the history of Israel.

This pattern can be found not only in the Jewish Old Testament Scriptures but the New Testament as well. Having seen this then one has to wonder how we lost and deviated from such a pattern which was established in antiquity by God to the point where we have lost such obedience and observance today. One would have to ask Rome that question.

Leviticus 24

- 22 **Ye shall have one manner of law**, as well for the **stranger**, as for one of your own country (Jews): for I [am] the LORD your God.

You need to re-read that verse above and let the implications of it sink in into your mind and spirit.

Joshua 8

32 And he wrote there upon the stones a copy of the law of Moses, which he wrote in the presence of the

children of Israel. (KJV) Josh 8:32-35 32 And he wrote there upon the stones a copy of the law of Moses, which he wrote in the presence of the children of Israel. 33 And all Israel, and their elders, and officers, and their judges, stood on this side the ark and on that side before the priests the Levites, which bare the ark of the covenant of the LORD, as well the **stranger**, as he that was born among them; half of them over against mount Gerizim, and half of them over against mount Ebal; as Moses the servant of the LORD had commanded before, that they should bless the people of Israel. 34 And afterward he read all the words of the law, the blessings and cursings, according to all that is written in the book of the law. 35 There was not a word of all that Moses commanded, which Joshua read not before all the congregation of Israel, with the women, and the little ones, and the **strangers** that were conversant among them. (KJV)

Answer for yourself: Did you notice that non-Jews were a part of not only the reading of the Laws of God but also this Covenant renewal? By now you should understand that this "one manner of Law for all" from Leviticus 24 is to be understood in that the non-Jews who heard Joshua read the Laws understood that within the reading of these Laws that certain Laws pertained to them and certain others did not. Regardless the non-Jew is seen re-affirming his Covenant and commitment to God and His Commandments as part of his Covenant. These Laws are called "Torah" or the instruction of God.

2 Samuel 22

- 45 **Strangers** shall submit themselves unto me: as soon as they hear, they shall be obedient unto me. {Strangers: Heb. Sons of the stranger} {submit...: or, yield feigned obedience: Heb. lie}

Psalms 18

- 44 As soon as they hear of me, they shall obey me: the **strangers** shall submit themselves unto me. {As soon...: Heb. **At the hearing of the ear**} {submit...: or, yield feigned obedience} {strangers: Heb. sons of the stranger}

Psalms 119

- 19. I [am] a **stranger** in the earth: hide not thy commandments from me.

Answer for yourself: Did you notice the yearning of the non-Jew to learn the Commandments of God? By now you should be understanding that one's Covenant with God is framed by Laws and Commandments that when kept bring not only one's right-standing with God but acceptance by Him as well.

1 Peter 2

- 11 Dearly beloved, I beseech [you] as **strangers** and pilgrims, abstain from fleshly lusts, which war against the soul;

Acts 28

- 23. And when they had appointed him a day, there came many to him (remember Paul was in Rome and many who came to him were non-Jews) into [his] lodging; to whom he expounded and testified the kingdom of God, persuading them concerning Jesus, both out of the law of Moses, and [out of] the prophets, from morning till evening.

It sure looks to me that not only in the Old Testament but the New Testament as well, and even long after Jesus' death, that non-Jews were still taught the Laws and Commandments of God. Why? Because these frame his Covenant with God and assure when obeyed his acceptance with God.



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GENTILE BELIEVERS OBSERVED SIMILAR LAWS AS THEY PARTICIPATED IN THE SACRIFICIAL SYSTEM

We need first to get acquainted with the term used in the Jewish Scriptures for the non-Jew: **"stranger."**

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- a) a temporary inhabitant, a newcomer lacking inherited rights
- b) used of foreigners within Israel, though they had conceded rights

In order to understand what comes next it would be important to begin to look for a "pattern" in the verses that follow not only in this article but the rest in this series as you will come to see that God included the non-Jews in the giving of the Torah. The reason for this is simple; it can be shown that non-Jews kept those parts of the Torah concerning the sacrificial system along with the Jews. This is startling revelation that has immense impact upon the role of the non-Jew in the Israel of God.

This pattern can be found not only in the Jewish Old Testament Scriptures but the New Testament as well. Having seen this then one has to wonder how we lost and deviated from such a pattern which was established in antiquity by God to the point where we have lost such obedience and observance today. One would have to ask Rome that question.

Leviticus 17

- 8 And thou shalt say unto them, Whatsoever man [there be] of the house of Israel, or of the **strangers** which sojourn among you, that offereth a burnt offering or sacrifice,

Leviticus 22

- 18 Speak unto Aaron, and to his sons, and unto all the children of Israel, and say unto them, Whatsoever [he be] of the house of Israel, or of the **strangers** in Israel, that will offer his oblation for all his vows, and for all his freewill offerings, which they will offer unto the LORD for a burnt offering;

Numbers 15

- 14 And if a **stranger** sojourn with you, or whosoever [be] among you in your generations, and will offer an offering made by fire, of a sweet savour unto the LORD; as ye do, so he shall do.

What must not escape our understanding in these verses is that according to Leviticus 24:22:

Leviticus 24

- 22 **Ye shall have one manner of law**, as well for the **stranger**, as for one of your own country (Jews): for I [am] the LORD your God.

Please understand that "this one manner of law" applied to not only the offerings but the whole of the sacrificial system as a form of the non-Jew's atonement as will be shown next:

Lev 17:8-11 8 And thou shalt say unto them, Whatsoever man there be of the house of Israel, or of the **strangers** which sojourn among you, that offereth a burnt offering or sacrifice, 9 And bringeth it not unto the door of the tabernacle of the congregation, to offer it unto the LORD; even that man shall be cut off from among his people. 10 And whatsoever man there be of the house of Israel, or of the **strangers** that sojourn among you, that eateth any manner of blood; I will even set my face against that soul that eateth blood, and will cut him off from among his people. 11 For the life of the flesh is in the blood: **and I have given it to you upon the altar to make an atonement for your souls: for it is the blood that maketh an atonement for the soul. (KJV)**

Answer for yourself: Did you notice that the non-Jew found his atonement the same way the Jew did...through the sacrificial system. Now...do you know how the sacrificial system worked? Before you say yes...you need to read the following because if you are a Christian I guarantee you don't because **Christianity is almost totally ignorant of how the dynamic of the Sacrificial System in the Jewish Scriptures operated.**

You need to re-read that verse above and let the implications of it sink in into your mind and spirit...because we have been taught incorrectly.....



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EARLY GENTILE BELIEVERS WERE ARE CALLED "STRANERS" IN SCRIPTURE & WORSHIPPED ALONGSIDE THE JEWS

Deuteronomy 31

12 Gather the people together, men, and women, and children, and thy stranger that [is] within thy gates, that they may hear, and that they may learn, and fear the LORD your God, and observe to do all the words of this law:

1Kings 8

41 Moreover concerning a stranger, that [is] not of thy people Israel, but cometh out of a far country for thy name's sake;

1Kings 8

43 Hear thou in heaven thy dwelling place, and do according to all that the stranger calleth to thee for: that all people of the earth may know thy name, to fear thee, as [do] thy people Israel; and that they may know that this house, which I have builded, is called by thy name. {this...: Heb. thy name is called upon this house}

2Chronicles 6

32 Moreover concerning the stranger, which is not of thy people Israel, but is come from a far country for thy great name's sake, and thy mighty hand, and thy stretched out arm; if they come and pray in this house;

33 Then hear thou from the heavens, [even] from thy dwelling place, and do according to all that the stranger calleth to thee for; that all people of the earth may know thy name, and fear thee, as [doth] thy people Israel, and may know that this house which I have built is called by thy name. {this...: Heb. thy name is called upon this house}

Isaiah 14

1. For the LORD will have mercy on Jacob, and will yet choose Israel, and set them in their own land: and the strangers shall be joined with them, and they shall cleave to the house of Jacob.

Isaiah 56

3. Neither let the son of the stranger, that hath joined himself to the LORD, speak, saying, The LORD hath utterly separated me from his people: neither let the eunuch say, Behold, I [am] a dry tree. 4 For thus saith the LORD unto the eunuchs that keep my sabbaths, and choose [the things] that please me, and take

hold of my covenant:

Isaiah 56

6 Also the **sons of the stranger**, that join themselves to the LORD, to serve him, and to love the name of the LORD, to be his servants, **every one that keepeth the sabbath from polluting it, and taketh hold of my covenant:**

Ezekiel 14

7 For every one of the house of Israel, or of the **stranger** that sojourneth in Israel, which separateth himself from me, and setteth up his idols in his heart, and putteth the stumblingblock of his iniquity before his face, and cometh to a prophet to enquire of him concerning me; I the LORD will answer him by myself:

Ezekiel 47

22 And it shall come to pass, [that] ye shall divide it by lot for an inheritance unto you, and to the **strangers** that sojourn among you, which shall beget children among you: and **they shall be unto you as born in the country among the children of Israel; they shall have inheritance with you among the tribes of Israel.**

Ephesians 2

19 Now therefore ye are **no more strangers and foreigners, but fellowcitizens with the saints,** and of the household of God;

Romans 11

20 Well; because of unbelief they were broken off, and thou standest by faith. Be not highminded, but fear:

1Peter 2

17 Honour all [men]. Love the brotherhood. **Fear God.** Honour the king. {Honour all: or, Esteem all}

The term "fear God" refers to the non-Jewish Godfearers like Cornelius in Acts 10 and others to which Paul would minister later in Asia, Minor. Let us continue our study but before going notice please how the non-Jewish worshiper of God, **the "stranger" is called with the Jew in the worship of God.**



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EARLY GENTILE BELIEVERS CELEBRATED THE SABBATH

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In order to understand what comes next it would be important to begin to look for a "pattern" in the verses that follow not only in this article but the rest in this series as you will come to see that God included the non-Jews in the observance of not only the Festivals but the Sabbath as well. This pattern can be found not only in the Jewish Old Testament Scriptures but the New Testament as well. Having seen this then one has to wonder how we lost and deviated from such a pattern which was established in antiquity by God to the point where we have lost such obedience and observance today. One would have to ask Rome that question.

Exodus 20

- 10 But the seventh day [is] the sabbath of the LORD thy God: [in it] thou shalt not do any work, thou, nor thy son, nor thy daughter, thy manservant, nor thy maidservant, nor thy cattle, nor thy **stranger** that [is] within thy gates:

Exodus 23

- 12 Six days thou shalt do thy work, and on the seventh day thou shalt rest: that thine ox and thine ass may rest, and the son of thy handmaid, and the **stranger**, may be refreshed.

Leviticus 25

- 6 And the sabbath of the land shall be meat for you; for thee, and for thy servant, and for thy maid, and for thy hired servant, and for thy **stranger** that sojourneth with thee,

Deuteronomy 5

- 14 But the seventh day [is] the sabbath of the LORD thy God: [in it] thou shalt not do any work, thou, nor thy son, nor thy daughter, nor thy manservant, nor thy maidservant, nor thine ox, nor thine ass, nor any of thy cattle, nor thy **stranger** that [is] within thy gates; that thy manservant and thy maidservant may

rest as well as thou.

Isaiah 56

- 3. Neither let the son of the **stranger**, that hath joined himself to the LORD, speak, saying, The LORD hath utterly separated me from his people: neither let the eunuch say, Behold, I [am] a dry tree.
- 4 For thus saith the LORD unto the eunuchs that **keep my sabbaths, and choose [the things] that please me**, and take hold of my covenant;

Answer for yourself: Can there be any doubt that God included the non-Jews in the observance of the Sabbath?

Answer for yourself: Can we find this "Pattern of Worship" continuing as we find non-Jews observing the Sabbath in the New Testament as well? We sure can. We only need look at the [ruling of James in Acts 15](#) as well as the [example of Paul where he, in Troaz, Asia, Minor, kept the closing Sabbath Havdalah Services with non-Jew in Asia, Minor.](#)

The point in sharing these examples of non-Jews which kept the Festivals and the Sabbath is to make you think. We hear today even from some Jews that the Gentile believer does not have to keep the Sabbath as it is not part of the Gentile's Covenant with Noah. Well it would seem from the texts that they did and God seems to have declared it to be so. **Even if not part of the Covenant of Noah we find in the passage above from Isaiah 56:3-4 that God is pleased when non-Jewish believers "choose" to keep His (God calls them 'My' Sabbaths) Sabbaths and choose to observe and keep those things related to God. Let us never forget that the Sabbath is not Sunday but Friday evening to Saturday evening.**



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EARLY GENTILE BELIEVERS CELEBRATED THE FEAST OF PASSOVER

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Exodus 12

- 19 Seven days shall there be no leaven found in your houses: for whosoever eateth that which is leavened, even that soul shall be cut off from the congregation of Israel, whether he be a **stranger**, or born in the land.

Exodus 12

- 43. And the LORD said unto Moses and Aaron, This [is] the ordinance of the passover: There shall no **stranger** eat thereof: (unless circumcised).

Exodus 12

- 48 And when a **stranger** shall sojourn with thee, and will keep the passover to the LORD, let all his males be circumcised, and then let him come near and keep it; and he shall be as one that is born in the land: for no uncircumcised person shall eat thereof.

2Chronicles 30

- 23 And the whole assembly took counsel to keep other seven days: and they kept [other] seven days with gladness.

24 For Hezekiah king of Judah did give to the congregation a thousand bullocks and seven thousand sheep; and the princes gave to the congregation a thousand bullocks and ten thousand sheep: and a great number of priests sanctified themselves. {did give: Heb. lifted up, or, offered} {gave: Heb. lifted up, or, offered}

- **25 And all the congregation of Judah, with the priests and the Levites, and all the congregation that came out of Israel, and the strangers that came out of the land of Israel, and that dwelt in Judah, rejoiced.**

Answer for yourself: Can there be any doubt that God included the non-Jews in the observance of the Passover and such obedience brought them rejoicing? What did they know then that we have not been taught today?



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ABRAHAM'S EXAMPLE: CIRCUMCISION REQUIRED FOR GENTILE BELIEVERS TO PARTICIPATE FULLY IN THE FEASTS OF THE LORD

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Genesis 17

12 And he that is eight days old shall be circumcised among you, every man child in your generations, he that is born in the house, or bought with money of any **stranger**, which [is] not of thy seed. {he that is eight...: Heb. a son of eight days}

Exodus 12

48 And when a **stranger** shall sojourn with thee, and will keep the Passover to the LORD, let all his males be circumcised, and then let him come near and keep it; and he shall be as one that is born in the land: for no uncircumcised person shall eat thereof.

As you can see from the above verse it was mandatory that before a non-Jew was permitted to observe the Passover he had to be circumcised. Many will think that this was just a "Mosaic" ordinance but that is not true. When one considers Abraham we find some interesting things concerning Abraham's knowledge of the "Passover" and his sanctification of this "appointed time" long before Moses. Let us look at the text for clues but these "clues" span over 4 chapters so bear with me in reading these long texts:

In reading these texts I want you to notice two things:

- God is making a covenant with Abraham and his seed as an **EVERLASTING COVENANT**
- Abraham is commanded to "circumcise" himself and every man child and this circumcision was to be a token and distinguishing mark of that covenant

Gen 17:1-11 1 And when Abram was ninety years old and nine, the LORD appeared to Abram, and said unto him, I am the Almighty God; walk before me, and be thou perfect. 2 And I will make my covenant between me and thee, and will multiply thee exceedingly. 3 And Abram fell on his face: and God talked with him, saying, 4 As for me, behold, my covenant is with thee, and thou shalt be a father of many nations. 5 Neither shall thy name any more be called Abram, but thy name shall be Abraham; for a father of many nations have I made thee. 6 And I will make thee exceeding fruitful, and I will make nations of thee, and kings shall come out of thee. 7 And I will establish my covenant between me and thee and thy seed after thee in their generations for an everlasting covenant, to be a God unto thee, and to thy seed after thee. 8 And I will give unto thee, and to thy seed after thee, the land wherein thou art a stranger, all the land of Canaan, for an everlasting possession; and I will be their God. 9 And God said unto Abraham, Thou shalt keep my covenant therefore, thou, and thy seed after thee in their generations. 10 This is my covenant, which ye shall keep, between me and you and thy seed after thee; Every man child among you shall be circumcised. 11 And ye shall circumcise the flesh of your foreskin; and it shall be a token of the covenant betwixt me and you. (KJV)

In reading these texts I want you to also notice:

- Once Abraham is in covenant with God and after circumcising himself then he prepares "unleavened" bread.

Answer for yourself: When in the Bible does it mention "unleavened" bread and what if any is there any connection with unleavened bread with any "appointed times with God" or "Festivals"? Yes; the Passover.

Of course you know that the children of Israel would bake unleavened bread when in Egypt just prior to the Exodus but this event has not happened yet. The account of Abraham is long before the Exodus so we must "think" and look for clues in the text.

Gen 19:1-3 1 And there came two angels to Sodom at even; and Lot sat in the gate of Sodom: and Lot seeing them rose up to meet them; and he bowed himself with his face toward the ground; 2 And he said, Behold now, my lords, turn in, I pray you, into your servant's house, and tarry all night, and wash your feet, and ye shall rise up early, and go on your ways. And they said, Nay; but we will abide in the street all night. 3 And he pressed upon them greatly; and they turned in unto him, and entered into his house; and he made them a feast, and did bake unleavened bread, and they did eat.

Answer for yourself: Since not being in a hurry so that they did not have time to add yeast to make "leavened" bread don't you see that there was really no reason to bake "unleavened" bread unless this "feast" mentioned in Gen. 19:3 as connected to the baking of "unleavened" bread as well as the prior circumcision of Abraham indicates that Abraham by revelation understood the LORD'S Passover and was in anticipation keeping the Passover which required not only circumcision but also the eating of unleavened bread?

Other than instances where the various offering involved the Levitical Priests and included the offering of unleavened bread (trespass offerings, thanksgiving offerings, meat offerings, heave

offerings, and the vow of the Nazarite, etc.) where it was consumed as connected to the presentation of various offerings we are led to conclude that since associated with the word "feast" in the text that this instance concerning Abraham was none other than the Passover.

The only place we find the admonition of eating "unleavened bread" in the Bible is connected with the ordinances of the Passover:

Exod 12:1-8 1 And the LORD spake unto Moses and Aaron in the land of Egypt, saying, 2 This month shall be unto you the beginning of months: it shall be the first month of the year to you. 3 Speak ye unto all the congregation of Israel, saying, In the tenth day of this month they shall take to them every man a lamb, according to the house of their fathers, a lamb for an house: 4 And if the household be too little for the lamb, let him and his neighbour next unto his house take it according to the number of the souls; every man according to his eating shall make your count for the lamb. 5 Your lamb shall be without blemish, a male of the first year: ye shall take it out from the sheep, or from the goats: 6 And ye shall keep it up until the fourteenth day of the same month: and the whole assembly of the congregation of Israel shall kill it in the evening. 7 And they shall take of the blood, and strike it on the two side posts and on the upper door post of the houses, wherein they shall eat it. 8 And they shall eat the flesh in that night, roast with fire, and unleavened bread; and with bitter herbs they shall eat it. (KJV)

So here we find Abraham, a non-Jew but yet a Hebrew, being circumcised and keeping and observing the Passover long before Moses and Sinai!

Answer for yourself: Could this be a pattern for the non-Jew in the Bible; that God desires that he as well as the Jew, keep and observe the Passover as indicated in the further requirements of circumcision to the "stranger" before he observes the Passover?

Exodus 12

48 And when a stranger shall sojourn with thee, and will keep the Passover to the LORD, let all his males be circumcised, and then let him come near and keep it; and he shall be as one that is born in the land: for no uncircumcised person shall eat thereof.

As you can now understand when we re-read the above passage Moses is doing nothing but reiterating the already known wishes of God in Exodus 12:48 when he again commands the non-Jew (stranger) to keep the Passover and be circumcised. So the conclusion of this is simple: keeping the Passover is to be observed by non-Jews as well as Jews and circumcision is required prior to keeping the Passover and this is not a "Jewish thing" but a Godly thing. In passing also not that God did not say to keep the pagan feast of Istar or Easter (Istar was know to Abraham); God commanded that non-Jews keep and observe the Passover

Acts 16 3 Him would Paul have to go forth with him; and took and circumcised him because of the Jews which were in those quarters: for they knew all that his [Timothy] father was a Greek (his mother was Jewish, thus making it necessary for circumcision since being a Jew).

What most Christians and Jews fail to realize in the above verse is that although Judaism today recognizes "Jewishness" coming from the mother's side God has given us understanding in physiology today that teaches us that the chromosomes are determined by the male and not the female. That being the case we see again Divine revelation, although not understood completely at the time, made allowances for Timothy to be circumcised not really because of Jewish tradition but because of a Gentile circumcision was to be required according to the Covenant of Abraham (himself

a non-Jew) and any participation in the Passover or other Biblical Festivals by non-Jews likewise required it. It is permissible to understand this "Jewish custom" but I believe it is better to understand the Heavenly decree and the reasons behind it; especially in light of what is required of the non-Jewish believer when Scripture is understood correctly.

What is important to see in this short study is that non-Jews were not allowed to participate fully in the Biblical Festivals unless the males were circumcised. Notice also that the death of Jesus/Yeshua did not alter ANYTHING IN THIS REGARD....because 25 years later in Acts 16 Paul felt obligated to circumcise the non-Jew Timothy. So these same admonitions applies today to the Christian believer.

Shalom.



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EARLY GENTILE BELIEVERS CELEBRATED THE FEAST OF PENTECOST

We need first to get acquainted with the term used in the Jewish Scriptures for the non-Jew: **"stranger."**

Strong's Concordance defines "stranger" :1616 **ger** (gare); or (fully) **geyr** (gare); from 1481; properly, a guest; by implication, **a foreigner**: KJV-- **alien, sojourner, stranger.**

Brown-Driver-Briggs' Hebrew Lexicon defines "stranger": 1616 **ger** or (fully) **geyr- sojourner**

- a) a temporary inhabitant, a newcomer lacking inherited rights
- b) used of foreigners within Israel, though they had conceded rights

In order to understand what comes next it would be important to begin to look for a "pattern" in the verses that follow not only in this article but the rest in this series as you will come to see that God included the non-Jews in the observance of not only the Festivals but the Sabbath as well. This pattern can be found not only in the Jewish Old Testament Scriptures but the New Testament as well. Having seen this then one has to wonder how we lost and deviated from such a pattern which was established in antiquity by God to the point where we have lost such obedience and observance today. One would have to ask Rome that question.

Deuteronomy 16

- 9 Seven weeks shalt thou number unto thee: begin to number the seven weeks from [such time as] thou beginnest [to put] the sickle to the corn.
- 10 And thou shalt keep the feast of weeks unto the LORD thy God with a tribute of a freewill offering of thine hand, which thou shalt give [unto the LORD thy God], according as the LORD thy God hath blessed thee: {a tribute: or, sufficiency}
- 11 And thou shalt rejoice before the LORD thy God, thou, and thy son, and thy daughter, and thy manservant, and thy maidservant, and the Levite that [is] within thy gates, and the **stranger**, and the fatherless, and the widow, that [are] among you, in the place which the LORD thy God hath chosen to place his name there.

Answer for yourself: Can there be any doubt that God included the non-Jews in the observance of Shavout (Pentecost) which was the rejoicing over the giving of the Torah to mankind? Don't you find it strange that a non-Jew would be rejoicing over the giving of the Torah (613) to the Jews or is it just possible that he, being instructed correctly in the Covenant and Laws of Noah, was rejoicing in God giving him the Torah in the Covenant of Noah which contained the Laws of Noah which, when obeyed, brought right-standing and acceptance with God? You see he was rejoicing and observing this Feast because he was thankful that God had given him the knowledge whereby he could be in good relationship with God. What did they know then that we have not been taught today?



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EARLY GENTILE BELIEVERS OBSERVED THE DAY OF ATONEMENT

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In order to understand what comes next it would be important to begin to look for a "pattern" in the verses that follow not only in this article but the rest in this series as you will come to see that God included the non-Jews in the observance of not only the Festivals but the Sabbath as well. This pattern can be found not only in the Jewish Old Testament Scriptures but the New Testament as well. Having seen this then one has to wonder how we lost and deviated from such a pattern which was established in antiquity by God to the point where we have lost such obedience and observance today. One would have to ask Rome that question.

Exodus 29

- 33 And they shall eat those things wherewith the atonement was made, to consecrate [and] to sanctify them: but a **stranger** shall not eat [thereof], because they [are] holy.

Leviticus 16

- 29. And [this] shall be a statute for ever unto you: [that] in the seventh month, on the tenth [day] of the month, ye shall afflict your souls, and do no work at all, [whether it be] one of your own country, or a **stranger** that sojourneth among you:

In summary, let me quote the Apostle Paul whom Christianity has mistakenly understood as well as his message concerning the Law of God. When writing to Gentiles who have come to the knowledge and faith in the one true God of Israel, and as they have begun to join themselves to Israel and celebrate the feast of the Lord, Paul says...

Colossians 2

16. Let no man therefore judge you in meat, or in drink, or in respect of an holyday, or of the new moon, or of the sabbath [days]: {in meat...: or, for eating and drinking} {respect: or, part}
- 17 Which are a shadow of things to come...

The Apostle Paul strongly urges believing Gentiles who have come to Faith in Yahweh and Jesus to let no one tell them that because they participate in the celebration of the feasts of the LORD they have put themselves under bondage and the Law. The Law was not to be restrictive. Jesus said his yoke was easy (the yoke of the Law of Moses) and his burden was light. King David in Psalm 119 said that he delighted in the Law and meditated in it night and day. If we presume to believe that the Law and celebration of the festivals was bondage then we have failed to understand the message of not only Paul, but Jesus as well. Let us resolve together to make a commitment to rediscover our Hebrew Roots and "choose those things that please God."



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EARLY GENTILE BELIEVERS CELEBRATED THE FEAST OF TABERNACLES

We need first to get acquainted with the term used in the Jewish Scriptures for the non-Jew: **"stranger."**

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In order to understand what comes next it would be important to begin to look for a "pattern" in the verses that follow not only in this article but the rest in this series as you will come to see that God included the non-Jews in the observance of not only the Festivals but the Sabbath as well. This pattern can be found not only in the Jewish Old Testament Scriptures but the New Testament as well. Having seen this then one has to wonder how we lost and deviated from such a pattern which was established in antiquity by God to the point where we have lost such obedience and observance today. One would have to ask Rome that question.

Deuteronomy 16

- 13 Thou shalt observe the feast of tabernacles seven days, after that thou hast gathered in thy corn and thy wine: 14 And thou shalt rejoice in thy feast, thou, and thy son, and thy daughter, and thy manservant, and thy maidservant, and the Levite, the **stranger**, and the fatherless, and the widow, that are within thy gates. 15 Seven days shalt thou keep a solemn feast unto the LORD thy God in the place which the LORD shall choose: because the LORD thy God shall bless thee in all thine increase, and in all the works of thine hands, therefore thou shalt surely rejoice. 16 Three times in a year shall all thy males appear before the LORD thy God in the place which he shall choose; in the feast of unleavened bread, and in the feast of weeks, and in the feast of tabernacles: and they shall not appear before the LORD empty: (KJV)

Zechariah 14

- 16. And it shall come to pass, [that] every one that is left of all the **nations (Gentiles)** which came against Jerusalem shall even go up from year to year to worship the King, the LORD of hosts, and to keep the feast of tabernacles.
- 17 And it shall be, [that] whoso will not come up of [all] the families of the earth unto Jerusalem to worship the King, the LORD of hosts, even upon them shall be no rain.
- 18 And if the family of Egypt go not up, and come not, that [have] no [rain]; there shall be the plague, wherewith the LORD will smite the heathen that come not up to keep the feast of tabernacles. {that have no: Heb. upon whom there is not}

Answer for yourself: Can there be any doubt that God included the non-Jews in the observance of the Festival of Tabernacles? Don't you find it strange that a non-Jew would be observing the Festival of Tabernacles where today in most Gentile Christian Churches the Festivals are not observed but in their place Gentile holy days from prior paganism are kept in Jesus' name instead?



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ACTS 15:28-29

Acts 15:28-29 28 For it seemed good to the Holy Ghost, and to us, to lay upon you (the non-Jews) no greater burden than these necessary things; 29 That ye abstain from meats offered to idols, and from blood, and from things strangled, and from fornication: from which if ye keep yourselves, ye shall do well. Fare ye well. (KJV)



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THE ACTS 15 COUNCIL AND ITS IMPORTANCE FOR THE CHRISTIAN "GODFEARER"

Unknown to most Christians is the crucial and critical importance of Acts 15 in their Bibles. In it, hidden behind 2,000 years of history and lost interpretation of a major "theological event" between the Jewish people and the "non-Jews" of the world is the very "Pattern" given by God in the beginning of time for the unification of all mankind in the true worship of the Divine. This event which is so often passed over in reading of the New Testament is the turning point in relations between the Jewish people and the "non-Jews" concerning not only how they were to "fellowship" together without required conversion of the "non-Jew" but the promotion of the Divine Pattern of worship given by God in the beginning of time. Over time as your studies into these areas increase on this website and others by Bet Emet Ministries this fact will become glaringly apparent to you the reader. Understand for now that this unify of all mankind, both Jew and "non-Jew" as the one people of God makes significant strides in Acts 15 when James and other Jews in Israel come to realize that Israel must drop the "man-made" requirement for Gentiles (non-Jews, i.e. pagan) to be circumcised before they can be recognized as part of the Israel of God.

Let us begin by noting that Luke is the author of the Book of Acts, or at least that is the accepted church tradition while others scholars today question this and ascribe the writing of the this New Testament book to the second century. Being as that may we need to look at the writer's account of the discussion regarding the relation of the Gentiles to the Law of Moses which in reality forms the centre of Acts both structurally and theologically. This is necessitated by not only Paul's preaching to the non-Jews in Antioch as well as [the Antioch problem that developed over table fellowship between the Jews and "non-Jews" and the degree of observance expected of the non-Jew to Jewish Laws \(the Covenant of Moses\).](#)

Answer for yourself: Are you familiar with this very big, big problem that surfaced with Paul in Antioch and which threatened the whole of Judaism as it existed historically in the first century? Are you aware that this Antioch Problem will split Judaism right down the middle? Are you aware that it will open the door to "non-Jews" to become the people of God without "circumcision" being imposed as well as "forced conversion" of "non-Jews" in the first century among the followers of the Jewish Christ? Are you aware that this polarizes even more the Schools of Hillel and Shammai? Well if you are not then stop right here and read the articles before you continue in order to understand the dynamics of what is occurring with James and the Jerusalem Council regarding Paul and his ministry among the "non-Jews". That being done then we can continue.

Within this matter of contention in Antioch between the men from James who came down from Jerusalem and the Pauline emphasis we see the degree of obligation then existing in the first century required of the "non-Jews" which they had to obey concerning various "kosher laws" if they were ever to eat together and fellowship together with other Jews. [The Jews, knowing already that the "non-Jews" have their own unique Covenant with God, the Covenant of Noah that brings them Eternal Life,](#) are here concerned with the acceptance of the "non-Jew" with other Jews without prior conversion which had been the current way of dealing with the "non-Jew" up to that point. The School of Shammai required full conversion of the "non-Jew" before any acceptance of the "non-Jew" by Israel. The School of Hillel said otherwise. Now something new was happening through the preaching of Paul in Asia, Minor, where the "non-Jew" was being accepted by the Jews without prior

conversion. Having said that let us also reflect that in the Covenant of Noah and the Laws of Noah there is also obligations given the "non-Jew" regarding eating of meat and this comes to a head in Antioch when the men from James arrived and discerned the compromises being made both by Jews as well as the "non-Jews" in regards to these important points of Law. Violations of both the Laws of Moses by the Jews and the Laws of Noah by the "non-Jews" were occurring in these Pauline churches and Paul allowed this to occur in the name of "expediency" to "win the Souls" of the "non-Jews" and make both "peoples" one. This became a critical issue for the Jerusalem Church as we shall see.

Gal 2:12 12 For before that certain came from James (Jews), he (Peter) did eat with the Gentiles: but when they were come, he withdrew and separated himself, fearing them which were of the circumcision (Jews from James). (KJV)

Basically everyone got into trouble for these compromises and something had to be done and the Jerusalem Church Council of Acts 15 was soon to follow to decide this matter.

Once the Pauline mission had begun to evangelize Gentiles who had not previously been circumcised and converted to Judaism, the problems of the conditions of their membership and inclusion into the Israel of God began to arise. It had evidently been the policy of the church at Antioch and its missionaries that such Gentiles should not be required to keep "ALL" the Jewish law which up to that time was tantamount to the "non-Jew" making full-conversion to Judaism. This was the policy taught by the School of Shammai and required of all "non-Jews" in order to be accepted in Israel. This point is passed over in silence in chapters 11-14 but is clear from 15:1.

Acts 15:1 1 And certain men which came down from Judaea taught the brethren, and said, Except ye be circumcised after the manner of Moses, ye cannot be saved. (KJV)

Notice if you will "saved" meant contextually not only "eternally" but included "acceptance into the Israel of God" as well as fellowship with the Jewish people.

But even though this, required conversion of the "non-Jews", was the "status quo" in Israel at that time this policy was unacceptable to some Jewish believers for two reasons:

- **First, they found it hard to believe that Gentiles could be "saved" and become members of the Israel of God, become like them "the people of God" without accepting the obligations of the Jewish law...in other words being accepted socially and religiously without first making conversion and being "born again" in the Jewish manner.**
- **Secondly, there was also the question of how Jewish believers, who continued to live by the Jewish law, could have fellowship at table with Gentiles who did not observe the law and were therefore ritually unclean...this problem was particularly acute when the church met to 'break bread'. This is the heart of the Antioch Problem!**

But notice something if you will. Notice the audience to whom Paul spoke. We find in this audience the presence of "God-fearers" (13:16b, 26) who were not only present but were already in some ways connected to Judaism,

Acts 13:16 16 Then Paul stood up, and beckoning with his hand said, Men of Israel, and ye that fear God, give audience. (KJV)

We find that in this audience in Jerusalem at the Council the presence of those who "fear God" which is the term used for "non-Jews" who worship the God of Israel and abide by the Laws of the Covenant given by God to the "non-Jews". We have a mixed audience! These Godfearers had, at least in religious ways, a level of

commitment to the Laws of Moses and the Laws of Noah well beyond the average Gentile ([Gentiles who practiced Isa. 56](#)). The narrative in Acts 15 leaves it ambiguous as to whether these Gentiles were "accepted" as Gentiles as just "Godfearers" or whether they had to become previously [proselytes to Judaism \(made full conversion\)](#), or had to some degree submitted to Jewish religious practices (Acts 15:1) in order to be "saved".

Answer for yourself: That brings up a big question. What, is the extent of the free offer of the gospel to Gentiles in Acts 13?

Acts 13:47-48 47 For so hath the Lord commanded us, saying, I have set thee to be a light of the Gentiles, that thou shouldest be for salvation unto the ends of the earth. 48 And when the Gentiles heard this, they were glad, and glorified the word of the Lord: and as many as were ordained to eternal life believed. (KJV)

Answer for yourself: Were these "ordained to eternal life" to remain as Gentiles or do they still need, and were expected by Paul and others to in some way adhere to Judaism (i.e., kosher laws, circumcision, immersion, etc.)?

This issue, of course, becomes the reason for the Jerusalem council in Acts 15 and is resolved there by the Jewish leaders connected with the Messianic Movement within the Judaism of its day.

We now turn specifically to the problem as outlined in Acts 15. In Acts 15:5 certain Christian Pharisees (those who supported the Judaizing wing of the church) argued that it was necessary for Gentiles to be circumcised and "ordered to obey" the law of Moses (fully) in order to be saved. This means that they accepted the "non-Jews" only if they became "full converts" and "proselytes". Luke says in 15:2 that this caused *"no little dispute between Paul and Barnabas and the Judaizers"*. Israel was divided on this issue after so many "non-Jews" were turning to God from idols.

Answer for yourself: Why was this division in the first place? Simply because there were Jews, like James and others, who knew that circumcision was never required by God of the "non-Jew" in the Covenant of Noah and to require that of these "non-Jews" turning to God simply was not right and many refused to undergo such a dangerous procedure when adults. Thus many men and their whole families turned away from God and His salvation because of this required circumcision enforced by the School of Shammai and possibly died away from God and this is not the fruit that God expected of His "Royal Nation and Holy Priesthood" (Israel).

The term ("sharp dispute") in 15:2, the stronger of the two words Luke uses to describe the debate, occurs nine times in the New Testament, seven of which are in Luke-Acts (Luke 23:19, 25; Acts 15:2; 19:40; 23:7, 10; 24:5). In each case in Luke-Acts the term carries not the meaning of "existence" or "continuance" but the force of either "riot," "discord," or "strife." One only needs to see how John Mark left Paul and Barnabas because of his uneasiness with a mission to the Gentiles. With that in mind, it may well be that his return to Jerusalem (13:13) sparked the issue with the Jewish "Christians" there, with the result that they sent men to Antioch to command the Gentiles to be circumcised and obey the law of Moses (supposedly these are the so called "men from James" which he will later deny ever sending). This required circumcision and full conversion had been standard practice for "non-Jews" to be accepted by the Jews up to now. The point is that the inclusion of the Gentiles into the Israel of God without prior "full conversion (circumcision, kosher, etc.) severely threatened to divide Judaism along ethnic lines and put an end to the Jewish mission in the Diaspora (i.e., the witness to Jews living outside Palestine around the Mediterranean in cities such as Alexandria, Antioch, and Rome...this remember is the purpose of the Priesthood of Israel). Concerning the issue of Jew/Gentile relations in the church and Luke's portrayal of the Jerusalem council, Witherington remarks:

Here the matter must be resolved as to what constitutes the people of God, and how the major ethnic division in the church (Jew/Gentile) shall be dealt with so that both groups may be included in God's people on equal footing, fellowship may continue, and the church remain one. Luke is eager to demonstrate that ethnic divisions could be and were overcome, despite the objection of very

*conservative Pharisees (adherents of the School of Shammai and not the School of Hillel)
[Witherington, Acts, p. 459].*

The issue was not easily resolved, however, for Luke says that it was only after “much debate” that any defining progress was made (cf. 15:7ff.). The fact that Peter stood up and brought to their remembrance what had happened in his case and how God had “chosen” the Gentiles to hear the gospel through his mouth and believe (cf. also Acts 13:48) indicates that the mission to the Gentiles was God’s decision and that Peter was involved in it. Although most Christians think Paul was the instigator of the mission to the Gentiles and “non-Jews” that is not the case. Thus the gospel to the Gentiles had occurred about ten years earlier, with the then leader (Peter) of the Jerusalem church when sent to the house of Cornelius in Acts 10. This is where Peter took the “keys to the kingdom” to the “non-Jew” Cornelius first. The outreach to the “non-Jews” without required circumcision began within Israel with Peter and Cornelius. Peter’s big revelation was the fatal blow to the School of Shammai and his bigotry toward the “non-Jews”:

Acts 10:34-35 34 Then Peter opened his mouth, and said, Of a truth I perceive that God is no respecter of persons: 35 But in every nation he that feareth him, and worketh righteousness, is accepted with him. (KJV)

Those at the council knew that to be true, though given the point of the debate, they may not have recognized the precedent God had set in doing it. Thus Paul’s “law-free” approach (the “non-Jews” were freed from 613 laws that involved full conversion but were not freed from the 66 laws in their Covenant of Noah) could not be scorned as a movement apart from God’s desire and against Moses (remember the Laws of Noah are in the Laws of Moses). Peter’s conclusion is that the God who knows the hearts of all men gave the Spirit to the Gentiles in the same way as he had done with the Jews (see the Cornelius event in Acts 10... his ears and understanding of Peter speaking Hebrew was given to him as we find in Acts 2 at Pentecost when the ears and understanding of Peter speaking Hebrew was made know to these 70 different converts from all over the world who did not know Hebrew..we have here the reverse of the Babel curse). Thus, the conclusion we see in Acts 15:11 is made clear to Peter and blown away he says that Jews are saved by the grace of God in the same way as Gentiles. The repeated mention of the identical manner of reception of the Spirit by Cornelius, a “non-Jew” who is not converted as were the “non-Jews” who were converts in Acts 2 indicates Luke’s focus on unity among the Jews and Gentiles in the church. This is crucial that you understand this! This event with Cornelius will turn the School of Shammai and Judaism upside down. In fact, Peter says that God “made no distinction between them and us, cleansing their hearts by faith” as well (15:8-9). To turn around, says Peter, and force Gentiles to keep the Law (all the Law including forced circumcision) is to put God to the test (v. 10).

After Peter stopped speaking, Paul and Barnabas, in v. 12, told all that God had done among the Gentiles through them (opened their understanding to Hebrew being spoken by Peter as seen in Cornelius, a “non-Jew”, as was done 17 years earlier to the “non-Jewish” converts (considered Jews now) from all over the world”. This miraculous event with Cornelius supported Peter’s testimony. But when they finished speaking James did not refer to their stories, but to that which Peter had done. He uses the word “first” to indicate that what God had begun through Peter, he was now carrying on through Paul and Barnabas (15:14). This indicates the continuity and unity between the Petrine offer of the gospel to Gentiles and Paul’s mission to the Gentiles. Both were initiated by God. This is clearly the case in the unfolding of the narrative of Acts. Peter was given a vision which led to the meeting with Cornelius where the same miracle occurred in Peter’s presence again as had happened at Pentecost 17 years earlier when the curse of Babel was reversed and Cornelius, by the Spirit of God, understood Peter speaking Hebrew although Cornelius had no knowledge of Hebrew prior to that time. The texts calls this “salvation” (10:9-16).

Answer for yourself: But was not Cornelius already a “Godfearer”? Yes. Had not Cornelius already believed in

the God of Israel and prayed and even given alms? Yes. Then was not Cornelius already "saved" in the traditional Christian sense? Yes. Then does this word "salvation" not mean "Heaven" or "Hell" but rather refers to the non-covert "no-Jew" being included along side the Jew in the Israel of God? It sure does. We have to be careful reading the words "salvation, save, saved, etc.) in the texts because out of 17 words for "save, saved, salvation, saving, etc. in the Bible only one word out of 17 words refers to things occurring after we die and it is used only 3 times in the whole Bible. One has to be a keen reader in understanding that Cornelius was already a believer in God since his prayers and alms had previously come up to God. Thus this salvation spoken of in the texts refers not to believing the theology about some Jesus but being included alongside the Jews in the Israel of God.

Acts 10:2 2 (Cornelius) A devout man, and one that feared God with all his house, which gave much alms to the people, and prayed to God always. (KJV)

Strong's Concordance tell us that the root word for "devout" in the Greek is:

4576 sebomai (seb'-om-ahee); middle voice of an apparently primary verb; **to revere, i.e. adore: KJV--devout, religious, worship.** So by definition Cornelius was ALREADY a worshipper of God and can be considered a Godfearer and saved "eternally". That being the case he was already "saved" as such but here the event recorded in Acts 10 is a major teaching tool by God to alert Peter that there is no difference with God between the "non-Jew" and the Jew regardless if Judaism and the School of Shammai made it so or not. Peter, who brought interpreters with him since Cornelius would not have understood Hebrew/Aramaic, began preaching and the Spirit fell upon Cornelius and his understanding of Hebrew was miraculously given him and he understood what Peter was saying. This is exactly what happened when Peter got up to preach at Pentecost to pilgrims from 70 different nations and dialects from all over the world which had traveled to Jerusalem to observe the Festival of Pentecost and the Spirit again opened their minds and hearts and they were given the spirit of understanding of Hebrew. This is the miracle given only to Jews (converts are considered full Jews) in Acts 2 which is repeated before Peter in Acts 10 to not a convert; rather only to a Gentile "non-Jew" who was not converted but only adhered to faith in God and the few Laws given him in the Covenant of Noah (66 to be exact).

Answer for yourself: But is Acts 10 and Acts 2 not about "speaking in tongues" as we hear in our Christian Pentecostal and Chiasmatic churches? Sorry, Acts 2 is not about blabbering tongues the way the Pentecostal and Charismatic churches teach so we need to grow up and interpret these texts correctly and stop acting improperly since being improperly instructed people before the Presence of God in our worship and allowing ourselves to be led astray by emotional hucksters who call themselves preachers of the Word of God. We need to repent of such sins now for unrestrained emotionalism is a poor substitute for worship in Truth and in Spirit. Acts 2 is not what Paul later speaks of when mentioning glossolalia. In the first Centuries C.E., glossolalia meant the ability of a person to communicate in a foreign language that they had never learned. e.g. a person raised speaking Greek and unable to speak any other language would suddenly be conversing in Aramaic or Hebrew. This the context of Acts 2 and Acts 10. Sadly, at the present time, it refers to a person who suddenly, in a state of religious ecstasy, starts speaking sounds that sound like language but do not represent any known tongue. This is not the same and travesty when contrasted with the true events which reveal the grace and power of God. Anybody can utter unintelligible sounds when prompted by pastors or others but this again is now what occurred in Acts 2 and Acts 10. God, please give us better teachers to the Body of Christ.

We see rather that Peter quickly comes to understand as recorded in Acts 10:34-35:

Acts 10:34-35 34 Then Peter opened his mouth, and said, Of a truth I perceive that God is no respecter of persons: 35 But in every nation he that feareth him (in nations outside Israel all "non-Jews" who are not converts), and worketh righteousness (obey the Laws of God which define which works

are accepted and not accepted by God), is accepted with him. (KJV)

What a verse. What a verse. The whole of Salvation rapped up in one verse. The testimony of 10,000 years of Egyptian religion passed on to their "Jewish children" in one verse (35). This is it bothers and sisters. So simple, yet so elusive since we never hear this in our Churches today which denigrate the Laws of God which define what God considers "true righteousness and what is not true righteousness". We instead hear:

Rom 10:4 4 For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth. (KJV)

Rom 6:14 14 For sin shall not have dominion over you: for ye are not under the law, but under grace. (KJV)

Rom 6:15 15 What then? shall we sin, because we are not under the law, but under grace? God forbid. (KJV)

Unbelievable statements in view of countless contradictory evidence in the New Testament which is anything but a theological unity.

The council had listened to the testimony of Peter, and Paul and Barnabas. They heard the reoccurrence of the "Jewish Pentecost" among the "non-Jew" Cornelius (the Gentile Pentecost). The conclusion was obvious. It only remained for James to give the scriptural precedent according Amos 9:11-12 (Acts 15:16-17).

Amos 9:11-12 11 In that day will I raise up the tabernacle of David that is fallen, and close up the breaches thereof; and I will raise up his ruins, and I will build it as in the days of old: 12 That they may possess the remnant of Edom, and of all the heathen, which are called by my name, saith the LORD that doeth this. (KJV)

It was happening before their eyes; not ours today. Prophecy was truly being fulfilled before their eyes. God was working out the words of Amos now before them. Man's theologies spouted by Shammai and his bigotry was falling apart. The two peoples of God, Jew and "non-Jew" were being united without required circumcision and conversion to Judaism as the School of Shammai maintained.

Acts 15:16-17 16 After this I will return, and will build again the tabernacle of David, which is fallen down; and I will build again the ruins thereof, and I will set it up: 17 That the residue of men might seek after the Lord, and all the Gentiles, upon whom my name is called, saith the Lord, who doeth all these things. (KJV)

Answer for yourself: What is this all about and is Acts 15 the defining moment for Judaism as God's Holy Nation and Royal Priesthood? Yes it is as I will explain.

Zechariah 4:2-4 And he said to me, "What do you see?" So I said, "I am looking, and there is a lampstand of solid gold with a bowl on top of it, and on the stand seven lamps with seven pipes to the seven lamps. The two Olive trees are by it, one at the right of the bowl and the other at it's left." So I answered and spoke to the angel who talked to me, saying, "What are these, my Lord?"

Zechariah 4: 11-14 Then I answered and said to him, "What are these two Olive branches that drip into the receptacles of the two gold pipes from which the golden oil drains?" Then he answered me and said, "Do you not know what these are?" And I said, "No my Lord." So he said, "These are the two anointed ones, who stand beside the Lord of the whole earth.

Jeremiah 11:16 The Lord called you a thriving olive tree with fruit beautiful in form.

In Genesis 48 we read of Joseph's Sons being blessed by Israel as two branches or tribes of the people of God, the younger becoming a **multitude of Nations (Gentiles)**.

Genesis 49:22 Joseph is a fruitful bough A fruitful bough by a well His branches run over the wall.

These prophetic utterances towards the end of the Old Covenant era are of great interest in these new days of the 2000 millennium. We know that the Israelite Nation was divided into two Kingdoms for much of the Old Covenant period, the Northern and Southern Kingdoms. We know also that the Israelites (Jews) are God's chosen nation of people who have never been able to be erased from human history. Other nations have been completely destroyed by various means and no longer walk the earth, but the Israelites are still with us and still exerting great influence on world events. His branches run over the wall. **Is an interesting reference and could be easily interpreted to mean that through Joseph the people of God will extend beyond the boundaries of being born into the Jewish nation.**

Romans 11: 17 And some of the branches were broken off, and you ("non-Jews", being a wild olive tree, were grafted in among them, and with them became a partaker of the root and fatness of the olive tree.

Here is clear reference to both the Jews and the Gentiles being grafted together into ONE tree in the ONE ROOT.

Consider Ephesians 2:11-12. Therefore, remember that you, once Gentiles in the flesh - who were called Uncircumcision by what is called the Circumcision made in the flesh by hands, that at that time you were without Christ, being aliens from the Commonwealth of Israel...

Ephesians 2:15-16 ...so as to create in Himself one new man from the two, thus making peace and that He might reconcile both to God, in one body...

There is and has been for most of the New Covenant era, enmity between the Christians and the Jews. Labelled wrongly as Christ killers, Jews have been slaughtered and persecuted by the world and Christians alike. Christians have believed that they have replaced the Jews as God's chosen people. But the Word is very clear, there are two Olive trees which will become one in God and their enmity will be put aside. We work and look forward to the time when Christians and Israelites will rise from the death of division and distrust and stand as the witnesses of the One God on the earth teaching the one true message of God given Israel in the beginning. Then and only then can these two Olive trees become one people of God in His Christ but this will never happen until Christianity faces the truth about its antisemitic theology.

What you just read is most likely a composite citation and that Luke understood the mission to the Gentiles not as a purely "Christian" thing, but according to a cumulative prophetic witness associated with Davidic hope. Thus the boundaries of the "people of God" are widened to include the Gentiles on equal footing with the Jews on the basis of Davidic hope. **The speakers are making the important affirmation that Gentiles can be God's people in the full sense that Israel is without full conversion. This is a major ruling based upon summary re-evaluation of what God has been doing among the "non-Jews" in front of the witness of**

the Jews. Davidic hope in Luke-Acts is for all, regardless of ethnicity, and places all in the same position in terms of the reception of covenant blessing, including the reception of the Spirit.

Thus through the combined witness of the missionaries and James' citation from the Jewish Scriptures and the reference to Amos, the "law free" (free from 613 laws and full conversion but not free from the 66 laws of the Covenant of Noah) mission to the Gentiles was officially sanctioned and acknowledged by the Jerusalem church. The ambiguity surrounding Gentile inclusion in Davidic promise in chapter 13 is settled in chapter 15.

James makes his remarks in response to the summary testimonies of the missionaries. Some requirements were stressed so as to make table fellowship between Gentiles and their more scrupulous Jewish brothers possible and that the mission to the Jews in the Diaspora not be hindered. The point is to maintain a practical unity in the church. James considers these "requirements" as not optional and the text makes this very clear:

Acts 15:28 28 For it seemed good to the Holy Ghost, and to us, to lay upon you no greater burden than these necessary things; (KJV)

BUT THERE WERE SOME "NECESSARY THINGS"....SOME LAWS WERE REQUIRED AFTER ALL

The only thing they asked was that the Gentiles maintain love for their Jewish brothers and sensitivity toward Jewish ritual purity for the sake of the Jewish-Christian witness in the Diaspora (15:20-21). Thus Luke accomplished his purpose of demonstrating how the Gentiles came to be accepted as Gentiles into what had hitherto been a predominantly Jewish church.

James first begins by mentioning Moses being "read" to these "non-Jews" in the Synagogues every Sabbath. From this we see the picture of the "non-Jew" observing the Sabbath in the first century.

Acts 15:21 21 For Moses of old time hath in every city them that preach him, being read in the synagogues every sabbath day. (KJV)

Next we find the decree of James as look at the very important mention by James of various "Necessary Things" which seemed good to the Holy Spirit that the "non-Jew" "must do":

Acts 15:29 29 That ye abstain from meats offered to idols, and from blood, and from things strangled, and from fornication: from which if ye keep yourselves, ye shall do well. Fare ye well. (KJV)

Acts 15:29

29 That ye abstain from:

- *meats offered to idols,*
- *and from blood,*
- *and from things strangled,*
- *and from fornication:*

from which if ye keep yourselves, ye shall do well. Fare ye well.

Answer for yourself: Some believe that the above admonitions refers to 4 of the 7 precepts of the Laws of Noah at that they do when examined in a particular way. This is true but however is there a deeper meaning here that most miss that fits the context of Acts 15 better?

Answer for yourself: In addressing the Gentile question as so many "non-Jews" were coming to faith in God through the outreach of the Jesus Movement in first century Judaism (Second Temple), what are the implications in the above verse that today's Christian needs to be made aware?

In order to find the meaning, both historically and culturally, we need to look at the original words as taken from the Thayer's Greek Lexicon:

The Greek word for "meat":

1494 eidolothuton-

- **sacrificed to idols, the flesh left over from the heathen sacrifices it was either eaten at the feasts or sold (by the poor and the miserly) in the market**

The Greek word for "blood":

129 haima-

- **1) blood**
 - **a) used of man or animals**
 - **b) refers to the seat of life (the soul is in the animal's blood)**
 - **c) used of those things that resemble blood, grapejuice**
- **2) bloodshed, to be shed by violence, slay, premeditated murder**

The Greek word for "strangled":

4156 pniktos- suffocated, strangled

- **a) what is strangled, that is, an animal deprived of life without the shedding of blood**
- **b) used of cooking: our "smothered" as a culinary term**

The Greek word for "fornication":

4202 porneia-

- **1) illicit sexual intercourse**
 - **a) adultery, fornication, homosexuality, lesbianism, intercourse with animals, etc.**
 - **b) sexual intercourse with close relatives; Lev. 18**
 - **c) sexual intercourse with a divorced man or woman; Mk. 10:11,12**
- **2) metaphorically, the worship of idols; used of the defilement of idolatry, as incurred by eating the sacrifices offered to idols before eating (a form of idolatry)**

Answer for yourself: Now for a very important question. Is there a common theme among these four "admonitions"? Yes there is and can you see it?

These admonitions which James called **"necessary"** and **"which seemed good to the Holy Spirit"** all involved "eating" and "table fellowship" in some way where the Jew and "non-Jew" were to be "one" as God's people. **By being one not only in dietary concerns the Gentile could come and learn from the Jew and thereby both would have the same witness of the same truth through a unified message where both Gentile and Jew come together as the two sticks in Joseph's hand with a united message for the**

world (Judah and Ephraim).

Answer for yourself: What are we missing here?

Simply that the Jews are given many "kosher" commands which are not voluntary and although the "non-Jews" are not given many of these "required Laws" concerning "kosher" for unity and table fellowship to occur between the "Jew" and the "non-Jew" then the "non-Jew" will have to understand Isa. 56 and the principles laid out there and "voluntarily" acquire other mitzvot not given to him by God in order for such communion between "Jew" and "non-Jew" to occur. Sure, as a "non-Jew" are you not required to eat only "clean food" as this is not required in the Covenant of Noah but we must choose "those things that please God" as Isaiah 56 commands of the "non-Jew". We don't have to eat "kosher"; but we "get to" and in so doing when we choose to not eat shrimp before a Jew we literally tear down that middle wall between the Jew and "non-Jew". This and other such issues were the problem at Antioch. That is our task as "non-Jews" and our role in fulfilling the words of Amos 9 and Genesis 49 through our lives. We, as "non-Jews" have a huge responsibility and obligation toward our Jewish brothers and sisters and in so doing maybe we can undo somewhat the horrors done to the Jewish peoples by the Christian Church during the Dark Ages that sadly have not yet abated due to the gross ignorance of Christians about the true nature of their birth faith.

THE ANTIOCH PROBLEM

Simply said these 4 items referred to the prior problem concerning Paul and his teachings that led up to the [Antioch Incident](#) and the problem of table-fellowship; Jews with "non-Jews". This was not meant to be a treatise upon the 7 Noahide Laws or the Noahide Covenant although these items are contained within them. This was concerned only about the "Paul problem" at Antioch and the violation of the Covenant of Noah and Moses to whom both Jews and "non-Jew" had fallen victim because of Paul's laxity and teachings which were opposed to the Torah in places. This might be hard for you to hear but Paul was teaching a form of "idolatry" as defined by the Covenant of Noah and Moses and this will be proved in the following articles which follow. Paul was not perfect and neither are we and this is why Paul was always a problem for James and the Jerusalem Church.

In other words one can see that the Acts 15 Council was to deal with the violation of Covenant Stipulations for both Jew and "non-Jew" [Moses and Noah] due to incorrect teaching and laxity in keeping the Commandments of God as taught by Paul; both for the Jew and the "non-Jew" concerning not only "table fellowship" but it runs deeper; deep as idolatry as defined by these Laws!!! READ THEM AGAIN ABOVE. Let us not forget that these "believers" were the first followers in "the Jewish Christ" and the accurate understanding of the dynamics of Acts 15 has a message to you if you consider yourself a follower of the Jewish Christ (called Jesus)!

It is to the Antioch Problem to which we must now turn to understand thoroughly the reason for the Acts 15 Council and the implications for all "non-Jews" who desire to be followers of Jesus and "the Christ"

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THE LAWS OF NOAH....ONE MUST NOT EAT ANY LIMB TAKEN FROM A LIVING ANIMAL #1

If you have studied with us this far then you know by know that long before the Jewish people existed God made Covenants with non-Jews and that their relationship and good-standing with God was determined by how they lived up to their Covenant stipulations (Laws). In particular we have been looking at the Laws of Noah and the Covenant of Noah where a non-Jew was considered "righteous" by God if he lived up to his Covenant and repented when he strayed from his Covenant Commandments and returned to obedience unto God.

In our day and time if you are reading this article then you are most likely a contemporary Christian and most likely highly indoctrinated by your denominational or non-denominational theology. If you have been faithful to study with us up to this point then you have seen beyond any doubt that the Jesus Movement of the first century instructed non-Jews who came to faith in God through Yeshua's followers to obey the Covenant of Noah and the Laws of Noah. As a typical Christian or otherwise I assume that you are basically a "good person" and not the chiefest of sinners. Yet when we examine in detail these Laws of Noah which frame our Covenant with God then we encounter many things that not only challenge how we live in America today but which should bring shame to the best of Christians as you will come to quickly realize that your Gentile denominational religious belief system in normative Christianity has caused you to sin in many areas which before now you had no knowledge that such beliefs and actions were sinful. It is our hope at Bet Emet Ministries that your love for God is greater than your love to eat with the Pastor after Sunday's service and that you take to heart the matters that will be discussed here for let us end this introduction with these words:

1 Jn 5:3 3 For this is the love of God, that we keep his commandments: and his commandments are not grievous. (KJV)

-182: ONE MUST NOT EAT ANY LIMB TAKEN FROM A LIVING ANIMAL (DEUT. 12:23)

In the Laws of Moses, which many are but reiterations of the previous Laws of Noah, Maimonides/Rambam codifies this Commandment as #182 of the negative Commandments given by God by which man must not do. By this prohibition we are forbidden to eat a limb of a living creature: that is, to cut off a [whole] limb from a live animal or fowl and eat as much as an olive's size of the limb in its natural condition [that is, together with its veins and sinews]; and even though there is only the smallest amount of meat on it, whoever eats it is punished by whipping. The prohibition is contained in His words, *Thou shalt not eat the life with the flesh (Deut. 12:23).*

There are distinctions between this prohibition as it pertains to a Jew and as it relates to a non-Jew. A Jew's prohibition is only concerned with kosher animals, while for a Gentile it applies to all animals.

The Sifr'e says:

"Thou shalt not eat the life with the flesh: this refers to a limb of a living creature." The verse is interpreted similarly in the Gemara of Hullin (102b [Sonc. ed. p. 569])³ where we also read: "He who eats a limb [severed] from a living creature, and also flesh [severed] from a living creature, is liable twice." The reason for this is that there are two prohibitions, of which the first, ***Thou shalt not eat the life with the fles forbids eating a limb, and the second, Ye shall not eat any flesh that is torn of beasts in the field (Ex. 22:30)*** forbids eating the flesh of a living creature, as we have explained.

This prohibition occurs again, in another form, in His words to Noah forbidding the eating of a limb of a living creature: ***Only flesh with the life thereof, which is the blood thereof shall ye not eat (Gen. 9:4).***

"It is forbidden to cut off a limb of a living animal and eat it, because such an action would produce and develop **cruelty**; besides, the heathen kings used to do it; **it was also a kind of idolatrous worship to cut off a certain limb of a living animal and eat it**" (Moreh Nebuchim III, 48).

THE RABBIS COMMENT

All commentaries are unanimous in their explanation. The purpose of this prohibition against eating the limb of an animal while the animal is still alive-a mitzvah which is applicable to the Noahide as well as to the Jew-is for man to refrain from an act of unspeakable cruelty and inhumanity. Maimonides adds another reason to that given above. This was a heathen practice and should, therefore, not be imitated by the Jew or the non-Jew.



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THE LAWS OF NOAH.....A TORN OR MAULED ANIMAL IS FORBIDDEN TO EAT #2

If you have studied with us this far then you know by know that long before the Jewish people existed God made Covenants with non-Jews and that their relationship and good-standing with God was determined by how they lived up to their Covenant stipulations (Laws). In particular we have been looking at the Laws of Noah and the Covenant of Noah where a non-Jew was considered "righteous" by God if he lived up to his Covenant and repented when he strayed from his Covenant Commandments and returned to obedience unto God.

In our day and time if you are reading this article then you are most likely a contemporary Christian and most likely highly indoctrinated by your denominational or non-denominational theology. If you have been faithful to study with us up to this point then you have seen beyond any doubt that the Jesus Movement of the first century instructed non-Jews who came to faith in God through Yeshua's followers to obey the Covenant of Noah and the Laws of Noah. As a typical Christian or otherwise I assume that you are basically a "good person" and not the chiefest of sinners. Yet when we examine in detail these Laws of Noah which frame our Covenant with God then we encounter many things that not only challenge how we live in America today but which should bring shame to the best of Christians as you will come to quickly realize that your Gentile denominational religious belief system in normative Christianity has caused you to sin in many areas which before now you had no knowledge that such beliefs and actions were sinful. It is our hope at Bet Emet Ministries that your love for God is greater than your love to eat with the Pastor after Sunday's service and that you take to heart the matters that will be discussed here for let us end this introduction with these words:

I Jn 5:3 3 For this is the love of God, that we keep his commandments: and his commandments are not grievous. (KJV)

-181: ONE MUST NOT EAT ANY LIMB TAKEN FROM A LIVING ANIMAL (EXODUS 22:30)

You shall not eat any flesh that is torn by beasts in the field, you shall cast it to the dogs (Exodus 22:30)

By this prohibition we are forbidden to eat terefah.

Answer for yourself: What is terefah?

Terefah is the flesh of an animal torn by a wild beast, or by a wild bird, or the flesh of any injured or diseased animal which, although ritually slaughtered, is known to be one which could not have lived more than a year; or the flesh torn from a living clean beast.

Animals and fowl that may not be eaten (aside from "unclean" animals) are divided into two

classifications: Nevelah ("carcass") and terefah ("torn"). Nevelah refers to the flesh of an animal or fowl that died of natural causes or was not slaughtered by *shehi'utah*, i.e., in accordance with Jewish law. ***Terefah* refers to the flesh of an animal or fowl that was killed by a predatory animal [one who eats blood] or one that had physical defects or injuries with which it could not have survived for twelve months. The flesh of an animal with such physical defects is forbidden food, even if the animal was ritually slaughtered. The general rule is that any injury with which the animal cannot survive renders it terefah or unfit for consumption under Jewish law.**

Any of the following eight defects discovered on examination following ritual slaughter renders an animal *terefah*:

- a. ***Derusah***: An animal or fowl whose flesh was torn by a bird of prey or a wild beast.
- b. ***Nekubah***: An animal or fowl with a perforated vital organ; e.g., a perforated heart.
- c. ***Hisurah***: An animal or fowl with an underdeveloped or atrophied organ; e.g., a lung of less than normal size.
- d. ***Netulah***: An animal or fowl that is found to have, for example, no liver.
- e. ***Pesukah***: An animal or fowl with a cut windpipe.
- f. ***Keru'ah***: An animal or fowl with a torn membrane, such as that of the stomach.
- g. ***Nefulah*** (lit. "a fallen animal"): An animal or fowl whose "limbs were loosened from one another" as the result of a fall from a high place.
- h. ***Shevurah*** (lit. "a broken animal"): An animal with most of its ribs fractured.

An animal with these defects is *terefah*, regardless of whether they were inflicted on the animal by accident, by other animals, or by a man (e.g., a hunter).

It is contained in His words, ***Ye shall not eat any flesh that is torn of beasts in the field (Ex. 22:30)***

The prohibitions in this Commandment and the preceding one are repeated as regards the priests in His words, ***That which dieth of itself, or is torn of beasts, he shall not eat to defile himself therewith (Lev. 22:8).***

The reason why the prohibition is repeated in their case is that, since Scripture commands them to eat of the sin-offering of a bird which is [slaughtered] by *melikah* - a method of slaughtering which if used in the preparation of ordinary food would undoubtedly be invalid, as it makes the meat *nevelah* - it might occur to us that they are permitted to eat even as ordinary food [the flesh of an animal which has been slaughtered by] *melikah*, or has been improperly slaughtered; Scripture therefore explains that they continue to be in the same position as laymen with regard to the admonition against eating *nevelah* or *terefah*. This is the explanation given by the Sages, who also mention this verse in connection with another law, which is not relevant to the present work (Hullin, 100b (Sonc. ed. p. 557)).

But a domestic or wild animal that is inferred by one of the accepted modes of interpretation to have become *terefah* is forbidden food, even though it has been ritually slaughtered; and one who ritually slaughters it and eats of its flesh is punished by whipping under Rabbinic law.

The things that make [an animal or bird] *terefah* are explained in the third chapter of Hullin. The provisions of this and the nine preceding Commandments are explained in the same chapter [of Hullin], in the last chapter of Makkoth, and in the first chapter of Bekoroth.

In his Mishneh Torah Maimonides enumerates seventy diseases and injuries which render a beast *terefah* (Kedushah, Hikhoth Shechitah X, 9). Later scholars have devoted much time and thought to the exhaustive study of this subject, with the result that the certification of meat as kosher carries with it a maximum guarantee of fitness for human consumption.

THE RABBIS COMMENT

Hinnukh: An animal that has been mauled by a wild beast falls prey to infection and disease even if the direct cause of the animal's death was *shehitah*. The meat of such an animal is detrimental to man's health. Hinnukh adds that whatever food is bad for a man's body will also be bad for his soul.

Abrabanel: This, too, was the reason why hunting is forbidden. However, although we are forbidden to eat the meat of animals killed by a hunter, we may derive other benefits from such meat; e.g., it may be given to one's dogs.

Ibn Ezra, Da'at Zekemm: Why does the Torah mention no other means of disposing of *terefah* meat than to feed it to dogs? Because dogs act as the guardians of flocks of sheep and herds of cattle. Should one of the herd, nevertheless, become prey to a wild beast, the dogs should be given the meat of the dead animal and should be rewarded for their efforts to protect these animals.



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FURTHER COMMENTS...EATING THE LIMB OF A LIVING ANIMAL

There is some discussion as to whether the prohibition of eating the limb of a living animal was originally given to Adam the First Man or not.

One opinion states that it was, indeed, included in the original commandment forbidding the eating of fruit of the tree of knowledge of good and evil.

According to this opinion, Adam who was clearly given vegetation for food, as it is written, *"And God said, Behold I have given you every herb bearing seed which is upon the face of the whole earth, and every tree upon which there is fruit of a tree bearing seed, to you these shall be for food."* (Gen. 1:29). Adam was not forbidden to eat meat, but was merely forbidden to kill animals for food. If the animal had died of itself, it was permissible as food. What Noah was given, therefore, was a refinement of this commandment, in which God allowed man to kill animals for food, but forbade him to eat the flesh of any animal while the animal was still alive. According to the other opinion, Adam had received six of the Seven Universal Laws and had been forbidden to eat the flesh of an animal in any manner. Only after the Flood was the leniency of permitting animal flesh instituted. (Maimonides)

This commandment is one which is revealed explicitly in scripture, as it is written, *"Every moving thing that lives shall be for you for food; just as the green herbs, I have given you everything. But flesh with its living soul, its blood, you shall not eat."* (Gen.9:34) This, of course, does not mean that an animal's blood is its soul and that what man was being forbidden was animal blood. It is taught by the sages that the vitalizing animal soul is contained within the blood, and this is what the commandment refers to, for when an animal dies, this vitalizing soul departs. So long as this vitalizing soul remains within the animal, its flesh is forbidden to man as food.

At first glance, this commandment seems peculiarly out of place as one of the Seven Universal Laws.

Answer for yourself: How can eating the limb of an animal take its place side by side with such obvious fundamental principles of human morality such as those prohibiting idolatry or murder?

Besides a few bizarre and isolated sociological perversions in Africa and China, one is hard put to imagine who would even consider eating an animal's meat while the animal lives.

And yet, this is precisely why this commandment may well represent the essence of the Seven Universal Laws. Although mankind is enjoined to obey these commandments as they appear, the letter of the law only serves as a minimum, a starting point, which guarantees God's favor and insures human morality. But if man wishes to realize his greatness spiritually, he must tap into the infinite potential of the seven laws, using them to refine and elevate himself. We see here that eating the limb of a living animal serves as

a hint as to the potential refinement that man can attain through his eating habits and by practising kindness to every creature.

For what man ingests as food is absorbed in his bloodstream and in every cell of his body and thereby becomes part of his essential being.

The person who eats snakes and monkeys will surely be different from the man who eats nuts and berries. And the mystical teachings state that the Holy Spirit will never rest on one who kills any creature, even the lowliest insect, purposelessly. (Teachings of the AriZal, Rabbi Isaac Luria Ashkenazi)

The early sages differ concerning the act of consuming the blood of an animal. The sages say that the Children of Noah contend that they are not forbidden blood as food. The Children of Noah may eat the flesh of an animal that dies by itself, but there is an opinion that states that only the flesh of an animal killed through slaughtering is permissible. One is guilty of transgressing this commandment subject to punishment by the courts whether he eats the limb of a living animal or for merely the flesh of living animal, even the smallest amount. The actual transgression is the eating of a limb or any flesh while it lives. Use of an animal's hide or any other benefit is permissible. Although a person is subject to punishment for eating the limb or the flesh of a living domestic or wild animal, he is not so condemned for the limb or flesh of a living chicken. It is, however, forbidden to eat this as well. Fish and other creatures, including animals, that are killed may have a limb or flesh taken from them and eaten. Slaughtering does not have to be in a ritual manner as with Jews. However, the killing of any animal for food must be done in as humane a manner as possible. Fish are considered dead the moment they are taken out of the water, but even so, one may not eat a fish while it appears to be alive as this is a lack of refinement and the chief reason for the giving of the Seven Universal Laws was to refinement the nature of man.

When one slaughters an animal, even if its windpipe and esophagus are severed, so long as the limbs are still moving, the limbs and the meat that are separated from them are forbidden to a Gentile because of this law. However, if one eats the limb or flesh of an animal after it has been killed, but while it is still moving, he is not punished for this by the courts, for it is not actually considered the limb or flesh of a living animal.

Everything that is forbidden to a Jew because of the law of the Limb Of A Living Animal is similarly forbidden to a Gentile, except that the Gentile has the added strictness of being guilty for this particular transgression whether the animal is spiritually clean or unclean. The Jew is guilty only if the animal is a type that is spiritually clean. Animals, together with their lives, were given into the hands of mankind. The higher spiritual rank of man dictates that he not eat the limb of a living animal. Even though the flesh of man and the flesh of animal are related, the one may be incorporated within the other through eating. But the soul (in the blood) of an animal may never be incorporated within the soul of man. Therefore the admonition for mankind to not eat blood as did the pagans in their false ritual worship. Another reason is that it is this blood that contains the Divine Life Source in the form of the Soul which God gave as atonement for the sins of mankind.

The soul [blood] of an animal must first be separated from its physical being before the animal body may be absorbed within and become part of the human body. (Samson Raphael Hirsch commenting on Genesis 2:16 and 9:5)

ATONEMENT...THE SOUL...THE BLOOD...THE LIFE....WHAT IS GOING ON?

As a Christian Pastor I can say that out of all the Biblical doctrines which Gentile Christianity completely misunderstands and teaches incorrectly I can find no other more misunderstood teaching than what Gentile Christianity teaches concerning ATONEMENT and how it actually was accomplished. The confusion rests in the understanding of the "blood" as the vehicle for the "life" which is contained within the blood for God tells

us if we read slowly and think that it is the "LIFE" that is in the blood that He gives mankind for atonement and NOT THE BLOOD. We read over this so often because we are subconsciously or consciously brainwashed by erroneous teaching our whole life to "think" blood when in reality we as Christians got it just backwards. The link above will straighten this all out and I strongly suggest that every Christian read the above information and make adjustments in their religious beliefs systems if they want to meet God with the truth one day. Shalom.



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THE ANTIOCH PROBLEM AND HOW IT RELATED TO TABLE FELLOWSHIP BETWEEN THE JEWS AND NON-JEWS IN THE EARLY SYNAGOGUE-CHURCH

This series will reveal to the student many truths that lay behind these verses. We will see that the whole account is somewhat misrepresented by Paul in the New Testament to present the Apostle Peter in a somewhat negative light as well as the fact that the problems surrounding table fellowship between the Jew and the non-Jew were of major importance in the first century.

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PAUL'S REBUKE OF PETER ...HAS THE NT MISREPRESENTED THE TRUTH BEHIND THE INCIDENT AT ANTIOCH? #1

I can just hear many of my readers now: "There he goes again, tearing down my hero Paul". Well it is not my desire to build up or tear down anyone; only to get to the truth behind accounts in the New Testament which have been recorded in such a slanted way as to obscure truth. It is in the spirit of truth and critical historical study that we investigated great time and research to get the bottom of Paul's rebuke of Peter.

This issues at stake in such research affects every non-Jewish believer on this planet. This will become crystal clear if you take the challenge and read the forthcoming articles which will strip away many of the lies and half-truths portrayed in the New Testament. Dear one, whether you know it or not, the New Testament you carry in which you hold beliefs concerning "inerrancy and infallibility" is more truthfully understood to be a Roman religious propagandist document in which religion was used as a political glue to hold the crumbling Roman Empire together in the 2nd through 4th century when the Canon of the New Testament was organized.

James D.G. Dunn, in *Jesus, Paul, and the Law*, states on page 2 that: "The Antioch incident was a crucial episode in Paul's career. The question was , How crucial?" He goes on to challenge his readers with such questions as:

- What was it that the men from James demanded from Paul and his church?
- Why was it that they demanded such from Paul and his Jewish-Gentile church?
- What was it that Peter and other Jewish Christians withdrew from, and why?
- What effect did this Antioch incident have upon the future of Jew-and Gentile relationships in the churches of Yeshua?
- What effect did this Antioch incident have upon Paul's relationship with the Jerusalem Church and was his defense of his Apostleship in many of his epistles stem from the Jerusalem's rejection of Paul and "his gospel"?

One of the issues raised by this study was is the changing relationship between Paul and the Jerusalem church before and up to the Antioch incident. Prior to the Antioch incident Paul had been much less independent of Jerusalem than subsequently-hence the somewhat defensive tone of Galatians 1:10-2:10. Without a doubt Galatians 1-2 reflects a transition in Paul's relationship with Jerusalem and Yeshua's Church authorities. What you the reader must understand from the outset is that it is this rejection of Paul and "his gospel" by the Jerusalem Church which plays such an integral part in the overall picture of Paul's theology and its development. The Antioch incident marked a crucial stage in the development of Paul's theology and his separation from the Jerusalem Church. In Galatians Paul is striving to assert his independence from Jerusalem. I challenge you to read Galatians 1-2 with the understanding that those whom Paul opposes and who opposed him were Yeshua's brother James and the elders of the Jerusalem Church. This puts a whole new spin on Paul's self-vindication in his epistles. The inner tension should be noticeable by all. The problem is ascertaining whom the adversaries of Paul actually are. You can understand my amazement when I discovered over the years of

my study that the adversaries of Paul of whom he characterizes as "Judaizers" in the New Testament are the very one whom Yeshua walked with and taught for 40 days after his resurrection. **To assume these "Judaizers" are wrong and that Paul is "right" makes Yeshua an incompetent who put the wrong men in charge of the Messianic Movement.** To assume these "Judaizers" of Jerusalem, James and the Church of Yeshua are "wrong" is incredulous considering these same men had been filled with the "Spirit of Truth" on Pentecost. Surely the true anointing of God did not lead these men into error. James no less is the leader and head of Yeshua's church...the mother church for all missionary activity. It seems to me that these men at Jerusalem had it wrong then what does that say about Yeshua's competency in setting these men in authority especially in light of beliefs attached to him that he was resurrected from the dead and believed to be the Messiah of Israel. This is the tension we have. This is the setting we have that confronts our further study: Paul is opposed by James and the church and Paul is opposed to the same. **Unfortunately we have only Paul's and Luke's account of the matter in the New Testament.** Let it be remembered that this "Luke" was Paul's friend and companion in several of his trips. So if we are to come to the bottom of the matter then everything must be scrutinized for truthfulness. We can take nothing for granted nor shall we.

TROUBLING QUESTIONS TO CLOSE ON

As we close understand what is at stake here. **If James and the Jerusalem Church can be found to be in the right then that means Paul was not observant of the dictates of the Acts 15 Church Council that preceded the Antioch incident.** Let us never forget that Acts attests for us in Acts 15:23 that the church wrote letters of their decision and attests these letters were to be sent to the churches in Asia to inform them of the decision. Not only that but verse 28 states that "it seemed good to the Holy Ghost, and to us, to lay upon you no greater burden than these necessary things". Take just a moment to notice that the decision of James and the Church was seen by the Holy Ghost to be "good" and "necessary" for the non-Jewish believer. We need to stop and take notice of such a thing and then ask ourselves: "What things"?

It seems certain things were mandated by God and enforced by Godly representatives for the non-Jewish believer to both observe and keep as part of his inclusion into the Israel of God whereby he received the gift of salvation. **The seriousness of the matter is underscored by the fact that these "necessary" and "good" things will not be enforced by Paul to his Gentile churches; in fact Paul is instrumental in casting such things to the ground as if they were not important.** This is the whole of the crux of the problem at Antioch. The letters informing of the Jerusalem Church's decision were intended to "strengthen" the Gentile Churches but the information within them had to be implemented among the Gentile converts and Godfearers. **Paul would make several serious compromises the majority of which today escape the notice of the casual reader.**

In the next articles I will point out each area of contention where **Paul directly disobeyed both James, the Church, and the Holy Ghost and literally broke from being submissive to the Jerusalem authority and preached "his own gospel" in defiance of Jerusalem and the Holy Ghost's decision.**

This I know is shocking to most because you have grown up with the positive account of Paul in the New Testament. But understand that this view of Paul is biased to say the least and far from the truth concerning this man. If you find the courage to continue reading I will prove, prove to you that the Paul of the New Testament is not a friend of Jerusalem Church let alone Yeshua whom you think he followed. **In truth Paul did his own thing and this is what brought him into great contention with the Jerusalem Church and its authorities. Literally he would be summoned to Jerusalem twice to answer charges brought against him in his life; the first at the Acts 15 Council and finally in Acts 21 where he would publicly demonstrate under duress his obeisance to the Torah and complete the Nazarite vow which required of him the offering of blood offerings and sin offerings for atonement....and this 30 years after Yeshua's death.** This fact alone should make one wonder what his true beliefs were concerning Yeshua's death being the final sacrifice for sin.

That was a lot to start with ...ponder what has been said ..and let us continue with the second article in this series. Shalom.



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PAUL'S REBUKE OF PETER ...HAS THE NT MISREPRESENTED THE TRUTH BEHIND THE INCIDENT AT ANTIOCH? #2

If one reads Galatians chapter one and two it is very informative as to Paul's relationship with the Jerusalem apostles. This is one of the key questions relating to the beginnings of Christianity which has never achieved a completely satisfactory resolution. It is clear enough that in Galatians itself Paul is striving to assert his independence from Jerusalem and Yeshua's Church. This cannot be disputed in light of historical facts.

THE EXEGESIS OF GALATIANS 2....LOOK AT WHAT WE FIND

Paul finds himself in rather a difficult predicament. The facts of history already betrayed Paul as Gentile convert and a Sadducee, which when spurned in his love interest in the Chief Priest's daughter, defects to the Pharisees. So now we have Paul as a self-made Pharisee. Paul, wishing to defend his honor and reestablish his position in the religious hierarchy of Jerusalem, made such a attend following his "revelation" on the Damascus road. Paul desired independence from the Jerusalem Church yet needs their acknowledgment and authority for his missions.

In Gal. 1:15-17 we find Paul's admission that he, after receiving his revelation of Yeshua, "did not confer with flesh and blood, nor did he go up to Jerusalem to those who were Apostles". Paul makes a strong case that he did not "confer" with those who knew Yeshua best. That seems strange to me considering he persecuted the "way" of the Nazarenes and caused the death of many before his "enlightenment" on the road to Damascus.

The Greek word for confer, as taken from Galatians 1:16 tells us a lot:

4323 prosanatithemi-

- 1) to lay upon in addition to
- 2) to lay upon oneself in addition
 - a) to undertake besides
 - b) to put oneself upon another by going to him,
 - c) to commit or to betake oneself to another for the purpose of consulting him
 - d) to consult, to take one into counsel
 - e) to add from one's store

3) to communicate, to impart

DOES PAUL INCRIMINATE HIMSELF AND REVEAL HIS MOTIVES IN THIS WORD FROM GALATIANS 1:16?

I believe that he does. In fact Paul's choice of words betrays his hidden attitude toward authority in his life. Remembering his rejection by the Chief Priest and the Sadducees, Paul set out to establish his own credibility and authority in response to his being rebuffed by the Temple authorities. If you wish to read in-depth in these issues I highly recommend H. Maccoby's The Mythmaker: Paul And The Invention Of Christianity. This book will open your eyes and only begin a life-long study into "what is the truth about Paul?"

We find from this simple word study ["convey" in Greek] that although Paul had been a severe if not major persecutor of Yeshua's Church, after his "revelation" Paul braggingly stated that was not willing to confer, to consult, to take into counsel the Jerusalem authorities, or even to "add" to his store of knowledge concerning Yeshua from those who knew him best.

This does not sound right, does it?

According to this Greek word for "consult" Paul braggingly states in Galatians that he was not willing to lay up more knowledge concerning Yeshua from those who knew him best. He did not seem to need to add to his knowledge of Yeshua other than what he had received on the Damascus road. But more enlightening is the meaning that he was not to put himself in a humbled position of submitting to another or committing to another for the purpose of consulting him in hopes of gaining needed and necessary knowledge concerning Yeshua and Yeshua's gospel. Except for the Damascus road revelation we all know Paul was in direct opposition to Yeshua and had the wrong message. Not only that but Paul did not consult with flesh and blood about the significance of the revelation he had received about his understanding of "revelation of Jesus Christ" (v.12) as a call to preach the gospel to the Gentiles. For Paul it was not necessary for him to consult with any man about the meaning of the revelation he had received by Jesus Christ. He had a private interpretation to which he assumed he needed no witness from those he had previously been persecuting. What is most amazing to me is that Paul brags about not needing to go to those who were the apostles before him (v. 17), to those, that is, who remain within the circle of Yeshua's followers who were at that time regarded as the most qualified to give an authoritative interpretation of what he (Paul) had seen on the Damascus road. By the time he did first visit Jerusalem three years had elapsed and the meaning of the "revelation of Jesus Christ" at Damascus had been clearly established "in" Paul without any reference to outside-human-agency, including the Jerusalem Apostles.

PAUL'S FIRST VISIT TO THE JERUSALEM CHURCH

Galatians 1:18 states: "Then after three years I went up to Jerusalem to see Peter, and abode with him 15 days". Verse 19 states: "But other of the apostles saw I none, save James the Lord's brother".

Thayer's Greek Lexicon translates "see" in this manner:

2477 historeo-

- 1) to enquire into, to examine, to investigate
- 2) to find out, to learn by enquiry

3) to gain knowledge of by visiting, used of some distinguished person, to become personally acquainted with, to know face to face

Now we see after three years Paul's submission to the Jerusalem Church whereby he traveled to Jerusalem to enquire and find out information which he was lacking about Yeshua. **We must understand that Paul probably never met or heard Yeshua teach so his information about him would be shallow indeed.** Paul needed to "catch up" especially since he fashioned himself the Apostle to the Gentiles. Paul's trip was, according to the Greek word, intended for the sole purpose of gaining information and knowledge of Yeshua by visiting those who knew him best. The word carries the implication of "gaining information" and in this case from those who knew Yeshua best; namely Peter and James.

If Paul was so concerned at this stage of his life in asserting his independence from Jerusalem he would hardly have used a word which explicitly acknowledged his own personal indebtedness to Peter for information concerning the "Christ crucified" which he preached.

But we have good reason to conclude that Paul's attempt to distance himself from Jerusalem had a much more specific issue in view; namely, his own personal interpretation of the revelation given him on the Damascus road. Understand that Paul was not trying to stand aloof from Jerusalem in respect to everything to do with the new movement. What he wanted to safeguard was quite simply the claim that his basic understanding of the gospel to the Gentiles came direct from God (v. 11-12). It was precisely his understanding of his Apostleship to the Gentiles which he refused so resolutely to attribute to any human authority (v.1). **This had been made perfectly clear by Paul in his refusal to confer with the Jerusalem authorities for 3 years following his "revelation".**

What is important for us to know is that Paul was **NOW** quite ready, as seen in these passages, to acknowledge his indebtedness to Peter and James for further information concerning the background of Yeshua's ministry while on earth as well as the very beginnings of the new movement centered on the risen Yeshua.

That Paul would have had a natural curiosity about this Yeshua who had appeared to him outside Damascus is rather obvious and we can hardly doubt that the fortnight with Peter was largely spent in passing on such information. Paul used his time with Peter, the one who had been closest to Yeshua, to make inquiry, to draw out the sort of information which had not come to him with the apostle-making gospel-giving revelation three years earlier. **What I want you to grasp is that after three years we find Paul submissive to the Jerusalem Church but that was to change over the course of the next few years.**

PAUL'S SECOND VISIT TO THE JERUSALEM CHURCH

Galatians 2:1-2 states: "**Then after fourteen years** I went up again to Jerusalem....I laid before them the gospel which I preach among the Gentiles, but privately before those of repute, lest somehow I was running or had run in vain".

The Greek word for "laid" is as follows:

394 anatithemai (an-at-ith'-em-ahee);

from 303 and the middle voice of 5087; to set forth (for oneself), i.e. propound:

KJV-- communicate, declare.

This is a very interesting word. The word carries the added idea of "declaring and communicating" with the added idea that the person to whom a thing is referred is asked for his opinion. In other words, something is laid before someone for his consideration. **Paul is asking for approval of the Jerusalem authorities for the message he has been preaching for the last 14 years!** This word carries the idea of submitting to a higher authority an issue which the one making he submission (Paul) was incompetent to resolve on his own. Dear

reader what we read here in the Greek is that Paul is submitting to the Jerusalem authorities "his gospel" for their approval. **This literally is Paul's acknowledgment that the authority of his gospel depended on Jerusalem's approval.**

This is of major importance as we again see for over 17 years Paul was preaching "his gospel" without the sanction of the Jerusalem Church! Wow! Let that sink in!

During these 17 years Paul has been holding a delicate balance in defining his relations with Jerusalem. On the one hand Paul makes it clear that his second visit took place 17 years after the revelation which had determined and defined for him "his" gospel and Apostleship to the Gentiles. Nothing that happened at such a distance in time from that decisive event could undermine or call in question the direction or significance of his commissioning by God through Jesus Christ. **Paul goes out of his way to point out that he went up in accordance with a further revelation thus presumably excluding any suggestion that his visit to Jerusalem was in response to a summons from James and the mother church.** Furthermore he calls the Jerusalem leadership "men of repute", a phrase which acknowledges the high standing in which the pillar apostles were held by others, without constituting an endorsement by Paul himself. The use of the last expression in particular reinforces the impression that Paul's choice was designed to characterize the **balance between Paul's recognition of the Jerusalem's Apostles' eminence and authority and his even firmer assertion of independence in the authority of his gospel and Apostleship.**

PAUL DOUBTS THE VALIDITY OF HIS REVELATION...NOW PAY CLOSE ATTENTION

Let me set the stage for you. Paul had a revelation. Lets face it, revelations are not always easy to understand or comprehend without help from spiritual authorities at times. Paul sought no help for 3 years. Only after three years did Paul consult with the Jerusalem authorities; and then only Peter for 2 weeks where he asks for "information" about the one he preaches in hopes of "filling in the gaps" lacking in his knowledge of Yeshua. Paul then strikes out preaching this revelation for 14 years then has second thoughts as we see from Galatians 2:2. Notice Paul then, after 14 years, makes the rather phenomenal statement in Gal. 2:2: "Lest somehow I should be running or had run in vain" (Gal. 2:2). **This clause certainly indicates not only serious doubt by Paul about the truthfulness of what he has been preaching for 14 years but a genuine concern on Paul's part that the success or failure of his missionary work among the Gentiles which depended upon the approval of the Jerusalem Church as well as its head Pastor James. Without a doubt the judgment of the Jerusalem apostles mattered to Paul; an adverse judgment concerning his gospel would have rendered his work past and present ineffective and useless.**

Answer for yourself: How can Paul in the same breath both assert his independence of the Jerusalem apostles and yet also acknowledge that the effectiveness of his work depended on the approval of his gospel by these same Jerusalem authorities?

Paul knew, what few Christians know today, that Jerusalem's refusal to acknowledge all or part of Paul's "gospel message" would render it ineffective.

Answer for yourself: Did these Jerusalem authorities and apostles ever give Paul complete approval of his "whole gospel" or would they at the Acts 15 Church Council **correct many parts of it and command Paul upon his return to Asia Minor to make sure that his churches under his tutelage be taught the truth in certain areas which at that time because of Paul they did not possess?** These things will be searched out in future articles so stay tuned?

YET...PAUL WAS CORRECT IN SOME THINGS

Let me say at this point that one of the things Paul had been preaching was correct. Paul had been preaching

that the non-Jewish believers in God, who accepted the Covenant of Noah along with the Laws of Noah, through the ministry of Yeshua and his followers, were grafted into the Israel of God without the need of circumcision. Paul was right on this. **This is what the whole Galatians epistle is about; not about being "not under the Law, but only the non-Jew not being under the law of CIRCUMCISION as stated in the Covenant and laws of Noah."** Christianity possibly has got nothing more incorrect than this, or maybe possibly its Christology.

You need to know that the acceptance of the non-Jew without circumcision was not the accepted or established practice of mainline Judaism at this particular time in Israel. Due to the intense Jewish hatred for the non-Jew, the rite of circumcision, given only to the Jew, was imposed upon the non-Jewish male in hope of providing an effective deterrent to his conversion to Judaism or other types of religious intercourse.

Guess what; it was working. Because of this potentially life-threatening procedure upon an adult male who no longer had his mother's antibodies to retard against infections as a child, hundreds of men wishing to draw closer to God died in such procedures. The bigoted Jews, who hated Gentiles because God had consistently used them to punish and persecute Israel for their disobedience to their covenant, were using such procedures to hold the non-Jew at arms length and limit both social and religious intercourse. **Under the Laws of Noah, and the Covenant of Noah, which both preceded the Laws of Moses, such requirements were never imposed on the non-Jew.** Because of the ministry of Yeshua and his followers such as James, the pastor of the Messianic Church of Jerusalem, and other, major repentance in the direction of Israel in this regard was to be accomplished. Understand however I am speaking only of the Messianic branch of Judaism only; the orthodox Judaism of the 2nd Temple period never relinquished such a requirement upon the non-Jew.

BUT UNDERSTAND....PAUL WAS WRONG IN OTHER THINGS

Having vindicated Paul on this point, it saddens me to say that Paul will defiantly oppose the other mandates of the Jerusalem Council which would come later as mandated by head Pastor James in Acts 15. The casual reading of Acts 15 without background in this area robs today's believer of such knowledge. A little study can show you Paul was wrong and defiant toward the apostles after Acts 15.

Because of his defiance to accept other parts of the Covenant of Noah and the Laws of Noah as binding upon the non-Jew, as it had been for Abraham, Paul would distance himself from the Jerusalem Church and begin to tout his "own personal authority" and "his gospel" over against the authority of the Apostles of the mother church. This explains the many examples in his epistles where he defends his "Apostleship" against those of Jerusalem which had problems with Paul and his message.

Probably for many of you this is "news" to you...problems with Paul...the Apostle to the Gentiles! My dear one all is not what it appears in the New Testament. If you are acquainted with our ministry we have dealt heavily with the New Testament documents and scrutinized them with the aid of scholarly research to ascertain the truth from the error within them. Such articles as this is the fruit of our labors. This information can be obtained at several websites:

- <http://web2.airmail.net/bennoah1>
- <http://geocities.com/faithofyeshua>
- <http://paganizingfaithofyeshua.netfirms.com>
- <http://faithofyeshua.faithweb.com>

Paul's refusal to accept the mandate of the Jerusalem Council would lead to such comments in the New Testament as this one:

"But from those reputed to be something-what they once were matters nothing to me; God shows

no partiality-the men of repute added nothing to me (Gal. 2:6)".

Paul in writing Galatians following the Acts 15 Council would not and did not admit to accepting any requirements as such from the Jerusalem authorities. But as I have shown you James made a ruling and commanded letters be written of the Council's final decision and circulated among the churches in Asia Minor. James is the head of the church and not Paul!

These very important "mandates" for the Gentile Churches of Asia should have "added something to Paul". It is one thing for Paul to write in a letter intended for the churches of Galatia that the men of Jerusalem added nothing to his gospel and quite another to say that in front of James and the elders of Yeshua's Church in Jerusalem. When the cat is away the mouse will play! With such insights you should be able to re-read Paul in the New Testament and discern the tension between him and the Jerusalem elders and his self-vindication to the non-Jews of Asia Minor who knew not the decision of the Jerusalem Council. This is so lopsided it is staggering and we as believers took such rhetoric hook line and sinker never questioning what was the dynamics behind some of Paul's self-vindicating statements. You will see how serious this becomes for the non-Jewish believer as we get deeper into the dogmas and doctrines contained in the Jerusalem decree in Acts 15.

PAUL'S DILEMMA

Paul knew that to acknowledge the Jerusalem apostle's overall authority to determine the terms on which the gospel could be received and Gentiles accepted into Israel's Re-Newed Covenant would have jeopardized the Gentile mission if the "Judaizers" in Galatia could have claimed Jerusalem's authority. Yet, at the same time, the pillar apostle's authoritative ruling in Acts 15 (James') was one Paul had to appeal to if his gospel was to be effective and his vision of Gentile converts being brought into the people of God to be fully realized. It was this attempt to hold on to Jerusalem's authority and yet at the same time to hold it at arm's length which explains the great lengths Paul goes to in his epistles to play up his Apostleship and play down the authority of the "pillars" of Jerusalem. Above all else Paul wanted to make it clear that the pillar apostles acknowledged the validity of his circumcision-free gospel to the Gentiles. That was where he wanted his readers to recognize the significance and force of Jerusalem's authority: Titus was not circumcised despite strong advocacy on the part of some that he should be.

Paul will tell a blatant lie in Galatians 2:6 when he says: But of these who seemed to be somewhat, (whatsoever they were, it maketh no matter to me: God accepteth no man's person:) for they who seemed to be somewhat in conference added nothing to me: (KJV)

Paul will later say "They added nothing, no further content, request, instruction or requirement to the circumcision-free gospel...except the encouragement to remember the importance of almsgiving (Gal. 2:10)".

If you keep reading you will see this is a outright lie Paul tells in rebellion to the Jerusalem message he was commanded to communicate with his churches in Asia Minor. Paul will not do it!

What Paul writes in Galatians chapter 2 is simply not true. This is where the problem comes in. One only needs to read Acts 15 and James's decree to understand that certain stipulations from the Covenant of Noah and the Laws of Noah were mandated upon non-Jewish believers coming to faith in God, even if through Paul and his ministry. To say these "pillars" added nothing is far from true. It is in these declarations by James that Paul will cast aside when trying to "win souls to Christ". You need to understand that at this point Jerusalem's backing was absolutely crucial to Paul's whole understanding of his gospel and its outworking in his missionary strategy.

On the other hand Paul had no desire to lean on Jerusalem's authority more heavily than was absolutely necessary. Hence once again **the distancing phrase**, "those reputed to be of some account" and its echo three verses later "those regarded as pillars" (Gal. 2:6-9). Notice also the highly revealing parenthesis, "what they once were makes no difference to me; God shows no partiality". Here Paul's language indicates clearly enough

both at that time the Jerusalem apostles were accorded a status and authority ["**what they once were**"...notice the imperfect tense] which *is* now a matter of indifference to him [again note the change of tense]. Notice also that in his view the Jerusalem apostles are still accorded too high a status and authority by some-but not by God. If this is not stabbing in the back I don't know what it!

It is to these actions of Paul's rebellion and defiance we will investigate in the further articles.

In closing of this article let me conclude with this thought. In laying "his" gospel before the Jerusalem apostles what Paul sought was not so much their approval, without which his gospel would have no validity, as their recognition of his gospel's validity, without which his gospel would lose its effectiveness.

Paul would gain the apostle's approval for "his" gospel of "no circumcision" for salvation and inclusion of the non-Jewish believer into the Israel of God. What escapes most Christians today is that when reading the Book of Galatians they tend to get the idea Paul opposed all the Law. He did not. It was just for Paul the Laws of Noah and the Laws of Moses were like a salad bar...he would pick this one and reject this one. This is never what God intended for His children, as we said before, **one's relationship with God is totally dependent upon one's Covenant and his effort to maintain Covenant stipulations thereby maintaining relationship with God. For the non-Jewish believer, the Christian, this is the Covenant of Noah.**

More in the next in this series as we look deeply into what the issues were that Paul put aside from the Acts 15 Council and the following incident at Antioch where he makes full breach with the Jerusalem Church. Shalom.



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PAUL'S REBUKE OF PETER ...HAS THE NT MISREPRESENTED THE TRUTH BEHIND THE INCIDENT AT ANTIOCH? #3

In the first two articles in this series I have tried to lay a foundation into the background into what were the dynamics involved as the Antioch incident where the men from James rebuked Peter, Barnabas, and Paul along with his church. These events, when properly understood, hold tons of important information that should be of interest to today's Christian if he truly desires to live a life pleasing to God. Failure to understand the truth behind the skewed pictures of the event in the New Testament guarantees the reader that his life will not prosper from such restored truth and hopefully his repentance in several areas of his life. This will become more apparent as we dig deeper.

PAUL'S REVELATION...&...FIRST VISIT TO THE JERUSALEM CHURCH THREE YEARS LATER

We have made note previously that when Paul had his "revelation" on the Damascus road, Paul writes (Gal. 1:16-24) that he did not immediately confer with those who had been apostles before him; instead, he went due south to Arabia and then returned to Damascus. Only after three years did he visit Jerusalem for a fortnight's conference with Cephas (Peter); among the apostles he saw only their leaders, Cephas and James the Lord's brother. Presumably in consequence of this meeting he then went to "the regions of Syria and Cilicia," avoiding "the churches of Judaea" even though they had been informed of his conversion and his mission work. Paul implies, and we have no word from the Jerusalem church to state otherwise, that the Jerusalem leaders agreed with him that he should confine his activities to the Gentile mission; at any rate, he was not to work under the direct jurisdiction of Jerusalem or in proximity to it. He also implies that there was no question about the right of the apostles at Jerusalem to govern the churches of Judaea.

The church of Jerusalem was the church of the twelve apostles. From I Corinthians 15:5-7 it appears that their jurisdiction was based on appearances of the risen Christ—on the one hand, to Cephas, the Twelve, and a large group of disciples; on the other, to James and to "all the apostles." The list of appearances seems to reflect the combination of two groups of appearances which were especially related to Cephas and to James, and the authority of the Jerusalem church thus rested on a double foundation (Peter and James). Paul's own claim to apostolic authority was obviously parallel not to that of Cephas, who had been a disciple of Yeshua in Galilee and at Jerusalem, but to that of James, a convert only after the resurrection like himself. **From the account in Galatians it is by no means clear that Cephas and James recognized Paul's apostolate when he first visited them. Indeed, it looks as if they waited for fourteen years before explicitly recognizing that by divine favor he had been entrusted with the mission to the gentiles (Gal. 2:7-9). If this is so, the leaders of the church of Jerusalem must have enjoyed a primacy greater than Paul not only in Judaea but also among Jews in other areas of the Christian world. Dear one this means that for all Messianic Jewry the Church of Yeshua in Jerusalem was the ONLY authority for the Yeshua's Movement...even in Asia Minor where Paul would go later.**

FOURTEEN YEARS LATER....PAUL'S SECOND TRIP TO THE JERUSALEM CHURCH TO GET THEIR APPROVAL FOR WHAT HE WAS PREACHING

What happened after fourteen years was that Paul went to Jerusalem from Antioch, taking with him both Barnabas and a Greek convert named Titus. The purpose of the visit was to hold a private conference with the Jerusalem leaders and to set before them Paul's gospel to the gentiles (Gal.2:1-10). The results of this conference were extremely important for the later history of the Pauline mission and of the Christian church. Jewish Christians, under the influence of R. Shammai, continued to advocate the practice of circumcision for non-Jews although it was never required in the Laws of Noah; Paul indignantly rejected it and refused to have Titus circumcised. The leaders of the Messianic Movement within Judaism (church) agreed with Paul's position, and from them he apparently won the definite allocation of spheres of influence described in his letter. According to Paul the "pillar" apostles laid no additional requirements upon him, he says, and they recognized that by divine favor he had been entrusted with the gospel for the gentiles, just as Peter had been given it for the Jews. **This statement by Paul is not true and we will see shortly in Acts 16 that there were several "additional requirements" called "necessary and which seemed good to the Holy Spirit by James" which Paul would not do nor agree to.** Paul and Barnabas were henceforth to work with gentiles; James, Cephas, and John with Jews. In ratifying this agreement they shook hands with him and also required that he take up a collection in support of the Jerusalem community, presumably thus sealing the concordat. This collection from the non-Jews was evidently analogous to the tax which Jews paid for the support of the temple in Jerusalem.

PAUL'S RETURN TO ANTIOCH AFTER THE 2ND VISIT...NOT ALL GOES WELL

Following Paul's second meeting with the Jerusalem Church following his 14 years absence difficulties arose immediately after Paul's return to Antioch, for the agreement Paul made with the Jerusalem Church was unworkable in communities consisting of both Jews and gentiles. This needs some explanation for you to grasp the hidden political and religious dynamics behind the scenes which prompted the meeting of the Acts 15 First Church Council.

Prior to the Acts 15 Council, and follow the revelation to Peter in Acts 10 and 11 where he learned non-Jews were "clean" Peter came to Antioch and at first observed the local Christian custom of eating meals, as a Jew, with Gentiles. **Since there were evidently many Jews in the congregation, the more conservative among them presumably informed James, at Jerusalem, that the Jewish Messianic Movement within Judaism (Christianity) was being undermined by Paul and his congregation at Antioch.**

James sent emissaries to insist that Jews should not eat with Gentiles, and his concern was respected not only by Peter but also by Barnabas and the other Jewish Christians (Gal. 2:11-13). **There are many reasons for this repentance on the part of Peter, Barnabas, and other Jews at Antioch when the men from James appeared because as you will see under the teaching of Paul some of the Commandments in the Laws of Moses were being violated at table-fellowship with non-Jews as well as some of the Laws from the Covenant of Noah which pertained to these same non-Jews. In other words, in the effort "to become all things to all men" Paul had compromised many Commandments and the men from James would not let these breaches of Law pass nor such disobedience to the Word of God for expediency sake.**

Answer for yourself: Why would James, the Lord's brother and head of the Jerusalem Church, command Jewish believers not to continue to eat with non-Jewish believers?

Answer for yourself: Is it possible that non-Jewish believers were sinning when they were eating and sharing

table fellowship with the Jews, and in doing so tempting the Jews to follow in their sinful ways? Yes!

Answer for yourself: It is possible that at table fellowship in Antioch, between Jewish believers and non-Jewish believers, that important parts of the Laws of Noah from the Covenant of Noah, which were binding upon all non-Jewish believers, were being violated by Paul and the practice of his churches?

Answer for yourself: Had Paul justified the "breaking" and "bending" of these Noahide Covenant requirements and Laws in the hopes of "becoming all things to all men that he might win some"? **He sure did. And the Christian Church today, under this same Covenant of Noah, sadly follows in the same footsteps and is not aware.** This is the reason what the men from James continually dogged him in the New Testament everywhere he went. **Paul's persecutions and "beatings" recorded in the New Testament are not from some stray Jews, they were not from "thugs"; rather it was from "brothers" from the Jerusalem Church who had been given a mandate by Yeshua before his ascension to teach all nations (Gentiles) to observe certain things (many of these things Paul would treat as if they did not exist or apply).** These persecutions were simply the result of Paul violating the teachings of Yeshua and the Torah. But without a deep understanding of what comes next in these articles it is so easy to read Paul's accounts and feel sorry for him when we should be enraged against him. Paul defends himself by calling these righteous men who held up such standards of righteousness "Judaizers". Growing up in the church this term always had a "bad" connotation when in truth it is these "Judaizers" who were closest to Yeshua and were not compromising the Commandments of God like Paul and others. You can see how Paul literally blasphemes those keeping the Torah and relegates them all with the negative term "judaizers."

Along with this question we must factor in what we have already learned from the previous articles. Let me summarize:

- Paul was desperately attempting to justify himself after being spurned by the Chief Priest over his daughter. This material can be sent upon request as it fills in many gaps in the understanding of the motives of Paul.
- Remember again this is primarily due to Paul being a Gentile who converted to Judaism and such a one was "not good enough" for the Chief Priest's daughter, even after conversion.
- Coupled with this, after Paul's defection from the Sadducees and profession of Pharisee beliefs, was the tension created by needing the acceptance and authority of the Jerusalem Church in order to give credibility to his Gentile mission. Paul's prior persecution of the Messianic Movement while being part of the Temple police force as a Sadducee did not help in the matter as well.

At this point Paul could see that his own mission to the Gentiles was being endangered. Paul was literally trying to build a name for himself and promote his authority which had been rejected by both the Sadducees and the Pharisees. He had successfully claimed during his trip following his 14 year absence that circumcision was not to be required of Gentiles (never required in the Covenant of Noah), but if the **Jewish dietary laws** were to be observed, as thought by Paul, even by Jews in a mixed community, then both "freedom in Christ Jesus" (Gal.2:4) and the unity of the churches would be destroyed in Paul's estimation. Paul's ideas conflict with the Torah. The Jews were commanded to observe such Commandments forever (like kosher). There was no getting around this issue for a Jew and **any table fellowship with non-Jews (take Antioch for example) would involve such issues. When the men from James came to the Antioch congregation they saw that at table fellowship between Jews and non-Jews that several breaches of the Covenant of Moses and the Laws of Noah were not being observed. Understand that such Laws of Noah are reiterated at Sinai and find their identity in the Laws of Moses as well.**

A ONE-SIDED DEFENSE OF AN INDEFENSIBLE POSITION

Paul was caught red-handed if I might say so. He had two options:

- Repent and confess and return to the dictates of the Laws of Noah for his followers...or

- Write a defense of his position and propagate it to other non-Jews who would know no better since lacking background in the Laws and Covenant of Noah.

It is not hard to see what occurred. Now read Galatians and Romans and you will begin to see through the charade. Paul therefore denounced Peter's action of repentance from violating kosher food laws when accused by the men from James and it is recorded for us completely different in that he asked him, "If you as a Jew live in gentile, not Jewish, fashion how can you compel the Gentiles to practice Judaism?" Unfortunately he does not report Peter's answer. But Peter's and Barnabas' actions give us their answer. After being reminded of their Covenant obligations and how they had broken and compromised them both Peter and Barnabas, according to Paul, they both left Paul's fellowship and the church moved next door! The New Testament only records the biased view from Paul's perspective but as I have showed you he was wrong and the men from James was right. Even Peter and Barnabas were taken away by such liberal compromise in the efforts to "win some". The Christian Church is guilty of the same today!

If the standards are lowered then it would be much easier to gain followers; thus bolstering Paul's reputation and authority. But the men from James, as well as James, knew better. This is why the men from Jerusalem was sent to "spy out" the situation at Antioch. At this time, regardless of what Paul would have you think according to his writings, the Jerusalem Church remained highly skeptical of Paul after 14 years. That is why the Jerusalem Church continually "dogged" Paul in every city where he went and reported his every action to the authorities in the Jerusalem Church. That is why Paul would be summoned twice to return to the Mother Church over problems for which he was the instigator. We see that in Acts 15 and Acts 21 where Paul had to report to James. Again we have only a one-sided account in the New Testament whereby he went up by "revelation" but dear one read between the lines once you have the facts.

THE ANTIOCH INCIDENT CAUSED THE NEED FOR THE JERUSALEM COUNCIL OF ACTS 15

The church was in disunity. As you can see one of the principal occasions of disunity within the early Messianic Movement was provided by the conversion and mission of the apostle Paul. An authoritative decision on such matters was necessary if unity was ever to be restored to the Messianic Movement. Such an authoritative decision is reflected in the account of a council at Jerusalem provided in the book of Acts (15:1-35). In many respects the account runs parallel to Paul's narrative in Galatians, but the two stories are basically different. According to Acts, the apostles and presbyters of the Jerusalem church held a public discussion on the question of circumcision. Peter made an address in which he pointed to his own work among Gentiles and insisted that circumcision was unnecessary. Paul and Barnabas described their work. Finally James proposed that, in view of Mosaic precedents [which again you remember many are but reiterations of the Noahide Laws], Gentile converts should be given four requirements based on Leviticus 17-18. The apostles and elders agreed with James and composed a decree containing his four points. Again the practice of circumcision was "dropped" since it never was required by God in the Covenant of Noah and only enforced upon non-Jews by the School of Shammai as they hated non-Jews and used circumcision as a means to keep non-Jews from coming into religious fellowship with them as they held all non-Jews not worthy of the World to Come.

EXAMINATION OF THESE FOUR POINTS....CALLED BY JAMES "NECESSARY" AS WELL AS WHAT "SEEMED GOOD TO THE HOLY GHOST"

First of all let us look at the text:

Acts 15:28-29

28 For it seemed good to the Holy Ghost, and to us, to lay upon you no greater burden than these necessary things;

29 That ye abstain from meats offered to idols, and from blood, and from things strangled, and from fornication: from which if ye keep yourselves, ye shall do well. Fare ye well.

This is James' decree at the Acts 15 Council which was prompted by the events at the Antioch incident earlier. Take note that the Messianic Community believed it "seemed good to the Holy Ghost" that these things be laid upon the non-Jewish believers. If the non-Jew would take upon himself these obligations and requirements which were ALREADY within the Covenant and Laws of Noah then table fellowship between the Jews and non-Jewish believers would not be a problem as it had been previously.

This "apostolic decree" is very important as the first pronouncement made by a Christian synod. Let us never forget that these decrees were over twenty years after the death and resurrection of Yeshua. This was what the Church of Yeshua considered "necessary" to impose upon non-Jewish believers in God.

In closing let us not forget that it would be the Apostle Paul who had failed to teach these dogmas and doctrines to his non-Jewish followers and would continue to not teach them after the Acts 15 Council. It is these very issues that would separate Paul from the Jerusalem Church finally in the latter years of his life. Because of Paul's refusal to accept the First Church's Council and their decision Gentile Christianity today stands outside of those things considered "necessary" and "good to the Holy Spirit".

It is to these issues we not turn as we try to regather truth long overlooked by Gentile Christianity which God commanded of us and still requires of us. Shalom.



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PAUL'S REBUKE OF PETER ...HAS THE NT MISREPRESENTED THE TRUTH BEHIND THE INCIDENT AT ANTIOCH? #4

As stated previously the "apostolic decree" in Acts 15 referencing the Laws of Noah for non-Jewish believers is a very important since it is the first pronouncement made by a "Christian" synod. We will concern ourselves in the following articles primarily with those concerning table-fellowship between Jew and non-Jew.

This first item, abstinence from meats sacrificed to idols, is based on Leviticus 17:8-19 and was understood, at least by Paul (I Cor. 10:28), to refer to foods known to have been consecrated to pagan Gods but not to meals eaten at Temples.

The second, abstinence from blood, has to do with the **dietary regulations** of Leviticus 17:10-12, and was so interpreted later (Eusebius, H.E. 5, 1, 26). At one point, however, Tertullian took it in regard to **murder** (De pudic. 12, 4-5). So did the Rabbis by the way.

The third, abstinence from the meat of animals which had been strangled, without their blood being drained; was an ordinance certainly Jewish in origin (Lev. 17:13-14) and enforced among Jewish Christians (Clem. Hom. 7,8; 8,19; Clem. Rec. 4, 36). This was not discussed by Paul; it is absent from the text of Irenaeus, Tertullian, and Cyprian.

The fourth item, abstinence from "fornication," seems strange in this context, although Paul may refer to it in letters from and to Corinth (1 Thess. 4:3; I Cor. 5:1, 6:13; 7:2). Among Jewish Christians it was referred to rules about marital intercourse and ritual washings (Lev. 18:6-19).

THE TAMPERING WITH THE DOCUMENTS BY THE GENTILE CHURCH BEGINS

By the early second century two versions of James' decree were in circulation. One of them contained the four items listed above; the other omitted any reference to "things strangled" and added the "golden rule" that "whatever they do not wish done to themselves they should not do to others" (cf. Tobit 4:15; Didache 1,2). Witnesses to the third item include both Clement and Origen at Alexandria. The other version was known to Irenaeus and Tertullian, probably also to Theophilus of Antioch (Ad Autol. 2, 34).

What this modification indicates is that the decree was seriously regarded as Christian legislation and for this reason was modified later by those who wished to not accept James' decree! This decision from the Jerusalem Church for the non-Jewish believers in Asia Minor was to be transmitted to Antioch and throughout Syria and Cilicia by two Jerusalem "prophets," Judas Barsabbas and Silas, who were to accompany Barnabas and Paul in order to make sure that it was delivered. Later on, we learn that Judas and Silas delivered the decree at Antioch and then returned to Jerusalem (Acts 15:30-33); and Paul went so far as to circumcise the son of a

Jewish mother and a Greek father (15:40-16:4). Indeed, Silas accompanied Paul through Asia Minor to Macedonia and Achaia, disappearing from the picture just before Paul's extended stay at Corinth (18:5).

The precise extent to which Paul may have regarded such a decree as binding upon Gentile converts—for example, outside Syria and Cilicia—is problematical. He and Silas (Sylvanus) wrote a letter from Corinth, insisting that God wills holiness and specifically referring to "abstaining from fornication" (I Thess. 4:3). Paul does not speak of dietary regulations (for obvious reasons as you will see shortly), but he praises "the churches of God in Judaea in Christ Jesus" as persecuted by the Jews just as the Thessalonians are persecuted by Gentiles (I Thess. 1:14). It is likely that he had told them of the apostolic decree, for the substance of it seems to appear in I Corinthians. Sections of practical counsel in that letter begin with discussions of "fornication" (5:I, specifically related to Lev. 18:7) and of "meats sacrificed to idols" (8:1). **At the same time, it is evident that Paul cannot accept the legal principle underlying the decree. For Paul Christians are not bound by dietary regulations, though they may observe them for the sake of others (10:23-29).**

1 Cor 10:23-29

23 All things are lawful for me, but all things are not expedient: all things are lawful for me, but all things edify not **[how can that be Paul when there are 365 negative Commandments?]**

24 Let no man seek his own, but every man another's wealth.

25 Whatsoever is sold in the shambles, that eat, asking no question for conscience sake: **[what is this? Might this constitute idolatry for Paul and those who follow his advice?]**

26 For the earth is the Lord's, and the fullness thereof.

27 If any of them that believe not bid you to a feast, and ye be disposed to go; whatsoever is set before you, eat, asking no question for conscience sake. **[what is this? Might this constitute idolatry for Paul and those who follow his advice?]**

28 But if any man say unto you, This is offered in sacrifice unto idols, eat not for his sake that shewed it, and for conscience sake: for the earth is the Lord's, and the fullness thereof: **[is Paul more concerned that others might see him break the commandments of God than God seeing him?]**

29 Conscience, I say, not thine own, but of the other: for why is my liberty judged of another man's conscience? (KJV) **[since when are you more concerned what men think of you than what God thinks of you Paul....after all did you not say you were not a man-pleaser but a God pleaser?]**

SO WHAT'S THE PROBLEM?

Growing up as a Christian you might say as I did "this sounds good to me," **however these Pauline suggestions violate Commandments given in the Old Testament in the Laws of Moses and the Covenant of Noah.** We will see this in detail as we go on but understand Pauline theology that violates and contradicts the written Commandments of God is sin even if they sound good and are taught by the Christian Church today. Paul's "Christ" never gave him authority to do away with the Commandments of God and you need to face that fact now!

If Silas continued to adhere to the Jerusalem regulations, which were no more than the reiteration of the already existing Covenant responsibilities God had given the non-Jew in the Covenant of Noah, it is no wonder that he left Paul at Corinth. According to Acts 21:25, the elders at Jerusalem were still concerned with observance of them when Paul last visited the church there; they had heard that Paul taught—"becoming everything to everyone," as he wrote himself (I Cor. 9:22):

1 Cor 9:22 To the weak became I as weak, that I might gain the weak: I am made all things

to all men, that I might by all means save some. (KJV)

The Jerusalem church had even heard that Paul was even teaching and urging Jewish Christians not to observe the law (Acts 21:21):

Acts 21:21 21 And they are informed of thee, that thou teachest all the Jews which are among the Gentiles to forsake Moses, saying that they ought not to circumcise their children, neither to walk after the customs. (KJV)

The word "customs" is interesting:

1485 ethos- 1) custom 2) usage prescribed by law, institute, prescription, rite

The Jerusalem had heard that Paul was teaching "all" the Jews in his mission to not abide by "the law" which for us means the Commandments of God!

Yet we find under the authority of James and the Jerusalem church, according to Acts 21:26, that Paul submitted to James' mandate and submitted to the Nazirite vow of consecration (Num. 6:9-20.....oh, by the way, this included blood sacrifices and sin offerings.....and Paul did this over 25 years after Jesus' death which we are told is the last sin offering...**THINK?**). At Jerusalem, one would suppose, Paul accepted the practices of the church there. He was under Jerusalem jurisdiction.

It must be admitted that to try to coordinate Paul's account in Galatians with the "literary" narrative in Acts leads to many difficulties. It is most unlikely that in the long run Paul DID NOT regard the Jerusalem decree as binding upon his converts or himself.

THE ANTIOCH DINNER

If the decree was known at Antioch, problems arose there as soon as Cephas (Peter) visited the city. Swayed by emissaries from James of Jerusalem, Peter withdrew from table fellowship with gentiles and was followed by other Jews, including even Barnabas. Paul insisted that his action was; inconsistent and irresponsible (Gal. 2:11-14).

To be sure, the question of infringement as to authority arose in many of the provinces where Paul had previously maintained control over them not only by personal visits but also by writing letters and by sending his lieutenants especially Timothy and Titus, to them. At Corinth, he speaks of others as proclaiming "**another gospel**" (2 Cor. 11:4), using the same language as that employed in the Galatian controversy (Gal. 1:6-9). **Ironically those whom Paul accuses of preaching another Gospel are the Apostles and the Jerusalem church and the Christian Church has missed this, maybe on purpose, for two thousand years!**

This is the irony that I wish to expose to you. But not following through by upholding James' decree along with the mandate of the Jerusalem Church Paul caused those he taught along with his churches to be in violation of many of the dogmas contained in the Covenant of Noah and the Laws of Noah.

Being so far removed today we find Gentile Christianity no better off in this regard and a strong rebuke and call to repentance is needed. It is to these issues we now turn.

It is our prayerful hope that you, upon examining these articles, will make the necessary corrections in your religious belief system and conduct before God. Shalom.



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PAUL'S REBUKE OF PETER ...HAS THE NT MISREPRESENTED THE TRUTH BEHIND THE INCIDENT AT ANTIOCH? #5

The incident at Antioch, briefly described by Paul in Galatians 2, has long been a source of some perplexity to students of the New Testament. This has become possibly more evident to you since reading the first four articles in this series. In the patristic period the embarrassment of an account recorded in the New Testament where Paul openly condemned Peter for hypocrisy was avoided by such devious exegesis as that of Clement of Alexandria who maintained that a different Cephas was in view, or that of Origen who argued that the whole dispute between Peter and Paul was “simulated.”

Answer for yourself: What really went on in this incident at Antioch which is recorded in the New Testament from Paul's view only, and is it trustworthy? How can we be sure Paul's view as presented in the New Testament is correct?

Answer for yourself: Are there any other sources to illuminate this incident outside the New Testament, and do they confirm Paul's viewpoint or do they bring it into question?

Answer for yourself: What if you were to find that Paul's “viewpoint” is a gross distortion of the facts of the matter and in reality both Peter and Paul were BOTH rebuked by the men from James as the ambassadors of Yeshua's church?

Answer for yourself: Why would James, the Lord's brother and head of the Jerusalem Church, command Jewish believers not to continue to eat with non-Jewish believers?

Answer for yourself: Is it possible that non-Jewish believers were sinning when they were eating and sharing table fellowship with the Jews, and in doing so tempting the Jews to follow in their sinful ways?

Answer for yourself: It is possible that at table fellowship in Antioch, between Jewish believers and non-Jewish believers, that important parts of the Laws of Noah from the Covenant of Noah, which were binding upon all non-Jewish believers, were being violated by Paul and his churches?

Answer for yourself: What if you were to find that it was Peter and Barnabas, Paul's close traveling companions, who were the ones to repent after the rebuke from the Jerusalem Church and that it was Paul who defiantly resisted the mother church's instruction?

WHAT IS TRUTH?

Dear reader I will prove to you as we conclude this series of articles on the incident at Antioch that Paul's defiance to conform to the Church's mandate is masked in the New Testament and is recorded in a distorted one-sided account in Galatians 2. Without these facts that I will show, the casual reader of

the New Testament reads this "one-sided" pro-Pauline account and arrives at the wrong conclusion concerning the matter. One will read **Paul's self-defense** in his epistle and be led to believe Paul is right and that Peter and Barnabas is wrong. **You must remember that this event at Antioch occurred after the cross of Christ and the decision brought from the Jerusalem Church is the dogma and doctrine that was to enforced on both Jew and non-Jew long after Yeshua's resurrection. That brings a lot of weigh to what the Jerusalem Church taught and SHOULD matter to Christians as the followers of this "Christ" today.**

We need to LISTEN to what the Apostles said in this matter which was in reality both a rebuke to Peter, Barnabas, and Paul as well. We have no letters from Peter and Barnabas on this issue that has survived and only have Paul's account which is definitely one-sided. Let us examine other materials which have survived which paint an entirely different picture of the matter and exposes the truth which is a direct contradiction of Paul's account. **Millions of Christians read the account of Paul's slander of the "Judaizers" and "false brethren" of which Paul speaks; never knowing that Paul is referring to the "pillars" from the Jerusalem Church in Galatians chapter 2 and are led to believe that Paul is right, never knowing that those he attacks and slanders are the Jerusalem Apostles who knew Yeshua best and walked with him for 40 days following his resurrection. Sadly the other side of the coin is not presented in the New Testament but believe me it does exist. So in the light of the fact that the Roman Church, wishing to promote Gentile religion over Biblical and Jewish faith, did not include both accounts of the incident at Antioch when they put the New Testament together. So what else is new? I will, and it is my hope that our readership will understand that this issue at Antioch goes to the very heart of the Olive Tree of Israel and how the non-Jew is to relate to the people of God.**

LOOKING AT GALATIANS UNDER THE MICROSCOPE

Gal 2:1-16

1 Then fourteen years after I went up again to Jerusalem with Barnabas, and took Titus with me also.

2 And I went up by revelation, and communicated unto them that gospel which I preach among the Gentiles, but privately to them which were of reputation, lest by any means I should run, or had run, in vain.

3 But neither Titus, who was with me, being a Greek, was compelled to be circumcised:

4 And that because of false brethren unawares brought in, who came in privily to spy out our liberty which we have in Christ Jesus, that they might bring us into bondage:

5 To whom we gave place by subjection, no, not for an hour; that the truth of the gospel might continue with you.

6 But of these who seemed to be somewhat, (whatsoever they were, it maketh no matter to me: God accepteth no man's person:) for they who seemed to be somewhat in conference added nothing to me:

7 But contrariwise, when they saw that the gospel of the uncircumcision was committed unto me, as the gospel of the circumcision was unto Peter;

8 (For he that wrought effectually in Peter to the Apostleship of the circumcision, the same was mighty in me toward the Gentiles:)

9 And when James, Cephas, and John, who seemed to be pillars, perceived the grace that was given unto me, they gave to me and Barnabas the right hands of fellowship; that we should go unto the heathen, and they unto the circumcision.

10 Only they would that we should remember the poor; the same which I also was forward to do.

11 But when Peter was come to Antioch, I withstood him to the face, because he was to be blamed.

12 For before that certain came from James, he did eat with the Gentiles: but when they were come, he withdrew and separated himself, fearing them which were of the circumcision.

13 And the other Jews dissembled likewise with him; insomuch that Barnabas also was carried away with their dissimulation.

14 But when I saw that they walked not uprightly according to the truth of the gospel, I said unto Peter before them all, If thou, being a Jew, livest after the manner of Gentiles, and not as do the Jews, why compellest thou the Gentiles to live as do the Jews?

15 We who are Jews by nature, and not sinners of the Gentiles,

16 Knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the law, but by the faith of Jesus Christ, even we have believed in Jesus Christ, that we might be justified by the faith of Christ, and not by the works of the law: for by the works of the law shall no flesh be justified.

First of all you need to know that when the men from James came to Antioch they rebuked not only Paul, but Peter and Barnabas as well for violating their Covenant and its Covenant Laws! Not only that, but the non-Jews as well as they had been led to compromise their Covenant responsibilities under God according to the Laws of Noah and the Covenant of Noah! Paul is right in saying that before the men from James arrived Peter did eat with the Gentiles and it was this compromise at Jew-Gentile table fellowship which violated Covenant Laws. It will become more apparent as we proceed which Laws were violated and are yet violated today.

What I want you to notice in the beginning is Paul' testimony that Peter repented (along with Barnabas) and withdrew and separated himself from eating with the Gentiles which had been taught wrong by Paul. They left Paul's fellowship and moved the church next door!

This occurred after the Cross of Christ and is a major statement on how the Church of Yeshua understood how they, the people of God, were to relate and accept the non-Jew into fellowship within Yeshua's church.

Answer for yourself: What has changed since then?

Answer for yourself: Should we not listen to what the ambassadors from Yeshua's Church have to say about how we, non-Jewish believers in God through the ministry of Yeshua, are to be "accepted" in the church of Yeshua?

Answer for yourself: If when listening to the message of the "men from James" we find that we as non-Jewish believers in God, have not "separated" ourselves from the very same activities that we encounter in the Antioch incident, are we then truly "accepted" by God although we feel accepted by our "denominational churches"?

Answer for yourself: Do our denominational churches today have greater authority than the "men from James", and if you believe they do, then where do you find that they get it?

Answer for yourself: Is it possible we have **lost the true message of Yeshua** and his followers after 1700 years of Gentile control of the Church of Yeshua?

Answer for yourself: How much has this "one-sided" account of Paul, among many others, as presented in the New Testament, prevented you from learning the truth about how Yeshua's Church would have accepted or rejected **you** into the people of God twenty years after Yeshua's death?

Answer for yourself: How does it feel to realize that you might be in good standing with your Baptist, Lutheran, Methodist, or your Catholic Church, but in Heaven not accepted by God in His assembly (Yeshua's Church)

because you are yet guilty of the same conduct as were the Galatian non-Jews and you don't know it? Serious questions I must say!

IS ANY OF THIS MAKING SENSE TO YOU YET?

Answer for yourself: Can we assume that Peter accepted Paul's rebuke and amended his conduct? Or is the truth closer that Peter and Barnabas accepted the men from James' rebuke and altered their conduct and that Paul's defiance is cloaked in a supposed "rebuke" of Peter and Paul's later self-defenses in the Book of Galatians and Romans? Sadly millions trust this New Testament document for Divine truth when it can be shown to be "fixed" in hundreds of places. We have lost so much due to anti-Semitism and the Roman Church and "their documents: <http://geocities.com/faithofyeshua>.

Answer for yourself: What was the actual conduct that was "exposed" that caused Peter and Barnabas and the Gentile followers of Paul to repent and leave Paul's fellowship in Galatia?

Answer for yourself: What was the dynamics that would later cause Paul to say in 2 Tim 1:15: "thou knowest, that all they which are in Asia (a whole continent) be turned away from me (Paul)"? READ THAT AGAIN!

Answer for yourself: If Peter did not heed Paul but the men from James, what does that tell us about the development of Paul's missionary work, about his subsequent relations with Jerusalem and Peter, about factions within first-century Christianity (Peter and Paul parties, etc.)?

Answer for yourself: Did you ever stop to think that it was the Jerusalem Church and the Apostles which were responsible for Paul's troubles to which he refers constantly? Any wonder why "the Jews" are painted in such a negative light as if they did not know any better?

Dear one these issues were first raised in their present sharp form by the work of F. C. Baur, Paul: His Life and Works (1845); ET 2 vols: London/Edinburgh: Williams and Norgate, 1873). I learned of this in Seminary as we spent 2 minutes on it. I, being inquisitive, later investigated this on my own. It seemed important to me and hopefully you understand the immense repercussions that such knowledge can make if one has it. This is not new material only materials that you have NOT yet been exposed to as of yet. The New Testament presents one perspective; I assure you that opposing this "one view" is the testimony of Moses, the Prophets, and even Jesus that assures us that the Law and Covenants of God have not passed away in spite of what other "self-appointed" authorities of God might say. For centuries men have seen behind the deception of Galatians 2 and Paul's rebuke of Peter and it is time you do as well.

WHAT WAS THE NATURE OF THE TABLE-FELLOWSHIP THAT CAUSED THE PAULINE AND PETER SPLIT?

Answer for yourself: Again, where does the Antioch incident fit within the history of that period?

Answer for yourself: Can we assume that it formed the impetus to the Jerusalem council recounted by Luke in Acts 15?

Answer for yourself: Or is the issue more complex, with the historicity of Acts being called in question in part at least by Paul's account?

For all that the significance of the Antioch incident has been recognized in many such discussions, there has been remarkably little detailed work done on the incident itself. The question of whether or not Galatians 2.1-10 is an accurate portrayal of Acts 15 has been overlooked by many. And when commentators or historians have moved on to the Antioch incident they have not paused long over what must on any reckoning be a crucial question: What was the nature of the table-fellowship that Peter enjoyed with the Gentile believers?

Answer for yourself: What was involved in this table-fellowship which was so unacceptable to the men from James?

Answer for yourself: What precisely did he withdraw from when the men from James arrived?

EXISTING TABLE FELLOWSHIP OF THE JEW AND NON-JEW AT ANTIOCH

The ready assumption by most is that the whole Antioch incident was all simply a matter of the **Jewish food laws** and little more need be said. But was it quite so simple? Is this not another exegetical assumption which ought to be examined more closely? **Without some clearer idea of what table-fellowship at Antioch involved prior to Peter's withdrawal, our grasp of what was at stake is seriously defective, and consequently also our ability to assess the significance of Peter's and Paul's conduct. You need to understand that the issues involved at table fellowship at Antioch involved commandments and conduct described in the Laws of Noah. The Laws of Noah and the Covenant of Noah is the Covenant whereby the non-Jew finds his standing before God! If the non-Jew converts to Judaism then he "moves up" so to speak, but Covenant relationship with God is determined by how one fulfills his Covenant responsibilities! It was these Commandments given by God to all non-Jews long before the Laws of Moses which Paul had compromised and was teaching others to do the same. Thus the consternation of the Jerusalem church over this incident and Paul.**

At that time of the Antioch incident many of these "Commandments" given to the non-Jew as seen expressed in various "conducts" had been relaxed by Paul to his church and even Peter and Barnabas had been "taken in" by such violations of these Commandments in the name of "winning souls". God was not pleased that His Commandments were violated and broken in the name of "ministry" and such goes on today almost everywhere today in the Christian Church which has forsaken Judaism and the non-Jew's relationship to God within it. Instead, the Gentile Church "created another way" and walks in it today; never questioning is if "this new way" is accepted by God. The horror of such actions is masked by documents altered from the "original truths" once held by the Jerusalem Church and the Apostles, let alone Yeshua.

It is toward this area and aspect that I wish to focus in what follows. My belief that such an investigation is necessary is the product of reflection on several overlapping and wider issues, a reflection stimulated by various items of recent scholarship. The overlapping and wider issues inform us of the broader historical context within which we must attempt to assess if we are truly to understand the Antioch incident and will engage our attention in future articles in this series. In the light of our findings there we will attempt some exegesis of Galatians 2.11-18 in the hope of clarifying the incident itself, including the reasons for Peter's conduct and the force of Paul's response. Finally we shall consider possible implications for some of the more familiar questions connected with this passage.

Now let us continue on to deeper matters that will reflect on the non-Jew's relationship or lack of relationship with Yeshua's Church as seen from the eyes of the men from Jerusalem which reflect the mandate of the head Pastor of Yeshua's Church...James the Righteous...Yeshua's brother.

Shalom.



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PAUL'S REBUKE OF PETER ...HAS THE NT MISREPRESENTED THE TRUTH BEHIND THE INCIDENT AT ANTIOCH? #6

THE HISTORICAL CONTEXT SURROUNDING THE ANTIOCH INCIDENT

The Antioch incident is usually dated in the late 40s of the first century, depending of course on such questions as the date of the Jerusalem council (Acts 15) and the relation between Galatians 2 and Acts 15. Scholars usually date anywhere between 43 C.E. and 51 C.E., but the majority of scholars prefer 48 C.E. or 49 C.E. as the most probable date (R. Jewett, Dating Paul's Life [Philadelphia: Fortress/London: SCM, 1979,1-2]. Since the crisis at Antioch was provoked by the arrival of "certain individuals from James" (Gal. 2.12), that is, from Jerusalem, it is important to clarify the relationship between the church in Jerusalem and the church in Antioch at that time, and to examine possible influences on these churches from the broader social and political situation within Palestine and within Palestinian and Diaspora Judaism. But for our further study you need to understand that most likely the **Antioch Incident occurred in the late 40's and it was the impetus for the acts 15 Jerusalem Council which was quickly to follow in 48-49 C.E.** It would be at this time and at this council that dogma would be decided that would determine how the non-Jew was to be "included" in the Olive Tree of Israel without complete conversion to Judaism. Dear one, this "Jerusalem decree" is the binding and loosing the Bible teaches about in the Old Testament and legally binding with God and His representatives regardless of what your particular denominational by-laws decree today. This is where most Christians miss it. They can be in good standing with their Pastor and Church today but totally disobedient to the Heavenly decree of James and the Jerusalem Church and not know it because they lack the necessary information about what truly went on with Peter, Paul, and the men from James.

THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE JERUSALEM CHURCH AND THE CHURCH AT ANTIOCH

One of the major weaknesses in many reconstructions of Christian origins and New Testament theology has been the failure to grasp the full racial and nationalistic dimensions of the early disputes within Christianity. As K. Stendahl pointed out in a famous essay, The Apostle Paul and the Introspective Conscience of the West, Harvard Theological Review 56 (1963) 199-215, Paul's teaching on justification through faith was not intended as an answer to a Luther-like agonizing after personal assurance of salvation. **Paul's concern was rather with the relation between Jew and Gentile. His question was not, How can I be saved?, but, How can Gentiles be included within the messianic community of Israel?**

You most likely need to read the above statement again.

If you can you need to procure for yourself K. Stendahl's Paul Among Jews And Gentiles And Other Essays

(Philadelphia: Fortress/London: SCM, 1976).

Stendal brings out clearly that this essentially racial or nationalistic concept of righteousness as a consequence of God's election of and covenant with Israel. This concept is further illuminated and received fresh illumination from the major study by E. P. Sanders with his characterization of Palestinian Judaism in terms of 'covenantal nomism' (Paul and Palestinian Judaism: A Comparison Of Patterns Of Religions (London: SCM, 1977). The heart of the book and Sanders' message is so needed to be heard by the Christian Church today.

Sanders teaches that one's place in God's plan is established on the basis of the covenant and that the covenant requires as the proper response of man his obedience to the covenant's commandments, while providing means of atonement for transgression (p. 75). One's intention and effort to be obedient constitutes the conditions of remaining in the covenant (p. 180).

This at first might not sound alarming but when you study our series of articles on the Christian and his covenant, and see how the New Testament has misrepresented the "new" or "renewed" covenant which has not occurred according to the Prophet Jeremiah regardless of what the unknown writer of the book of Hebrews attest, then one should be rather scared at the implications of such facts.

You can read all the Essene materials you want and see they thought themselves representatives of this "New Covenant" since they rejected Judaism in toto and the Temple-Priesthood. Don't look now, but if you are really familiar with their writings they are totally discredited as "falsehoods" since their prophecies failed and this relegates them to an ever growing company of "false teachers" according to the Torah. You need to learn the truth about the Essenes and their "New Covenant," because when they converted in mass to the Jesus movement following Yeshua's death, they brought their "New Covenant" theology with them. They simply were wrong as history attests! Their writings are equally wrong and is little more than apocalyptic star-wars religion. Read some good books on them; take L. Schiffman's Reclaiming the Dead Sea Scrolls to get an accurate picture of how reliable their writings were and if they are to be trusted and believed today.

The Christian today literally stands apart from God without a Covenant in force for he is either ignorant of or rejects the only Covenant God gave to him. Being totally ignorant of the Covenant God made with the non-Jew and its stipulations and responsibilities placed upon the non-Jewish believer, he is unable to recognize and fulfill its obligations. No intention or effort is made at all to remain in a Covenant that you are not aware your in. One needs only to look at the anti-Semitism of the Catholic Church for the last 1800 years and how it influenced the writing and collection of the New Testament to understand how such truths were lost. If you want this series to see the horrible facts for themselves let us know. Now back to the Antioch incident.

The point you need to see and understand is this: that earliest Christianity was not yet seen as something separate and distinct from Judaism. It was a sect, like other sects within first-century Judaism. The first Christians had some distinct and peculiar beliefs about Yeshua; but their religion was the religion of the Jews! This important and forgotten aspect needs to be researched by every Christian alive today. Let me suggest you begin your study by reading L.H. Schiffman, "At the Crossroads: Tannaitic Perspectives on the Jewish-Christian Schism", Jewish and Christian Self-Definition, Vol. II, Aspects of Judaism in the Graeco-Roman Period (ed. E. P. Sanders; London: SCM Press 1981) 115-156.

What the Christian Church must come to understand is that when Gentiles began to embrace these particular beliefs about Yeshua the question raised was still only in terms of what requirements were necessary for Gentiles to join themselves to the people who worshipped the one God. Historically the question was not "have you asked Yeshua into your heart?", "have you accepted the blood of Yeshua for your sin?", or "do you believe in Yeshua?" You might be amazed to find that these questions which seem to fill our pulpits today had no relevancy to the earliest Church of Jerusalem because such theologies had not yet been attached to Yeshua's life and death by his followers. Owing to Paul's teaching on these issues, and his drawing from mystery religions much of this teaching which he only reiterates to the non-Jews already familiar with such "beliefs," such will basically become the message and fruit of the non-Jewish Churches after the destruction of the Temple in 70

C.E. in the vacuum caused by the absence of the Jewish Authorities. The Gentiles would draw upon their prior pagan concepts of salvation and apply them to Yeshua. Since the canonization of the New Testament was entirely a Gentile endeavor it is not surprising that such traditions survive today as written in and among the scattered truths about Yeshua in the New Testament.

Contrary to what you have heard or even read in the forged New Testament, a Roman creationism, Paul's main argument in Galatians is about how one becomes Abraham's offspring, heir of his blessing (Gal. 3—4) and not how a non-Jew is "saved". **As I will show you as we go along, circumcision was only one aspect of that debate concerning the Gentile's inclusion into the Israel of God, and it was probably the incident at Antioch which helped sharpen the issues for Paul as well as the Jerusalem Church.**

Now something else that is of major importance when viewing the New Testament. This nationalistic dimension (Jew-Gentile relationship and table-fellowship) to the earliest development of Christianity within Judaism also helps us to recognize that **the church at Antioch would not have seen itself as an entity independent of the Jews or of the Jewish believers in Palestine.** It was simply the believing Jewish community at Antioch embracing more and more God-fearing Gentiles. The fact that the new movement was first given a distinctive name in Antioch (Christians-Acts 11:26) **need not imply a distinction between the new movement and the synagogue, but only a distinction within Judaism.** The absence of any mention of hostility from synagogue authorities in Antioch against the "Christians" in any of our sources is to be understood as very significant! **This means that the first non-Jewish believers in God through the ministry of the followers of Yeshua understood that they were a part of Biblical Judaism and were now included in the Israel of God and not a part of something "new" and "different" as apart from Judaism! This is a major statement with profound consequences to the Christian Churches today. They did not consider themselves a "new" denomination!**

Almost certainly the majority at heart would simply think of themselves as part of the Diaspora, with Jerusalem still serving as a source of pride and inspiration and a focus for faith and aspirations - despite the persecution which had forced many of the founding members to flee from the capital city (Acts 11.19-20). **Stephen's views as represented in Acts 7 should not be understood as calling for an abandoning of Judaism. On the contrary they can be readily understood as a recall to a more primitive and purified form of Judaism. This would also involve the church at Antioch recognizing the church at Jerusalem as the fountainhead of their distinctive faith (cf. Rom. 15.27) and probably also as the authoritative interpreter of it. This is why when the men from James appeared and rebuked the church which had been taught its own version of Pauline Christianity, the church repented. The Jews removed themselves from table fellowship which included meats sacrificed to idols, meats that had not been tithed of correctly, and although not given to non-Jews, they non-Jewish believers took upon themselves the commandments concerning meats which had not been killed rabbinically according to Commandments concerning how the blood was to be drained from the meat before eating. This was given to Jews and if non-Jews were to share table-fellowship then this would have to be observed by them as well. All these issues are dealt with in the Laws of Noah. The failure of the Church of Antioch to adhere to these Commandments affected not only the non-Jew since they were included in the Laws of Noah but the Jews as well as they again were included in the Laws of Moses. And the Church at Antioch and its failure to observe such "necessary" things which "seemed good to the Holy Ghost" can be traced to Paul's leadership; or should I say lack of leadership! Later we will look at each of these issues in detail.**

WHAT DOES THAT MEAN TO ME...A NON-JEWISH BELIEVER TODAY?

This means we today must listen to Jerusalem before we listen to Paul and Antiochian echoes. Sadly the Christian Church of today has it just backwards and this explains the mess we have in the world today which is the direct result of Gentile Christianity's theology of grace without Law. In other words the problems we find today in the Christian World are directly traceable to the Antiochian influence over the Jerusalem influence. It was never meant to be this way but such is the fruit of the anti-Semitism of the Gentile juggernaut called the

Christian Church since the 3rd century.

PAUL'S RELATIONSHIP WITH THE JERUSALEM CHURCH BEFORE THE ANTIOCH INCIDENT...PAUL IN THE BEGINNING WAS DEPENDENT UPON JERUSALEM

Most significant here is the degree to which Paul's treatment of his own relations with Jerusalem prior to the Antioch incident reinforces the impression that up until the incident over "table-fellowship" at Antioch Paul too had taken it for granted that Jerusalem had this primacy and authority. I refer to the character of Paul's self-defense in Galatians 1-2. Prior to this event Paul was in the middle so to speak. He wanted his Gentile followers to see his "independence" from the authority of Jerusalem but yet was depended upon Jerusalem's recognition for the validity of his mission and his authority among the Gentiles. The dialectic between being independent of and being acknowledged by Jerusalem and James is the keynote of this important text and must not be forgotten. If this is news to you I suggest you read B. Holmberg's Paul and Power: the Structure of Authority in the Primitive Church as Reflected in the Pauline Epistles.

In Galatians Paul is writing AFTER the incident at Antioch, after his rebuke by the men of James, and after the Jerusalem Council which reaffirmed the Laws of Noah, and his antagonist exposition toward "law" is heavily colored by that later viewpoint. But in trying to assert his independence from Jerusalem, and the directness of his Apostleship and gospel from Christ, he cannot escape the fact that previously he had readily acknowledged the authority of the Jerusalem apostles. We have by Paul's own hand his testimony in Gal. 1:18 that "after three years I went up to Jerusalem to see Peter and abode with him fifteen days." Peter, the apostle who knew Yeshua best, was sought out as well as James, Yeshua's brother by Paul. Later in the same epistle we have Paul's admission again in 2:1: "Then fourteen years after I went up again to Jerusalem with Barnabas, and took Titus with me also. Andcommunicated unto them that gospel which I preach among the Gentiles, but privately to them which were of reputation, lest by any means I should run, or had run in vain".

Let me show you how Paul was dependent upon the Jerusalem Church, at least at first before he will later break away from the Apostolic decrees made at the Acts 15 Council. In Gal. 1:16 Paul states that he "conferred" not with flesh and blood in the beginning following his revelation but would do so three years later.

4323 prosanatithemi-

- 1) to lay upon in addition to
- 2) to lay upon oneself in addition
 - a) to undertake besides
 - b) to put oneself upon another by going to him,**
 - c) to commit or to betake oneself to another for the purpose of consulting him**
 - d) to consult, to take one into counsel**
 - e) to add from one's store**
- 3) to communicate, to impart

Paul's use of the word "prosanatithemi" (to consult in order to be given an authoritative interpretation) in 1.16 is an implicit acknowledgment that the Jerusalem apostles were recognized by him at that time as the appropriate authorities to consult on the interpretation of the revelation given him at Damascus - the point (as he now insists) being that he had not consulted them (1:16-17). He does not disguise the fact that his first visit to

Jerusalem had been 'to get information from Cephas' in Gal. 1:18), though the information was evidently something different from the gospel already received three years earlier through the revelation of Christ (1:12). The purpose of his second visit to Jerusalem was to consult the Jerusalem leadership about "his" gospel, but he does not hide the fact that what they thought or decided about his gospel would make all the difference to the success or failure of his mission to the Gentiles. The point is not that Paul's gospel might be judged invalid, but that its effect among the Gentiles might be nullified. So without a doubt one can see Paul yielding to Peter, James, and the Jerusalem Church in both of his visits. This means that Paul was in subjection to the Jerusalem authorities from Yeshua's Church and this is the way it should be. Sadly all this would change later after the Antioch incident.

The language Paul uses in Gal. 2.2 and 2:6 indicates a certain embarrassment at this admission. He calls the Jerusalem apostles "the men of repute", a phrase familiar in political rhetoric, where it was used both positively and negatively. The parenthesis of verse 6, with its noticeable change of tense - 'what they were (then) is (now) a matter of indifference to me; God shows no partiality' - is all aimed at curtailing the authority of the Jerusalem apostles in the current situation in Galatia and at reducing the significance of his earlier acceptance of that authority (D.M.Hay, "Paul's Indifference to Authority", JBL 88 (1969) 37-8; Betz, Galatians 94-95). Likewise when he says "those of repute added nothing to me" (2.6), there again the language indicates an acknowledgment on his part at that time of Jerusalem's 'right' to instruct or give directives to its daughter churches. So too, it can plausibly be argued that Paul's convoluted statement in verses 7-10 is a further attempt to obscure the degree to which Paul had been willing to accept Jerusalem's authority at that time as clearly expressed in the pillar apostles' recognition of Paul's and Barnabas' missionary success and their approval of a future division of labor (Bruce, Paul, 154, and Betz, Galatians, 96-103). All this points strongly to the conclusion that while Paul defended a position at Jerusalem, the three 'pillar' apostles delivered a verdict.

Moreover, there is a growing agreement on the view that when Paul went up to Jerusalem this second time it was not as an independent missionary or apostle, but as a delegate from the church at Antioch (so Acts 15:2; cf. 14:4, 14 - 'apostles', that is, of the church at Antioch, 13:2-3). The question discussed at the meeting in Jerusalem was not primarily whether Paul (and Barnabas) were apostles, but whether as apostles of Antioch their practice of not circumcising their converts should continue - that is, whether the church of Antioch's practice of according full acceptance to uncircumcised Gentile believers should continue without modification. The victory or rather concession won by the Antioch delegation did not call in question the authority of the Jerusalem apostles to make this concession. The point is that the church at Antioch could not make this decision by themselves, and readily referred it to Jerusalem. And when subsequently the delegation came from James, the majority of believers in Antioch just as readily accepted the authority of this further ruling regarding the practice of table-fellowship at Antioch. Paul would not and this is where the problem comes into play which would cause the quick meeting of the Acts 15 Church Council to settle the matter.

This nationalistic dimension to the Antioch incident becomes still more significant in the light of the second feature of the broader historical context to which we now turn.


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PAUL'S REBUKE OF PETER ...HAS THE NT MISREPRESENTED THE TRUTH BEHIND THE INCIDENT AT ANTIOCH? #7

WHAT MOTIVATED THE MEN FROM JAMES TO REBUKE PETER, BARNABAS, AND PAUL OVER EATING WITH GENTILES?

During the period which concerns us, many Jews, no doubt a growing proportion within the Jewish territories, must have believed their distinctive religious and national prerogatives were under increasing threat. The long, drawn out crisis provoked by Caligula's insistence that a statue of himself be set up in the Jerusalem temple is well known (AD 40). And later, after the death of Agrippa in AD 44, the situation deteriorated rapidly under a succession of weak Roman procurators. Cuspius Fadus (AD 44-46) demanded that the vestments of the High Priest be returned to the Romans for safe-keeping (Josephus, Antiquities 20.1.1 §6) and had to act against the threatened rebellion led by the self-styled prophet Theudas (Antiquities 20.5.1 §§97-9). Tiberius Julius Alexander (AD 46-48) crucified James and Simon, the sons of Judas the Galilean, presumably because, like their father, they were engaged in fomenting unrest against Roman rule on account of its threat to their faith (Antiquities 20.5.2 §102). Under Cumanus (AD 48-52) things went from bad to worse, with a near riot in Jerusalem resulting in thousands of deaths (20,000 or 30,000 according to Josephus - Jewish War 2.12.1 §§223-7; Antiquities 20.5.3 §§105-12), and a succession of disorders involving zealot bands in Samaria and elsewhere (Jewish War 2.12.2-5 §§228-38; Antiquities 20.5.4-6 §§11-24). Josephus reports that "from that time the whole of Judea was infested with bands of brigands" (Antiquities 20.6.1 §124) - 'brigands' being Josephus' way of describing the Zealots."

INTENSIFIED NATIONALISM AND THE PUSH TO REMAIN SANCTIFIED KEPT THE JEWS APART FROM GENTILES

The followers of Yeshua within Palestine would not have been unaffected by these mounting pressures. The death of Stephen and the subsequent persecution (early or middle 30s) presumably had the effect of ensuring that those followers of the Nazarene who had been exempted from the persecution, or who had returned to Jerusalem thereafter, would take care to show themselves good Jews, loyal to their religious and national heritage. Agrippa's execution of James (brother of John) in or before AD 44 is presumably also to be explained against this background; Luke notes that 'it pleased the Jews' and encouraged Agrippa to move against Peter (Acts 12.1-3).

Furthermore, we should bear in mind that such pressures towards conformity with the mainstream of nationalistic Judaism were experienced as much within the infant Christian communities as from without. It is not simply a matter of coincidence that in the preceding episode involving Peter prior to his arrest, Peter had been criticized by the circumcision party for eating with an uncircumcised Gentile (Acts 11:2-3). We

need to understand that nowhere in the Torah is the Jew commanded not to eat with the Gentile; however, several Commandments from the Laws of Moses and the Laws of Noah deal with the "requirements" for food and table fellowship. This is the issue here and not just simply eating with non-Jews. The subsequent controversy over the necessity of circumcision clearly indicates that many Jewish believers took it as axiomatic that Gentiles must be circumcised if they were to have a share in the Jewish heritage, and were prepared to exercise considerable advocacy and missionary endeavor to ensure that that heritage was neither diluted nor endangered.

EXAMPLES

In Acts 15:1 we have the statement that "certain men which came down from Judea taught the brethren, and said, Except ye be circumcised after the manner of Moses ye cannot be saved".

In Acts 15: 5 we have the statement that "But there rose up certain of the sect of the Pharisees which believed, saying 'That it was needful to circumcise them, and to command them to keep the law of Moses'".

These are just two examples of the Jews trying to preserve and protect their faith from dilution which they expected would happen once the flood gates were open to the acceptance of the non-Jews on such a wide basis. This was an effort to keep their faith sanctified, although wrong in some ways. The Jews, the Messianic Jewish Community within Judaism, could not continue to require and put circumcision upon the non-Jew because God never commanded it in the Laws of Noah. But again we must be smart enough to understand that certain Laws in the Covenant of Noah are not negotiable and are required of all non-Jews who come to saving faith in God. It was some of these Laws which Paul has relaxed in his efforts to win the non-Jews to "his" gospel. So when the men from James came and rebuked the condition of table fellowship as they saw it Paul defends his indefensible position by stating:

Gal 2:4-5

4 And that because of false brethren unawares brought in, who came in privily to spy out our liberty which we have in Christ Jesus, that they might bring us into bondage:

5 To whom we gave place by subjection, no, not for an hour; that the truth of the gospel might continue with you.

Let us not forget that these "false brethren" were the authorities from the Jerusalem Church and they were not there to remove any liberty that the non-Jews had in God through the ministry of Yeshua, but only to make sure that obedience to the Commandments of God was being enforced within that relationship which came to them through the instruction of ministers of the Jesus' movement. Paul is sure right in one thing; he would give then no submission for his stance was etched in stone. You must understand that Paul's "truth" which he wanted to continue with his followers is not the "truth" the Jerusalem Church of Yeshua wanted to continue at all!

Paul would even stoop so low as to call these "pillars" in the Jerusalem "dogs" in Phil. 3:2 where he warns his readers that these ambassadors for Christ were in reality "evil workers" and "dogs". Remember with me that it is these Apostles and disciples of Yeshua in Jerusalem who not only opposed Paul and "his" gospel which in many ways opposed the true gospel of Yeshua and his church, but "dogged" him during his travels to "undo" the errors that he was teaching. It is these same "Jews" that followed Paul and were responsible at time for his "stripes", beatings, and persecutions which Paul mentions in his epistles. **Think on that for a minute!** These were those who knew Yeshua personally who were diligent to make sure that they could "undo" the problems created by Paul.

Let me say again that imposing such circumcision upon the non-Jew is totally out of step with the Covenant of Noah and the Laws of Noah. Racial hatred of the non-Jew was the reason why such stringent requirements were put upon the non-Jews by the Jews in hopes of keeping them at arm's length.

Here too, we may note the evidence of the Gospel of Matthew, which indicates the conservative direction the law and Israel took in preserving the nation and its faith:

Matt 5:17

17 Think not that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfill.

Matt 23:3

3 All therefore whatsoever they bid you observe, that observe and do; but do not ye after their works: for they say, and do not.

Matt 10:5-6

5 These twelve Jesus sent forth, and commanded them, saying, Go not into the way of the Gentiles, and into any city of the Samaritans enter ye not:

6 But go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel.

Matt 15:24

24 But he answered and said, I am not sent but unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel.

Wholly consistent with all this, and not at all surprising in view of it, is Luke's account of Paul's last visit to Jerusalem (probably in AD 57), where James describes the church in Jerusalem (and Palestine) as consisting of 'many thousands . . . who are all zealous for the law' and who know of Paul only that he is a renegade and menace to their Jewish faith and inheritance (Acts 21:20-1).

The threat to Jewish prerogatives was, of course, not confined to Palestine, nor were Jewish exertions to defend them. Philo gives a clear account of the riots in Alexandria in AD 38, provoked by deliberate attacks on the religious and civic rights of the considerable Jewish population resident there (Flaccus particularly 41-54; also Embassy to Gaius 132-7). Delegations to the Emperor, the first led by Philo himself, resulted in a reassertion of these rights by Claudius in AD 41. In the same year, according to Dio Cassius, Claudius deprived the Jews resident in Rome of their right of assembly (Dio 60.6.6), and eight years later, according to Suetonius, he expelled the Jews altogether because they were 'constantly rioting at the instigation of Chrestus' (Suetonius, Claudius, 25.4; cf. Acts 18.2). Since all the other Jewish unrest of this period largely centered on Jewish response to what they perceived as threats to their unique racial and religious status, it may well be that the trouble in Rome was caused by similar Jewish reaction to the success of evangelism in the name of Yeshua, like that against Stephen and that against Paul (Acts 6:9-14; 21:27-36; cf. 13:50; 14:2-5, 19; 17:5-7, 13; 18:12-15).

Whatever the precise details of these various incidents the overall picture is clear enough. During the period in which the Antioch incident took place Jews had to be on their guard against what were seen to be repeated threats to their national and religious rights. Whenever such a threat was perceived their reaction was immediate and vigorous. In Palestine itself more and more were resorting to open violence and guerrilla warfare. The infant Christian sect was not exempt from this unrest. Indeed we may generalize a fairly firm conclusion from the above review of evidence: wherever this new Jewish sects belief or practice was perceived to be a threat to Jewish institutions and traditions its members would almost certainly come under pressure from their fellow Jews to remain loyal to their unique Jewish heritage.

The question which such a conclusion leaves us is obvious:

Answer for yourself: To what extent was the Antioch incident the result of such pressures operating upon the infant communities in Palestine and Syria, pressures from Jews loyal to their heritage both without and within the sect itself?

Against this background the hypothesis becomes rather compelling that the open table-fellowship practiced at Antioch was perceived by the Jerusalem church (and perhaps by other Jews) as such a threat. The mission of the men from James would then have been their reaction to that threat. And the danger of diluting or abandoning Israel's heritage with its converse and powerful appeal to national and religious loyalty would have weighed heavily with Peter, Barnabas and the rest.

One thing must not be overlooked here. Just before the Antioch incident Paul had returned from Jerusalem after 14 years having "won" the round concerning "circumcision" and the Messianic Community no longer would make it required for Gentile followers of HaShem. Yet Acts 15:1 links "circumcision" to the salvation of the non-Jew. This must be understood as the zealous reaction of fellow Jews from Jerusalem who were keenly aware of the threat the non-Jew presented to Judaism at present and there was a fraction within even the Messianic Movement which did not agree with James. But this issue between James and Paul had previously been worked out before Paul's return to Antioch. In fact in Acts 15:24 we have James' own admission that neither he nor his men gave any such commandment to fact that the non-Jew had to "be circumcised or keep the Law [understood as the Law of Moses as in full conversion] to be saved". Yet however dear one James never absolved the non-Jews from the Laws pertaining to them within the Covenant and Laws of Noah! It would be Paul who would do that!

IN CONCLUSION

Thus already a fair amount of light has been shed on the Antioch incident from the broader background. We may summarize these preliminary observations thus.

- At this stage of its growth, the new movement of Yeshua's followers would almost certainly still think of themselves as a development of and within the religion of the Jews (a form of eschatological, messianic Judaism) - not yet a distinct faith or separate religion.
- Within this Messianic Movement within Judaism, the primacy and authority of the Jerusalem apostles in matters of dispute, specifically over what requirements should be laid on Gentiles who wished to associate with the new movement, would be generally acknowledged, and in fact had already been acknowledged by the church at Antioch and by Paul, the delegate/apostle of the Antioch church.
- The increasing threat to Judaism, especially from the deteriorating political situation in Palestine, and the increasingly polemical response of the Jews themselves, would increase the pressures on those involved in the new movement to show themselves as faithful and loyal Jews. In short, the probability is strong that all the main participants in the Antioch incident would naturally think of themselves as first and foremost Jews (a probability confirmed by Gal. 2.15); as such they would naturally look to Jerusalem for direction when in doubt and not Paul; and as such they would inevitably feel themselves moved by the mounting groundswell of Jewish nationalistic and religious sentiment.

With the broader background thus clarified we can now dig more deeply into that which most concerns us - the table fellowship at Antioch.

Answer for yourself: What was at stake in the Antioch church's practice of table-fellowship?

Answer for yourself: Within the context of Palestinian and Diaspora Judaism in the middle of the first century AD, how would the table-fellowship at Antioch have appeared? - as something unexceptional, as something very unusual, as a breach of Jewish practice and covenantal loyalty which posed a threat, or what?

Answer for yourself: We are accustomed to seeing the issue through the eyes of Paul (Gal. 2.11-18). But how was it seen through the eyes of "the men from James"?

This brings us to the next stage of our analysis.



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PAUL'S REBUKE OF PETER ...HAS THE NT MISREPRESENTED THE TRUTH BEHIND THE INCIDENT AT ANTIOCH? #8

WHAT WERE THE LIMITS OF TABLE-FELLOWSHIP IN THE JUDAISM OF THE LATE SECOND TEMPLE PERIOD?

The significance of table-fellowship in the east is well known. In Judaism particularly the religious significance of a shared meal was central. 'In Judaism', as Jeremias notes, "**table-fellowship means fellowship before God, for the eating of a piece of broken bread by everyone who shares in the meal brings out the fact that they all have a share in the blessing which the master of the house has spoken over the unbroken bread**" (J.Jeremias, New Testament Theology. Vol. I. "The Proclamation Of Jesus" (1971; ET London: SCM, 1971) 115. The added significance for the rabbis and their pupils is well characterized in a saying of R. Simeon (c. 100-160 or 170):

If three have eaten at one table and have not spoken over it words of the Law, it is as though they had eaten of the sacrifices of the dead (Ps. 106:28), for it is written, 'For all tables are full of vomit and filthiness without God' (Isa. 28:8 - 'place' taken as a designation for God). But if three have eaten at one table and have spoken over it words of the Law, it is as if they had eaten from the table of God, for it is written, 'And he said unto me, This is the table that is before the Lord' (Ezek. 41:22). (m. Abot 3.3)

No devout Jew could engage in an act of such religious significance casually, and the question of who was and who was not an acceptable table companion must have greatly exercised the minds of such Jews during the period which concerns us, as the Antioch incident itself demonstrates (cf. Acts 11:2-3; 1 Cor: 8-10).

Acts 11:2-3

2 And when Peter was come up to Jerusalem, they that were of the circumcision contended with him,

3 Saying, Thou wentest in to men uncircumcised, and didst eat with them.

To put it another way, part of the pressure on a devout Jew in the 40s and 50s of the first century AD would have been the compulsion to observe the limits of acceptable table-fellowship. These limits would be determined partly by two things:

- The explicit laws in the Torah, particularly concerning unclean foods (Lev. 11:1-23; Deut. 14:321), and
- The multiplying halakoth of the oral tradition concerning tithes and ritual purity.

THE ANTIOCH CHURCH AND THEIR OBEDIENCE TO THE LAWS OF NOAH AND THE LAWS OF MOSES

Basically the issue we are facing is if under the teachings of Paul was the Antioch Church, containing both Jewish and non-Jewish believers, observing and keeping the respective Laws of their respective Covenants. You will come to see that both the Jew and the non-Jew were in violation of their respective Covenants and one must look to the teacher who failed to instruct properly; in this case we must confront Paul for what he was actually doing and teaching which was contrary to both the Jew's and non-Jew's respective Covenant stipulations. The New Testament, and especially epistles from Paul's perspective, give a certain "spin" to the story, but research in both Covenants and their respective requirements are very telling in the gathering of truth and exposing Paul's apostasy!

BACKGROUND...THE COVENANT AND LAWS OF NOAH FOR THE NON-JEW

Some basic background information into the Laws of Noah concerning abstaining from eating the limb of a living animal will be very helpful at this point in our study. There is some discussion as to whether or not the prohibition of eating the limb of a living animal was originally given to Adam, the first man. One opinion states that it was included in the original commandment forbidding the eating of the fruit of the tree of knowledge of good and evil (Babylonian Talmud, Sanhedrin 56 b). According to this opinion, Adam, who was clearly given vegetation for food, as it is written, "And God said, Behold I have given you every herb bearing seed which is upon the face of the whole earth, and every tree upon which there is fruit of a tree bearing seed, to you these shall be for food" (Gen. 1:29), **was not forbidden to eat meat, but was merely forbidden to kill animals for food.** If the animal had died of itself, it was permissible as food (Babylonian Talmud, Sanhedrin 56 b). What Noah was given, therefore, was permission to kill animals for food, but he was forbidden by God to eat the flesh of any animal while the animal was still alive (Gen. 9:4, Commentary on Rashi). According to the other opinion, Adam had received six of the Seven Universal Laws and had been forbidden to eat the flesh of an animal in any manner. Only after the Flood was the leniency of permitting animal flesh instituted (Mishneh Torah, Laws of Kings, chapter 9, law 1).

This commandment is explicit, as it is written, "Every moving thing that lives shall be for you for food; just as the green herbs, I have given you everything. But flesh with its living soul, its blood, you shall not eat" (Gen. 9:3-4). This means that an animal's soul is contained in its blood and it is this soul/blood that God was forbidding man to drink animal blood. The life is in the blood and it is this life that God has given as an atonement. One should realize that when "blood" is mentioned it is truly meaning something deeper; it means the soul atones. One's life, his soul, atones in his actions and repentance following his sin. There are studies on this on the net explaining how Christianity has misunderstood this concept and how the Jews have got it right all along! The vitalizing animal soul is contained within the blood, and this is what the commandment refers to, for when an animal dies, this vitalizing soul departs. So long as this vitalizing soul remains within the animal, its flesh is forbidden to man as food (Lev. 17:14, commentary of Rashi; Gen. 9:4, commentary of S. R. Hirsh).

At first glance, this commandment seems peculiarly out of place as one of the Seven Universal Laws. How can eating the limb of an animal take its place side by side with such monumental principles of human morality as those prohibiting idolatry or murder? Besides a few scattered sociological perversions in Africa and China, one is hard put to imagine who would even consider eating an animal's meat while the animal lives.

And yet this is precisely why this commandment may well epitomize the spirit of the Seven Universal Laws. **Although mankind is enjoined to obey the Seven Laws of Noah along with their specific commandments as they appear, nevertheless the letter of the law serves only as a minimum, a starting point, which guarantees God's favor and ensures human morality.** But, if man wishes to realize his spiritual greatness, he must tap into the infinite potential of the Seven Laws, using them to refine and elevate himself. We see here that eating the limb of a living animal serves as a hint to the potential refinement that man can attain through his eating habits and by practicing kindness to God's creatures. For what man ingests as food is absorbed in his bloodstream and in every cell of his body and thereby becomes part of his essential being. The person who eats snakes and monkeys will surely be different from the one who eats nuts and berries.

The Noahide may eat the flesh of an animal that dies by itself (Encyclopedia Talmudica, vol 3, chp. 21), but there is an opinion stating that only the flesh of an animal killed through slaughtering is permissible" (Asarah Ma'amarot, Chekur Din, sec. 3, chp. 21).

For the Noahide animals, birds, and fish may be killed for food in any way that man deems to be efficient and it should be done as humanely as possible. For the Noahide, the non-Jewish believer, slaughtering of animals or birds does not have to be in a ritual manner as with Jews. But this was a Commandment which had to be enforced and taken up by the non-Jews voluntarily if the Jew was to partake of the food at any table fellowship with non-Jews. Again this was voluntary and is a perfect example of "choosing those things that please God" as instructed of non-Jews in Isaiah 56. The non-Jews might not have been given such a commandment but if they were to share table fellowship with Jews then it was up to them to voluntarily take upon themselves those commandments requiring ritual slaughter if fellowship with their Jewish brethren was to ensure. Let us again be reminded that such table fellowship is the example and rehearsal of the Marriage Supper where both peoples of God; both Jew and non-Jew share in the "supper" of God!

Notice again that the issue of "circumcision" had been dealt with for the most part after Paul's 14 year absence and subsequent trip to Jerusalem, but not all Jews had yet "agreed" to this mandate by James. Yet circumcision remained a problem for many Jews, especially the non-Messianics. In Antioch "tensions" surfaced where the non-Jews were expected to respond in obedience to other commands if they were to maintain fellowship with their Jewish brethren. Notice these "other commands" were not required of these non-Jewish believers, but they "had to" keep them if they were intent on solidifying their fellowship with their Jewish brethren.

This is where we begin to encounter problems in the Antioch incident and why the men from James began to rebuke Paul for the manner of table fellowship which was being practiced in his congregation. The Jews had no options: either be excluded or compromise their Covenant and Commandments and sin! The men from James discerned that the table fare, which had come from the Gentile market-place had not been prepared, ritually slaughtered, drained of all blood, and most likely not tithed of, which was required by the Covenant and Laws of Moses. Even Peter and Barnabas and other Jews in the congregation had been misled by such practices as condoned under the auspices of being "in Christ" and "becoming all things to all men that they might win some". There were certain procedures involved in the killing of the animal which was commanded to be done in as merciful a manner as possible before the animal was considered "kosher" for consumption by the Jew. The practice of such relaxation of such commandments was not acceptable to the men from Jerusalem and nor it should be.

The men from James had not forgotten that one guilty of transgressing this commandment in the Laws of Noah or Laws of Moses, in any of its manifestations, is subject to punishment by the courts whether he eats the limb of a living animal or merely the flesh of a living animal or any internal organ, even the smallest amount, or even eating the smallest amount of an animal that has not been killed by Biblically sanctioned ritual slaughter. A Jew was subject to punishment by the courts for eating the limb or the flesh of either a living domestic or wild animal which had not been ritually slaughtered according to the Torah.

The Antioch congregation under the authority of Paul had somehow not bothered themselves with this commandment since "being in Christ" for them meant they were no longer under the Law according to Paul. But the men from James and the Jerusalem Church had something to say about that. The uproar would be heard all the way back in Jerusalem and the Acts 15 Council would be called and these principals reiterated to Paul and included in letters to all the churches of Asia Minor.

Answer for yourself: What does this have to say about such practices in Gentile Churches today?

Animals, together with their lives, were given into the hands of mankind. The higher spiritual rank of man dictates that he not eat the limb of a living animal. Even though human flesh and animal flesh are related, the one may be incorporated within the other through eating. But the soul of an animal may never be incorporated

within the soul of man. The soul (in the blood) of an animal must first be separated from its physical being before the animal body may be absorbed within and become part of the human body (Gen. 9:4, commentary of S. R. Hirsch). This means that certain procedures are necessary to drain the blood, which contains the life and soul of the animal, from the animal before the flesh is fit for consumption. This is applicable to both Jew and non-Jew. Such procedures as commanded in the Laws of Noah and the Jewish Laws were not practiced in pagan markets of that day and time and such meat at table fellowship had no guarantee that such safeguards had been taken to ensure the blood was completely drained from the animal. Besides methods of slaughter as addressed above, now we have the problem of draining the blood completely before consumption. These violations would be grouped under the admonition of James in Acts 15 as "refraining from pollution of idols and blood"! Remember this "seemed good to the Holy Spirit":

Acts 15:28-29 28 For it seemed good to the Holy Ghost, and to us, to lay upon you no greater burden than these necessary things; 29 That ye abstain from meats offered to idols, and from blood, and from things strangled, and from fornication: from which if ye keep yourselves, ye shall do well. Fare ye well. (KJV)

Obedience to the law on unclean foods had been one of the make or break issues in the Maccabean rebellion. "Many in Israel stood firm and were resolved in their hearts not to eat unclean food. They chose to die rather than to be defiled by food or to profane the holy covenant; and they did die" (1 Macc. 1.62-3). No one who cherished the memory of the Maccabees would even dream of eating unclean food. The typical Jewish attitude at the time with which we are concerned is probably well caught by Luke's account of Peter's reaction to the vision given him in Joppa: "I have never eaten anything that is common or unclean" (Acts 10.14). This belief was later compromised in Peter and other Jew's lives because of Paul's teaching in Rom 10:4 that "Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth" we may not possibly ever know. What we can be sure of is that we have a rather perplexing problem in the testimony of the New Testament concerning the "attitudes of Yeshua and of Paul as to the law.

Answer for yourself: Is Yeshua the Yeshua of Mark 7, who denies that anything outside a man is able to defile him and who thus defines all foods as clean (Mark 7:15, 18-19) or is Yeshua the Yeshua of Matt. 5, who declares the inviolability of jots and titles and the importance of even the least commandments (Matt. 5:18-19; 23:23)? All we can say is that the Pauline corpus of writings existed prior to the writing of the Gospels and to think that the Gospels and their writers were not influenced by Pauline theology would be rather naive.

Jewish devotion on this point was particularly expressed in their abhorrence of pigs and of pork. The height of Antiochus Epiphanes' abomination had been his sacrifice of swine on the altar(s) of the temple (Josephus, Antiquities 13.8.2 §§ 243). Continuing Jewish antipathy to the pig is illustrated by the Mishna's refusal to allow Jews to rear swine anywhere (in Israel) (m. Baba Qamma 7.7). And Jewish rejection of pork was well known and often commented on in Greek and Roman society. For example, Philo reports Caligula as interrupting his hearing of the Alexandrian delegations with the abrupt question, "Why do you refuse to eat pork?" (Embassy to Gaius 361), and Plutarch devotes one of his Quaestiones Convivales to discussion of why Jews abstain from pork (4.5). Clearly abstention from pork was thoroughly characteristic, we may even say universally characteristic, of Jewish conduct both in Palestine and in the Diaspora.

But notice if you will Paul's comment in Gal 2:4:

4 And that because of false brethren unawares brought in, who came in privily to **spy** out our liberty which we have in Christ Jesus, that they might bring us into bondage:

The Greek word for "spy" is Strong's Number #2684 (kataskopeo) which means to inspect, to view closely, in order to spy out and plot against. Understand that when they observed table fellowship something was "visible" that first grabbed their attention as to irregularities. The only thing "visible" was the type of food on the table to begin with and most likely this points to the fact that the diet of that day contained "unclean" and unkosher food". This only led to other deeper problems such as the lack of tithing, the lack of ritual slaughter, etc.

Equally abhorrent to the devout Jew was food tainted by the abomination of idolatry, although the

extra-biblical documentation is thinner in this case. In addition to 1 Corinthians 8-10 and Acts 15.20, 29, we may mention Josephus' report of how in 64 C.E. he sought to aid certain priests of his acquaintance who had been taken prisoner in Rome and who "even in affliction had not forgotten the pious practices of religion, and supported themselves on figs and nuts" (Life 3 §§13-14), presumably in part at least to avoid meat left over from pagan sacrifices (4 Macc. 5.2). This will be dealt with in more detail in other articles.

Likewise with meat (of clean animals) from which the blood had not been drained, in accordance with the clear and repeated commandments of Moses (Lev: 3.17; 7:26-7; 17:10-14; Deut: 12.16, 23-4; 15.23; Acts 15:20, 29). What constituted a proper slaughtering of a clean animal for food is well defined in rabbinic Judaism by the time of the Mishna (tractate Hullin; also Keritot 5.1), but we can gain some idea of how far the halakoth had developed by the middle of the first century from Hullin 1.2, which reports the debate between the school of Shammai and the school of Hillel on what precisely was allowed by the (presumably) earlier ruling that slaughter with a handsickle was valid. If you recall the Noahide, let alone the Jew, was commanded not to eat any animal in which the "life/soul" remained in the animal. The higher spiritual rank of man dictates that he not eat the limb of a living animal. Even though human flesh and animal flesh are related, the one may be incorporated within the other through eating. But the soul of an animal may never be incorporated within the soul of man. The soul (in the blood) of an animal must first be separated from its physical being before the animal body may be absorbed within and become part of the human body (v. 27:30-32).

Equally abhorrent to the devout Jew was food that was consumed from which a "tithe" had not been given. To consume food without first tithing from it was considered robbery from God. A tenth part of agricultural produce or livestock which was "holy to the Lord". Animals, together with their lives, were given into the hands of mankind. The Bible specifies various percentages of the crop that the farmer must allocate in accordance with given criteria as a religious offering to particular individuals. The custom of tithing is of ancient origin, as Abraham gave a voluntary tithe to Melchizedek (Gen. 14:18-20; cf.28:22). As part of the commandments "dependent on the Land [of Israel]," these tithing regulations are only applicable to produce grown there (Kid. 1.9). Such laws applied to the first six years of the seven-year cycle during which crops were grown; no tithes were given in the seventh Sabbatical year (shemittah) during which the fields had to remain fallow.

God shares with us in the Commandments of the Tithe that if we fail to set apart a "tithe" for the "poor", the remainder we keep for ourselves is considered by God as if it is "stolen". If we fail to remember the poor then God considers that all we have which we consider as "ours" since we worked for it as if it were "stolen" and it is **not** released for our use. Thus, we rob God in a big way. **The real problem is if the church where we attend is teaching the tithe correctly; don't bet on it until you have studied it out! You will be shocked if you do!**

During two years of every seven year cycle (the third and the sixth years), a person was obligated to "set apart" from the fruit of his soil a tithe for the poor, the stranger, the orphan, and the widow; in addition to the Terumah (the heave offering) and Masser (first fruit offering) which he "set apart" for the Kohen (priest) and the Levite respectively. **If one failed to formally "set apart" the tithe for the poor the entire basket was prohibited for use by the giver even if the Terumah and the Maaser Rishon (the first tithe which went to the Levite) had already been "set apart".** **The men from James ascertained that since the table fare had come from the market place in Antioch that the "dinner" had not been tithed of according to Scripture and that in reality those at table were robbing God. Thus again the rebuke of Paul, Peter, Barnabas, and the whole church.**

Answer for yourself: Does your church give, as commanded in the Jewish Scriptures of Moses, to give all of the tithe every 3 years to the poor (equivalent to 1/3 of the church's budget every year)? Hardly! Has God said?

"For the poor will never cease from the midst of the land." "Take care" the Torah (the first 5 books of the Old Testament) therefore said to the Jew, "lest you forget the stranger, the orphan, the widow or the poor. When one eats of the bread of the land, he is to know that the land and its fullness belongs to the Lord alone. The food which He prepared for His creatures, He prepared for them all". If food for a poor person was not available in his home, it was considered to be available through "your" home. The food he needs, is his, not yours! And

when you give the poor his Masser (heave offering), it is not charity which you give him. Rather are you returning what belongs to him. When you made the return, you did so graciously, as one does who returned an object temporarily entrusted to him for safekeeping.

The Kohen (priest) acquired his portion first. After him came the Levite. The poor, the stranger, the orphan and the widow came next. And you guessed it-the people of the land came last! What those at Antioch were not observing is this practice of tithing first before they consumed their food. If you have already "set apart" the required Terumah and Maaser offerings, you too may eat your "bread" in joy, for God has graciously acknowledged your deeds. Even if you have not yet actually given the offerings already "set apart," to their respective recipients, the remainder of your produce is already permitted to you by God. When you "set apart" your Terumah and Maaser offerings you thereby receive the right to enjoy the remnant of your product. In the act of "setting apart" you acknowledge God's ownership of the land, His being the source of your bounty, and the consequent claim of others to their rightful portion of your bounty. God then grants to you your portion and he says; "What remains...is for you. Let it be yours!" **Whoever keep the portion of the poor in his possession, and fails to give it to them, is not withholding charity, but is rather in possession of stolen property (Mal. 3:8).** And the people of God are not given to such malicious wrongdoing.

These matters are of paramount importance to our discussion of the incident at Antioch and Paul's breach of the Law for both Jews and non-Jews.

LOOKING FROM THE JEWISH PERSPECTIVE

Obedience to these commands so clearly set out in the Torah was obviously fundamental to devout Jews in our period; it belonged to the distinctiveness of their race and religion and marked them out as Yahweh's chosen people. Such fundamental laws were a limiting factor of considerable consequence for the devout Jew's practice of table-fellowship. These Laws and Commandments are not negotiable for the Jew. They did not, we should note, inhibit his own entertainment of others, where he was responsible for what was served up and for the manner of its preparation. But these Laws and Commandments would largely prevent him from accepting with an easy conscience invitations from others (Gentiles) who might ignore them in whole or in part, hence it is the case of an invitation to someone else's house which Paul discusses in 1 Corinthians 10:27-9.

But whereas Paul was addressing non-Jews who were called to table fellowship with other non-Jews in I Cor. 10:27-29, the Jew is held to a higher standard. The Jew were called to a higher level of holiness than non-Jews and unlike the non-Jews who need not ask about where the "dinner" came from, the Jew has to know. When Paul would go on to say in I Cor. 10:38 "Whether therefore ye eat, or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God" we would be wrong to conclude that "everything" was fair game and was able to be consumed in any manner whatsoever because stipulations in preexisting Covenants state otherwise!

It was these laws which were being overlooked at table fellowship in Antioch. The men from James when they arrived "spied" out Paul's liberty as he stated, and found several things wrong. They called for immediate repentance and Peter and Barnabas and the rest of the Jewish part of the congregation removed themselves.

The rest is up to you..shalom.



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PAUL'S REBUKE OF PETER ...HAS THE NT MISREPRESENTED THE TRUTH BEHIND THE INCIDENT AT ANTIOCH? #9

TITHING AND RITUAL PURITY

One of the most striking features about the Pharisees in Palestine prior to the Jewish revolt was their preoccupation with defining the limits of table-fellowship more scrupulously. J. Neusner has concluded from his meticulously detailed study of rabbinical traditions about the Pharisees that **of the 341 individual rulings from our period "no fewer than 229 directly or indirectly pertain to table-fellowship, approximately 67% of the whole"** (Neusner, *Rabbinic Traditions* 3.297, pp. 291-4). Within these the major concerns were quite clearly **ritual purity and tithing.**

As to ritual purity, the Pharisees quite simply sought to **apply the purity laws governing the temple ritual to their everyday lives.** Others might quite properly conclude that these laws referred only to the priests when performing their temple service and to themselves only when they went to the temple; outside the temple the laws of ritual purity need not be observed.

But the Pharisees held that even outside the temple, in one's own home, the laws of ritual purity were to be followed in the only circumstances in which they might apply, namely, at the table. Therefore, one must eat secular food (ordinary, everyday meals) in a state of ritual purity as if one were a temple priest.

The detail with which the schools' debates were already concerned, as to the precise circumstances in which foods and food containers would be rendered unclean, indicates clearly the importance of such matters for the Pharisees and their conscientiousness in trying to maintain their purity (cf. Matt. 23.25-6).

Matt 23:25-26 Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye make clean the outside of the cup and of the platter, but within they are full of extortion and excess. **26** Thou blind Pharisee, cleanse first that which is within the cup and platter, that the outside of them may be clean also. (KJV)

It is important to note that Jesus was not condemning the Pharisees for their ritual purity and their efforts in such regards, he was however, rebuking their religiosity at the expense of weightier matters of their faith; namely, the issues of the heart and their neglect of loving-kindness to the poor and downtrodden. The Kingdom of Heaven, of what Jesus spoke, was not just internal and personal, it was something that needed to be manifested in positive actions to those needing help. It was love in action, not just in theory. This is where some, but not all, of the religious Pharisees failed! Notice I said "some" for history shows that many would not be included in Jesus' rebuke for they understood and lived the life which Jesus modeled. But as you know, even today we have our "hypocrites."

Particularly important here was the cleansing of the hands which were always liable to uncleanness through an unintentional touching. A complete tractate of the Mishnah was to be devoted to the purity of hands (Yadayim),

and the ramifications must already have been the subject of debate at our time, as our own Gospel traditions also testify (Mark 7.2-5; Matt. 15.2; Luke 11.38).

Mark 7:2-5 2 And when they saw some of his disciples eat bread with defiled, that is to say, with unwashen, hands, they found fault. 3 For the Pharisees, and all the Jews, except they wash their hands oft, eat not, holding the tradition of the elders. 4 And when they come from the market, except they wash, they eat not. And many other things there be, which they have received to hold, as the washing of cups, and pots, brassen vessels, and of tables. 5 Then the Pharisees and scribes asked him, Why walk not thy disciples according to the tradition of the elders, but eat bread with unwashen hands? (KJV)

THE IMPORTANCE OF TITHING TO RITUAL PURITY

Tithing was important according to the same logic, since only food which had been properly tithed was ritually acceptable. That is to say, tithing was as much concerned with table-fellowship as ritual washing. Tithing was considered a dietary Law (Neusner, *Politics to Piety*, 80, 83). Here too it is significant that a whole tractate of the Mishnah was to be devoted to rulings about produce not certainly tithed (Demai), that is to guidance for the devout Jew in his dealings with Jews whose devotion to the law could not be presumed (particularly the am ha-aretz). And again there can be little doubt that scrupulous tithing must have formed an important element in the Pharisaic halakoth of pre-AD 70 Palestine, as our own Gospel traditions again confirm (Matt. 23.23; Luke 18.12).

Matt 23:23 23 Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye pay tithe of mint and anise and cummin, and have omitted the weightier matters of the law, judgment, mercy, and faith: these ought ye to have done, and not to leave the other undone. (KJV) Again we find Jesus not rebuking them for what they were doing in this regard, but failing to continue their actions to the more important aspects of their faith; namely, positive actions toward others. True Biblical faith does not just "believe," it "responds in concrete actions based on that faith."

Jesus' brother even said: But wilt thou know, O vain man, that faith without works is dead [James 2:20 20] (KJV)

We should not confine the influence of such Pharisaic rulings and practice to their own ranks (the haberim). For the well-attested Pharisaic criticisms of Yeshua's table-fellowship as an eating with 'tax collectors and sinners' (Mark 2.16; Matt. 11.19; Luke 7.34; Luke 15.2) and of his eating with unwashed hands (Mark 7.2-5; Matt. 15.2; Luke 11.38) were precisely criticisms of a devout Jew outside the Pharisaic circle for not observing the Pharisaic halakoth - "Why do your disciples not live according to the tradition of the elders . . .?" (Mark 7.5; Matt. 15.2). What is important for our understanding here is if this issue, as detailed in the New Testament, was in reality in effect and imposed upon non-Pharisees and non-Priests in the days of Jesus. There is evidence that such regulations, as imposed upon the general populace, was only later applied to the common people in the time of Rabbi Akiba. That means when reading the New Testament that such events most likely never happened as recorded, and was later inserted into the text to further separate Jesus and his faith in order to give authority for the new religion which would later be created by Rome.

TITHING...OUTSIDE THE LAND OF ISRAEL

Now let us look closer to how this applied to Paul and his Gentile followers. **Nor can we assume that such influence was limited to Palestine.** It is true that some halakic sources ruled that the law of tithes did not apply "outside the Land" (e.g. m. Halla 2.2; m. Qiddusin 1.9):

- But already in Tobit we read of tithes being scrupulously observed from a home in Nineveh (Tob. 1.6-8).
- Josephus mentions an edict issued by the pro-consul of Asia Minor to the people of Miletus in the days of Caesar permitting the Jews to "perform their native rites and manage their produce in accordance with their customs" (*Antiquities*, 14.10.21 §245), which presumably indicates that the practice of tithing was

well established among the Jews of Asia Minor in the first century BC.

- And Philo tells us that tithing was observed by the Jewish community in Rome (Embassy to Gaius 156) and implies that the Alexandrian Jews did the same (Special Laws 1.153).

Answer for yourself: So what do we learn from the above statement? Namely, that the Laws of the Tithes, although officially not required outside the Land of Israel, was seen to be practiced as the usual "custom".

RITUAL PURITY

As to the purity ritual we may simply note that the practice of Jewish ritual cleansing outside Palestine is presumed by the Epistle of Aristeeas 305-6, and that such purifications are described as characteristic of Jews as a people by the Sibylline Oracles 3.592-3 and Josephus, Against Apion, 2.23, 24 §§198, 203. Philo also testifies to a more general concern in Diaspora Judaism for a punctilious observance of the law (Migration of Abraham, 89-93). Here too we should note Paul's own testimony, that though he came from the Diaspora, nevertheless he "advanced in Judaism beyond many of my own age among my people, so extremely zealous was I for the traditions of my fathers" (Gal. 1.14; cf. Phil. 3.6). It is this Pharisaic striving for a rectitude beyond what was written which is probably in view in the fierce condemnation of Matthew 23.15 - a proselytizing zeal on the part of the Pharisees is elsewhere unattested, but the Pharisees may indeed have been more than willing to "traverse sea and land" to ensure that those who became proselytes properly understood the full extent of their obligations under the law ("when he becomes a proselyte, you make him twice as much a child of hell as yourselves").

We may justifiably infer, then, that wherever Pharisaic influence was strong during the middle decades of the first century of our era, both within Palestine and among strong concentrations of Jews in the Diaspora, there would be pressure on those who thought of themselves as good Jews to observe the halakic clarifications of the laws on tithes and purity - that is to say, pressure on devout Jews (including proselytes) to observe strict limits in their practice of table fellowship.

BUT THERE WERE OTHER OPINIONS..THERE WAS NO UNIFORMITY

On the other hand we should not assume that this pressure would be constant and consistent. The Pharisees were not the only ones with views on these matters. For a start, the Sadducees denied that the laws of purity were applicable outside the temple. At the other end of the spectrum, the Essenes observed rules of ritual purity even stricter than those of the Pharisees (IQS 3.4-5, 8-9; 5.13; 6.16-17, 25; 7.3, 16; IQSa 2.3-9; CD 10.10-13; Josephus, Jewish War 2.8.5, 9-10 §§129, 149-50). And we know that within the ranks of the Pharisees there were many debates between the schools of Shammai and Hillel about particular details, where the concern in effect was to define the precise limits of table-fellowship. We also know that the Pharisees of our period already distinguished several degrees of purity.

Similarly with the Essenes: according to Josephus the novice had to pass through several stages of purification before participating in the common food (Jewish War, 2.8.7 §§137-9), and a senior member could be rendered impure by the touch of a junior member of the community (Jewish War, 2.8.10 §150). Once the concept of differing degrees of purity within the temple ritual was translated into rules governing everyday table-fellowship it inevitably meant that different degrees of association were possible - he who lived at a stricter level of purity could not eat with one who observed a less strict discipline. And I stress that Jewish records date this event in the time of Rabbi Akiba around 100 A.D.; long after the life-time of Jesus!

We may conclude that in the Palestine of our period there was a wide spectrum of teaching and practice on this precise issue - from the am-ha-aretz who knew not the law (cf. John 7.49) to the stricter Pharisees and 'the many' of the Essenes at the other, with varying degrees of scrupulousness and disagreement about particular

details in between. **Insofar as the new sect of followers of Yeshua was to any extent influenced by Pharisaic views, its members were bound to be caught up in these debates and cross-currents about the acceptable limits of table-fellowship.** We need simply note here that it is precisely an issue of this sort, and the disagreements between Christians concerning it, which is reflected in the different emphases drawn by Mark and Matthew from Yeshua's words about true cleanliness (Mark 7.19; Matt. 15. 17, 20).

Mark 7:19 19 Because it entereth not into his heart, but into the belly, and goeth out into the draught, purging all meats? (KJV)

Of particular interest for us is what all this would have meant for the devout Jew (including the devout Nazarene) in his social intercourse with Gentiles. It is to this subject we continue to investigate as this get us to the core of the problem at Antioch. Having surveyed the various beliefs about Table-fellowship with non-Jews let us now turn our attention to the Paul-Peter problem at Antioch.


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PAUL'S REBUKE OF PETER ...HAS THE NT MISREPRESENTED THE TRUTH BEHIND THE INCIDENT AT ANTIOCH? #10

We have spent considerable time researching into the background of "table-fellowship" in Judaism in relationship to what is "accepted" and what is "not accepted" in the religion of Israel and the Jews. We must never forget that Yeshua is a Jew and that he had certain views in these areas as well, and such views, when ascertained, should be used to help us "non-Jewish believers" chart our way in such areas as well. Besides the Gospels we can look at normative Biblical Judaism to see what were the current views held by conservative Jews in these areas as well as they would apply to Yeshua in this time period. We must remember that the issue is more than just "table-fellowship" and goes to the very core of how we, non-Jewish believers in the God of Israel, through the ministry of Yeshua, are to be accepted and included in the Israel of God. This is the crux of the matter as these dogmas express the will of God for the non-Jew in these areas. These teachings by the followers of Yeshua, we must remember, are expressed "after the cross" of Yeshua and were intended to be enforced on all non-Jews who came to God through the ministry of Yeshua and his disciples. That means you and me! Just because our denominations teach something different today does not mean they are right and your relationship with God, as He intended, is being upheld in good standing by you. This issue cuts to the very core of the Torah and the Law and how much of it applies to the non-Jewish believer. You must understand if I can prove, as I will, that we are truly grafted into Israel and not the Baptist, Catholic, or the Methodist Church, then the covenant by which we are related to God and its covenant stipulations and commandments, as upheld by us, is the means by which we keep ourselves in good standing in the covenant and maintain a positive relationship with God. Let us never confuse our emotions and our love for God for how God looks at us and how He feels about us. We can only be certain of such areas by adherence to what God said and His representative which gave His will in the matter. It is to these men moved by the Holy Spirit as found in the early Jerusalem Church can be certain that our actions and conduct is pleasing and acceptable to God. This is why I provoke you to think about the historical accuracy of the accounts in the New Testament in order for your to see "if you really are in the faith or not". You must realize if you are "outside" of the Covenant God gave you, or believe you are under another one created by Gentile Christianity which God never gave, then in reality you are without a Covenant before God! Making one up, as Gentile Christianity has done concerning the supposed "New" Covenant is not valid and God knows it. It is those who have failed to study these issues in detail who will lose in the end. Now on with the study.

WE EITHER FOLLOW PAUL OR YESHUA...BUT WE CANNOT FOLLOW BOTH

In our previous studies we have found that there was no unanimous opinion regarding how to relate to the non-Jew in Judaism. We have found in the previous article that no one opinion on ritual purity held sway but that many different ideas were promoted. For our discussion purposes we are concerned as to how the Messianic Community of the First Century understood it and how they ruled accordingly. As followers of Yeshua the

Messianic congregation of Jerusalem should have a major influence on our beliefs and conduct today as non-Jewish followers of Yeshua. We either walk in the footsteps of the early Messianic Jewish Jerusalem Church or we do not. We either follow Paul and his ideas or Yeshua's and his followers. Dear one they are not the same! The sad fact is that the vast multitude of Christian believers today follow Paul and think they are at the same time following the wishes of Yeshua and the Jerusalem Church. Nothing could be further from the truth as we shall see as we continue our examination of the issues involved at the incident at Antioch.

WHAT DOES ALL WE HAVE LEARNED SO FAR MEAN TO A NAZARENE BELIEVER IN HIS SOCIAL INTERCOURSE WITH GENTILE BELIEVERS IN THE FIRST CENTURY FOLLOWING YESHUA'S DEATH?

As a Gentile Christian you need to understand that the dominant tendency within Judaism in the century or so around the time of Yeshua seems to have been to avoid such intercourse with Gentiles as much as possible. This can be attributed in a large sense to the teachings of R. Shammai and his Rabbinic School. This might be shocking to you as well but there is not one story in the New Testament where Yeshua welcomes non-Jews! In fact his response to them ranges from calling the daughter of a non-Jew a "dog" to instructing his followers to not go to the Gentiles **[THINK]**.

Matt 15:26

26 But he answered and said (speaking to the Gentile woman), It is not meet to take the children's bread, and to cast it to dogs.

Matt 10:5-6

5 These twelve Jesus sent forth, and commanded them, saying, Go not into the way of the Gentiles, and into any city of the Samaritans enter ye not:

6 But go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel.

To think that Yeshua's primary intent was to "save" the Gentile is a severe misjudgment of his time and his religion. To the lost sheep of the House of Israel he was sent and they were being assimilated and had been, in the days of Yeshua, become part of the Gentile peoples of the world for over 800 years. Yeshua knew it was these people, formerly Jews who had a Covenant with HaShem, who were now being "lost" to their heritage and their faith and their privileges as well as their responsibilities before God. But a "pure" Gentile mission was not on his mind I assure you. He knew what the Gentile Church does not today; namely that the Gentiles were unclean. Yeshua knew that only by the non-Jew's submission to the God of Israel whereby the non-Jews took up the Covenant given to them by HaShem whereby they submitted to the commandments of God would they then find acceptance within the particular Covenant given them by God. Only by this would the non-Jew maintain their acceptance in the grace of God within the Covenant God had given them. But yet it was to these "lost" brethren from the Northern scattered tribes Yeshua was sent and not the "Eskimos" (if you get what I mean). Today it is hard to look backward and realize such since the Gentile Church is such a force in the world but that was not Yeshua's purpose.....to create a Gentile Church which would almost persecute his Jewish family to death over the centuries and completely do away with the Law which was the only means of maintaining good standing in the Covenant with God. Let us return to "table-fellowship" and acceptance of the non-Jews.

JEWISH RELATIONSHIP WITH GENTILES

The stories of Daniel, of Tobit and of Judith were all held forth as examples of the faithfulness and success of

Jews who refused to eat "the food of Gentiles" (Dan. 1.8-16; Tob. 1.10-13; Jdt. 10.5; 12.1-20; see also 3 Macc. 3.4; Joseph and Asenath 7.1). **The fear of idolatry and of impurity was a considerable limiting factor, since by definition a Gentile was an idolater and certainly ritual impurity had to be assumed rather than the reverse** (Alton, Jews, 170-4; Schurer, History, 2.81-4).. This played heavy in the minds of the men from James as they came upon such a compromising situation in Antioch. **Thus the Mishnaic tractate on idolatry is mainly concerned with defining the permissible relationships with Gentiles** (Aboda Zara). And in several rabbinic sayings the uncleanness of the Gentile is well-known: **Gentiles are simply "unclean persons"** (Makhot. 2.3); 'the dwelling-places of Gentiles are unclean' (Oholot 18.7); A Gentile is in every respect like to a man who suffers a flux' (Eliyahu Rabba 10). **Such sayings cannot be dismissed as the later utterances of rabbinic Judaism subsequent to our period.** The prohibition on Gentiles entering the temple sanctuary was already well established by our time (cf., e.g., Antiquities, 12.3.4 §§1450), and must have been based on the belief that Gentiles were unclean. Already in Jubilees the same attitude is clearly expressed and the line firmly drawn:

Separate yourself from the nations, And eat not with them,..... For their works are unclean, And all their ways are a pollution and an abomination and an uncleanness ... (22.16)

According to the Epistle of Aristaeas, Moses fenced us (Jews) round with impregnable ramparts and walls of iron, **that we might not mingle at all with any of the other nations, but remain pure in body and soul . . .** he hedged us round on all sides by **rules of purity, affecting alike what we eat, or drink, or touch, or hear, or see.** (139, 142; cf. 106)

And Tacitus scornfully describes the Jewish hatred for the rest of the world: "they eat separately, they sleep separately .." (Histories, 5.5).

Dear ones this is the same attitude held by Yeshua!

If such views were consistently and rigorously applied, no devout Jew could even have considered participating in table-fellowship with a Gentile. But that is by no means the whole story.

BUT CERTAIN GENTILES WERE ACCEPTED INTO TABLE-FELLOWSHIP DESPITE THE ABOVE SAFEGARDS AND EXCLUSIONS

You must keep in mind the whole purpose of these articles is to again to show how certain non-Jews were "accepted" into table-fellowship with the Jews and were included in the "Israel of God". **This means those "non-Jews" who were "unacceptable" somehow were "made acceptable".** This is what confronts our study as Gentile believers in the God of Israel.

Answer for yourself: As a traditional Christian, how certain are you in light of facts presented that you have made yourself "acceptable" to Yeshua in these areas?

What we must look for is which of the above responsibilities mentioned by the Rabbis were also expected of the non-Jewish believers by the Messianic Church and James in order for them to be included in the Israel of God.

Make so mistake about it some items mentioned above were to be later rescinded by the Jerusalem Church (circumcision) and James **BUT NOT ALL** and **many were yet required of non-Jewish believers to be incorporated into the Israel of God (the Laws of Noah).** James would call many of these **"necessary"** and **"good to the Holy Ghost"** and they apply today whether you are aware of them or not! This is the deceptions which must be removed in order for the non-Jewish believer to make his calling and election certain.

CLASSIFICATIONS OF NON-JEWISH BELIEVERS

For there were two types of Gentiles towards whom even the rabbis could maintain a very positive and welcoming attitude:

- **The Proselyte or Full Convert (Gentile converts to Judaism)**
- **Gentiles who showed themselves sympathetic to the religion of the Jews broken down into two classifications: The Resident Alien & the Godfearer**

Answer for yourself: How were these non-Jewish believers in God, through the ministry of Yeshua's apostles, affected by the limits commanded by God and observed by the devout Jew in his table-fellowship?

What you the Christian must understand that there are some things commanded by God of the Jew that are eternal observances and are not negotiable and some of the "obligations" were mandated and put upon the non-Jew before or "acceptance into the Israel of God". Sadly over time some "obligations" were put upon the non-Jew which came not from God but from bigoted Jews who disliked non-Jews and wanted to keep them at arms-length from any type of politico-social intercourse. This is where our study must go if we are to discern the path for unity in the Israel of God. Because God seemed to always use the non-Jewish nations to punish the Jewish people for their transgressions you can understand the Jewish dislike for the non-Jew and their attempts to lay upon the non-Jews stipulations and obligations they knew would be so distasteful to them that few if any would accept them and want to be included in the Israel of God. Besides that Gentiles were generally thought to be "unclean." Now not all Jews felt this way but the trend leaned itself to this and this is exactly what we find happening in Yeshua's day especially under the influence of R. Shammai and his schools of Pharisees. Understand again that through the Messianic ministry of the followers of Yeshua not only the "lost sheep of the House of Israel" would be reached but the "non-Jew" as well, **but again make no mistake about it, these "non-Jews" reached by the Jesus movement were obligated to certain commandments and responsibilities to be "accepted" as God's children which the Christian Church today does not teach.** Again understand it was not only Yeshua's belief and will that these conditions for acceptance be met but his God and Father as well. It would do the Christian Church well to begin to serious study the first century to ascertain such things as this in order to no longer deceive and mislead their people. **Surely at death we will receive a rude awakening when the Christian finds he has lived his whole life in ignorance concerning "THE" Covenant God gave him let alone the Covenant stipulations it requires. One will quickly find upon one's death that he is ill prepared for the judgment!**

We must now look at the three classifications of the non-Jew and how each relates to his acceptance into the Israel of God.



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PAUL'S REBUKE OF PETER ...HAS THE NT MISREPRESENTED THE TRUTH BEHIND THE INCIDENT AT ANTIOCH? #11

CLASSIFICATION OF THE NON-JEW AND HOW EACH RELATES TO HIS ACCEPTANCE INTO THE ISRAEL OF GOD

Following the death and resurrection of Yeshua there were no Baptists, Methodists, and Catholics. No Gentile religious establishment had not yet made "dogmas" to replace the faith of the Bible. That would come later. There were not as yet any denominational ecclesiastical authorities to replace the faith of the Jerusalem Church with those of their own making. This would come later and my dear friend you are mired in it and don't know!

For your information discussion in this area usually works with a three-fold distinction - the proselyte, the resident alien and the God-fearer (sometimes misleadingly called the 'half-proselyte') [G.F. Moore, Judaism, 1.326-7, 339]. This Gentile scholar knows the truth and his two set of books are in invaluable resource to anyone's library and such facts as I share with you can be found in them if you will only look. Understand as we proceed that either the Apostles of Yeshua under the influence of the Holy Spirit either went out and "did it wrong" or else they "did it right" and it is we non-Jewish believers who today, in deviating from their instructions in the matter, "does it wrong" without knowing! It is our hope and prayer at Bet Emet once you see the whole of the facts in this issue will repent and "do it right".

THE PROSELYTE, OR FULL CONVERT

In the beginning the Israelite religion had always inculcated a positive attitude towards the non-Jewish stranger (ger) who lived within the borders of Israel (Exod. 20.10; 22.21; 23.9, 12; Deut. 1.16; 5.14; etc.). However, that was to change as shared above and by the first century C.E. these commands concerning the ger had been referred almost completely to the proselyte: already in the LXX (the Greek translation of the Hebrew Scriptures) the regular translation of "ger" in rabbinic Judaism always means a Gentile won over to Judaism. A positive approach to proselytization is likewise indicated by such stories as those of Ruth finding shelter under Yahweh's wings (Ruth 2.12) and Achior in Judith 14.10, by Isaiah 56.1-8 addressed to 'the foreigners who join themselves to the Lord' and Matthew 23.15, by the accounts in Josephus of the forcible conversion of the Idumeans by Hyrcanus and of the Itureans by Aristobulus (Antiquities, 13.9.1 §§257-8; 13.11.3 §§31819), and by various other accounts and references in both Jewish and non-Jewish sources (e.g. Josephus, Life, 23 §§112-13; Antiquities, 18.3.5 §82; Horace, Satires, 1.4.142-3 - 'we, like the Jews, will compel you to make one of our throng'). If you wish to read into these subjects let me suggest K. Lake, The Beginnings of Christianity, Part I: The Acts of the Apostles (Vol. V; London: Macmillan 1933) 82-84 and B.J. Bamberger, Proselytism in the Talmudic Period (1939; New York: Ktav, 1968) 15-16, 267 ff.

As a "proselyte" the Gentile had undertaken to observe the law, including circumcision, and was more or less a full Israelite (see e.g. Exod. 12.49; Philo, Special Laws, 1.51-2; b. Yebamot 47b, Josephus, Antiquities,

20.2.4§39). Despite the stigma of being a proselyte (m. Qiddusin 4.1), and the suspicion harboured by some rabbis that he was always liable to fall back into his old ways (m. Niddah 7.3; b. Baba Mesia 59b), the proselyte (following his mikveh, circumcision, and sacrifice) once his initiation was complete came within the same limits of table-fellowship that applied to the native born Jew (G.F. Moore, Judaism, 1.341). Of particular interest to us, however, is the fact that there seems to have been some debate among the rabbis at our period over the degree of uncleanness attaching to the Gentile proselyte at his conversion and over the length of time it took before his uncleanness could be washed away by ritual purification (m. Pesahim 8.8; m. Edayyot 5.2). Most now agree that proselyte baptism (mikveh or "being born again") had already become an accepted practice by the middle of the first century C.E. Strange as it may seem to the "born again" Christian "born again" is a Jewish concept that related to the "non-Jew" at his mikveh/baptism whereby he became a convert to Judaism and not to a competing religion such as Christianity. Ironically "born-again" Christians are complete opposite to what the term meant in the first century and have no idea whatsoever what the term meant in the discussion between Yeshua and Nicodemus. The term means becoming a proselyte to Judaism and accepting the 613 Laws and the terrible irony of the whole mess is that Christians call themselves "born-again" and reject the very Laws that when obeyed provided security of acceptance into the Covenant. So sad.

THE RESIDENT ALIEN

Although it understood the biblical ger to refer to the proselyte, rabbinic Judaism also recognized a different category of Gentile, the "ger tosab", the resident alien. He too lived within the borders of Israel, but unlike the "full" proselyte who accepted the "whole of the Law" he accepted only some of the commandments of the Torah.

Just how much he had to accept before being recognized as a ger tosab was a subject of dispute among the rabbis. According to R. Meir (c. 150) a sufficient requirement was that the Gentile in question undertook in the presence of three haberim (holy ones) to renounce idolatry (G.F. Moore, Judaism, 1.325). In the first century before theology was worked out by the Gentiles that made Yeshua God this was not a problem for the non-Jew was taught that there is only ONE God. Today this is problematic considering the vast majority of Christians today are Trinitarians and believe Yeshua is God. The belief that Yeshua is God would disqualify them from this category. Others defined a "ger tosab" as a ger who eats of animals not ritually slaughtered, that is, he took upon himself to observe all the precepts mentioned in the Torah apart from the prohibition of (eating the flesh of) animals not ritually slaughtered' (b. Aboda Zara 64b). This will be one of the problems encountered at Antioch for the "meat" came from the market place where it had been sanctified to idols and not killed in a kosher manner thus not being ritually slaughtered. But remember that the Noahide (as the Ger Tosab) did not have to observe this commandments but "needed" to if table fellowship with non-Jews was to be observed. This exemption of the "ger tosab" from the prohibition against animals not ritually slaughtered was determined by Deuteronomy 14.21 - 'You shall not eat of anything that dies of itself; you may give it to the alien (ger) who is within your towns, that he may eat it . . .'- a law which could properly be held to exempt the ger tosab from at least some of the restrictions governing the eating of meat, and which thus provided sanction for slackening one of the limits of acceptable table-fellowship. But the halakah which gained greatest support and decided the matter was that a "ger tosab" was any Gentile who takes upon himself the seven Noachic laws -that is, he holds himself subject to the established courts of justice, and refrains from blasphemy, idolatry, adultery, bloodshed, robbery, and eating flesh cut from living animals (b. Aboda Zara 64b; cf. b. Sanhedrin 56a). I suggest reading Moore, Judaism, 1.339 to learn more about this requirement. It is this Covenant, the Covenant of Noah which was given to the non-Jew to be "acceptable with God".

Understand that this Noachic Covenant was NOT being promoted to the non-Jew in the first century C.E. by R. Shammai and others because it did not require circumcision of the male. It was the act of circumcision that was hoped by the bigoted rabbis to hold the Gentile at arms length and prevent his assimilation into the Israel of God. Acts 15 is pivotal here as the Messianic Jews and Apostles of Yeshua would repent and return to the Laws of Noah for the non-Jew thus increasing the changes of inclusion of non-Jews into the Israel of God. Circumcision would no longer be enforced upon the non-Jews for fellowship or inclusion into the Israel of God. Paul would win this round however other obligations within the Laws of Noah would be

kept and this is where Paul would depart from the Jerusalem Church in heart and spirit.

Clearly, then, there was some debate among the rabbis in the period before the consensus view was established regarding the definition of a "ger toshab", a debate in effect as to the terms on which social intercourse with Gentiles living locally might be acceptable. This strongly suggests that there were already during the first century period diverse views among the rabbis regarding the limits of table-fellowship as they applied to the resident alien. Here we should note also that, despite such rabbinic characterizations of Gentile uncleanness as were cited above (m. Makkot 2.3; m. Oholot 18.7), the Mishnah contains at least two rulings which presuppose situations at the meal table where a Gentile (not a ger) was present (m. Berakot 7.1; m. Aboda Zara 5.5), and the Babylonian Talmud contains discussion of the conditions on which Jews might accept invitations to and participate in Gentile banquets (b. Aboda Zara 8a-b). **We can only conclude that, in all probability, in the Palestine of our period there was also a diversity among devout Jews in their practice of table-fellowship so far as Gentiles were involved - a diversity similar in extent to or indeed continuous with the spectrum of permissible table-fellowship as determined by the various grades of purity among Jews themselves.**

THE GODFEARER

A third group of more acceptable Gentiles were those usually called 'God-fearers' or 'pious Gentiles' - those who showed themselves sympathetic towards Judaism - though whether 'God-fearers' was a technical term for such may be doubted. **However they should be designated, there were certainly many Gentiles (we are talking here particularly of the Diaspora) who were attracted to Judaism and who signified their interest by attaching themselves to Jewish practices in differing degrees.** How diverse such attachments were is a question more easily posed than answered. **We know from Acts that such Gentiles attended the synagogue or Jewish meetings for worship** (Acts 13.16, 26, 50; 16.14; 17.4, 17). Cornelius most nearly approaches in a technical sense as described as 'a devout man who feared God, gave alms liberally to the people, and prayed constantly to God' (10.2). **We should also recall that pious Gentiles were welcome to worship in the temple** (John 12.20; Acts 8.27; also Josephus, Jewish War, 4.4.4 §275), within, of course, well-defined limits (namely, the court of the Gentiles). Let me say something now that few will understand, there was a "pattern" of worship in the Temple which both Jew and non-Jew participated in. It might surprise you that this "pattern of worship" survived well into the 4th century for the non-Jew until obliterated by Constantine and the Roman Church-State.

Answer for yourself: If God intended this pattern of worship be observed by Jew and non-Jew up to the fourth century, could it have been God intended it be followed eternally in spite of Constantine's actions? The answer is yes especially in the light of the existence today of over 2000 different Christian denominations which are filled with hundreds of conflicting doctrines, dogmas, and differing "Jesuses".

The central question for us, however, is the extent to which such God-fearing Gentiles were expected to keep the law (including the oral traditions) concerning tithing and ritual purity. Josephus' claims in Against Apion, confirm the attractiveness of Judaism for many Gentiles: many Greeks 'have agreed to adopt our laws' (2.10 §123); our laws 'have to an ever increasing extent excited the emulation of the world at large' (2.38 §280; cf. 2.28 §§209-10). Philo speaks in similar and similarly vague terms in Life of Moses 2.17-20. But Josephus becomes more helpfully explicit a little further on in Against Apion - **"The masses have long since shown a keen desire to adopt our religious observances; and there is not one city, Greek or barbarian, not a single nation, to which our custom of abstaining from work on the sabbath day has not spread, and where the fasts and the lighting of lamps and many of our prohibitions in the matter of food are not observed"** (Against Apion, 2.38 §282).

Equally interesting is the succession of notices which demonstrate how attractive the Jewish way of life was for many Gentiles in Rome itself and how alarmed the authorities were in consequence. Plutarch (in a passage which relates to the middle of the first century BC) speaks of a freedman named Caecilius 'who was accused of Jewish practices' (Life of Cicero, 7.6). Seneca mentions autobiographically that in his youth he began to abstain from animal food, but that he abandoned the practice because 'some foreign rites were at that time being inaugurated, and abstinence from certain kinds of animal food was set down as proof of interest in the strange cult' (Letters, 108.22).

He refers most probably to the persecution of Jewish and Egyptian rites under Tiberius in AD 19 (Tacitus, Annals, 2.85).⁷⁷ Perhaps significant here too is the report of Dio Cassius already cited, that in 41 Claudius forbade the Jews in Rome to hold meetings because they had increased so greatly in number (60.6.6). Better known is the persecution by Domitian of 'those who followed the Jewish way of life without formally professing Judaism' (Suetonius, Domitian, 12.2); Dio Cassius, also writing of the late first century AD, speaks of 'many who were drifting into Jewish ways' being condemned for atheism (67.14.1-3). And Juvenal confirms the attractiveness which Judaism obviously exercised for many at this period when he attacks contemporaries who 'revere and practice and revere the Jewish law' and who get themselves circumcised, under the influence of a Sabbath-reverencing, pork-abstaining father (Satires, 14.96-106). As evidence of Judaism's continuing influence at the other end of the second century AD we may simply note **Tertullian's report that many Gentiles in his day observed Jewish feasts and ceremonies and Jewish practice in prayers** (Ad Nariones, 1.13). **It would not be unjust to deduce from all this that many God-fearers attracted by the Jewish law quite naturally would have observed the law in the way native born Jews did - that is, in the way that the developed customs and developing tradition dictated.**

Still more interesting for us, not least because the incident described took place within a few years of the Antioch incident, is the well-known story of the conversion of Izates, king of Adiabene, recounted by Josephus (Antiquities, 20.2.4 §§38-48). Izates was initially told that he need not be circumcised - 'he could worship God, even without circumcision, if he had fully decided to emulate the hereditary customs of the Jews' (Antiquities, 20.2.4 §41). Since the sticking point was circumcision, we may take it that Izates was prepared to go the whole way apart from that, and 'zeal for hereditary customs' suggests that his devotion would have embraced much at least of the oral law as well as the written Torah (cf. 20.2.3,4 §§34, 38). This may well be confirmed by the fact that when Eleazar came upon the scene from Galilee, described by Josephus as a Jew 'who had a reputation for being extremely strict concerning the hereditary customs', the only further step he required of Izates was circumcision (Antiquities, 20.2.4 §§43-5).

Most interesting of all, however, is Josephus' description of the Jewish politeuma in Antioch in the period prior to the Jewish revolt: 'they grew in numbers . . . and were constantly attracting to their religious ceremonies multitudes of the Greeks, and these they had in some measure incorporated with themselves' (Jewish War, 7.3.3 §45). **Whatever degree of devotion to the Torah, written and unwritten, on the part of the God-fearing Greeks is implied by this statement, it must denote a considerable measure of acceptance by the Antiochene Jews of these Greeks, and so also a considerable measure of social intercourse between circumcised Jew and uncircumcised Gentile.**

We may conclude from all this that there was a broad range of attachments to Judaism and Jewish ways wherever Diaspora settlements had made any impact on the surrounding community -from occasional visits to the synagogue, to total commitment apart from circumcision, with such matters as the sabbath and dietary laws being observed in varying degrees in between. There would be a broad range of social intercourse between faithful Jew and God-fearing Gentile, with strict Jews avoiding table-fellowship as far as possible, and those less scrupulous in matters of tithing and purity willingly extending and accepting invitations to meals where such Gentiles would be present.

We can also see that the attitude and practice of openness to the Gentile would not have been static. It would depend upon the influence of particular rabbis and of particular rulings in matters of dispute. This is where the authority of the Jerusalem Church and the followers of Yeshua comes into the mix. We may compare, for example, the famous pericope contrasting the response of Shammai and that of Hillel to the Gentile who asked both to teach him the whole Torah while he stood on one foot (b. Sabbat 31a). It would depend on the mood of the surrounding populace and local authorities at the time -particularly in Rome, Alexandria and Antioch, where the Jews were strong in numbers and undue influence on their part could be construed as a threat to the state. And at the period which concerns us it would depend not least on the Jews' sense of the mounting threat to their religion and nation which we sketched out earlier (§2.2) and which must have expressed itself in an increasingly hostile attitude to the Gentiles. This last is illustrated by the sequence of events described in Acts 21, which depicts Jerusalem Jews in the late 50s giving ready credence to the rumor that Paul had taken a

Gentile into the temple (Acts 21.27-36). Another instance is the report of Josephus that at the beginning of the revolt in 66 Eleazar 'persuaded those who officiated in the temple services to accept no gift or sacrifice from a foreigner' (Jewish War 2.17.2 §409). Here too we may mention again the episode of Izates' conversion, which among other things **shows that the attitude of the Palestinian Jew was stricter than that of the Diaspora Jew on the question of how far a Gentile had to go to be acceptable** (Josephus, Antiquities, 20.2.4 §§38-48), and which thus provides an interesting parallel to the Antioch incident.

Before moving on, it is worth noting once more, if it is not already clear, that the issues in all this would have been issues for the earliest Christians too, particularly as the circle of Yeshua's discipleship began to embrace more and more Gentiles. The extent to which the spectrum of attitude and practice mirrored that within the rest of Judaism is indicated by Paul's advice to the believers in Corinth (including Jews) at one end (1 Cor. 8-10), and at the other by the reaction of the Judean brothers to Peter's eating with a Gentile, even though he was a pious God-fearer and presumably already observed the dietary laws (Acts 11.2-3). At the latter end of the same spectrum we should note also the untypical saying of Yeshua preserved for us not surprisingly only by Matthew - 'if he (the brother at fault) refuses to listen even to the church, let him be to you as a Gentile and a tax-collector' (Matt. 18.17). The question for us, of course, is where the Antioch incident, not to mention Acts 15.20, 29, fits into this spectrum. It is to this question that we can now at last turn.



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PAUL'S REBUKE OF PETER ...HAS THE NT MISREPRESENTED THE TRUTH BEHIND THE INCIDENT AT ANTIOCH? #12

THE ISSUE AT ANTIOCH...ONE FINAL LOOK

Against the background sketched out in the preceding articles, the exegetical alternatives in Galatians 2.11-18 become clearer.

The leading questions can be posed thus:

Answer for yourself: What did the table-fellowship at Antioch involve prior to the coming of the men from James?

Answer for yourself: And what would have been required of Gentile believers if the table-fellowship was to be resumed after the initial disruption caused by the withdrawal of Peter and the others?

Answer for yourself: To put it another way, what was it that the men from James objected to or found fault with in the table-fellowship at Antioch?

Answer for yourself: And how could that defect be remedied, if at all?

Answer for yourself: What in your practice of your faith would the Ambassadors of the Jerusalem Church find objectionable or find fault with and what bearing does this hold concerning your acceptance into the Church of Yeshua?

By now you should be able to answer many of these questions.

Understand again that there is a big difference being accepted in the Church of Yeshua as it existed in Jerusalem in the First Century C.E. and a Baptist, Catholic, or Methodist Church today. Think on these things.

ENTER PAUL AND HIS ANTI-JERUSALEM CHURCH THEOLOGY

The exegetical alternatives focus particularly on the key phrases of Paul's challenge, "'If you, a Jew live like a Gentile and not like a Jew, how can you compel the Gentiles to judaize?'" We are Jews by birth and not Gentile sinners ...' (Gal. 2. 14-15).⁸⁵

Answer for yourself: 'To live like a Gentile' must exclude any detailed observance of the law; but need it exclude a more limited observance, such as many Gentiles attracted by Judaism obviously maintained? In the previous article you saw for yourself the attractiveness of Judaism to the non-Jewish world and the non-Jewish

believers. Gentile Christianity today surely will discount this.

In particular, since the Noahide Laws were thought by many Jews to apply to all mankind, we cannot exclude the possibility that the antithesis here is the antithesis between what we may call a Noahide life-style and a Sinaitic life-style, the one being characteristic of God-fearing Gentiles, the other of loyal Jews. At least this is the attitude of S. Schechter in his Aspects of Rabbinic Theology (1909; New York: Schocken, 1961) 206-207 as well as men like E.P. Sanders in his Paul, 210-211. Based upon my research I believe these men have hit the nail on the head in laying before their readers the very heart of the matter at hand.

The one instance from our other sources which might shed some light comes from Eusebius, where he describes Symmachus as an Ebionite, that is, as one who strongly maintained 'that the law ought to be kept in a more strictly Jewish fashion' (Ecclesiastical History, 6.17). What "a more strictly Jewish fashion" means is presumably indicated by Eusebius' earlier description of the Ebionites as those who "insisted on the complete observance of the law", and who "were zealous to insist on the literal observance of the law" (Ecclesiastical History, 3.27.2, 3). This simply serves to confirm that "to live in a Jewish fashion" was a relative term and did not imply a pattern of behavior precisely defined or widely agreed among Jews.

Answer for yourself: What was it that Paul accused Peter of requiring from the Gentile believers?

In the LXX of Esther we read that 'many of the Gentiles were circumcised and judaized for fear of the Jews' (8.17 LXX). So also Theodotus: Jacob would not give Dinah to the son of Hamor "until all the inhabitants of Shechem were circumcised and judaized)" (Eusebius, Praep. Evang. 9.22.5). In Josephus we read a similar characterization of one Metilius, the commander of the Roman garrison in Jerusalem, who "saved his life by entreaties and promises to judaize and even to be circumcised" (Jewish War, 2.17.10 §454). **In each instance 'judaizing' is obviously not the same as being circumcised: it denotes rather the range of possible degrees of assimilation to Jewish customs (Jewish customs are only expressions of Biblical Commandments observed), with circumcision as the end-point of judaizing; but evidently one could 'judaize' without going the whole way (circumcision). It must therefore describe that range of conduct covered by the term God-fearer (or within Palestine also the term 'resident alien') and signify an embracing of much that characterized the Jewish way of life, enough at any rate for the judaizing individual to be acceptable to devout Jews.**

Answer for yourself: You have to ask yourself if you as a Christian embrace enough of the Jewish way of life, as understood as a life-style of Biblical observed commandments, to be acceptable to devout Jews and be included in the Israel of God? If not, after all this evidence presented I would think I would seriously rethink my relationship with God and what Covenant I have along with its Covenant stipulations and requirements.

Still more interesting is the passage a little later in The Jewish War, not least because it describes the situation in Syria in the mid-60s - "The whole of Syria was a scene of frightful disorder; every city was divided into two camps, and the safety of one party lay in their anticipating the other ... For, though believing that they had rid themselves of the Jews, still each city had its Judaizers, who aroused suspicion; and while they shrank from killing offhand this equivocal element in their midst, they feared these neutrals much as pronounced aliens. (Jewish War, 2.18.2 §§462-3)

Here we have confirmation that a considerable number of Gentiles in Syrian cities (including of course Antioch) were attracted sufficiently to Judaism as to have identified or associated them-selves in some marked degree with it. Moreover, these Gentiles are further described as 'those who had become mixed up with the Jews', and which elsewhere in such a context denotes social intercourse including guest friendship, living with, and sexual intercourse. This strongly suggests a degree of affiliation to Judaism which made possible a high level of social intercourse between Jew and Gentile, including not least unrestricted table-fellowship. Moreover, when taken together with Josephus' testimony in Jewish War, 7.3.3 §45, **it clearly implies that the Jewish community at Antioch in the 50s and early 60s had attracted large numbers of Gentiles and that many of these Gentiles were sufficiently ready to conform to Jewish practices as to make possible regular social intercourse including at least guest friendship and table-fellowship. But understand those which did not share such sentiments were problematic for the men from James and would literally cause the forthcoming Acts 15 Council to settle the**

problems.

THE SINNER

A sinner is determined as such precisely by his relation to the law. 'Sinner' was becoming more and more a technical term for someone who either broke the law or did not know the law - the two criticisms of course often amounting to the same thing.

Matt 7:21-23

21 Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven.

22 Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works?

23 And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, **ye that work iniquity.**

If we look up the word for "iniquity" in the Greek along with its root word you will be amazed:

The Strong's # for iniquity is #458 anomia:

1) the condition of without law

a) because ignorant of it

b) because of violating it

2) contempt and violation of law, iniquity, wickedness

I have spent considerable time trying to reach you with the truths long overlooked by Gentile Christianity. Yeshua definitely said that he will not "know" certain people (the term in Greek means sexual intercourse and applies to the Marriage Supper where Groom Messiah and Bride (believers) become one flesh). Besides this he said that the reason that these will be rejected as "foolish virgins" is that they practice "iniquity". I know you think that such a condition cannot refer to you let alone the typical Christian. But that is exactly to whom it refers; especially the Gentile Christian! Let me show you.

To those whom Yeshua tells to depart and to whom will not be allowed to become one flesh with Messiah are those who, by definition, are "without the law". In Antioch Paul had been leading a Church which had laid aside their personal requirements in many areas of the "Law". Many of Paul's followers were "ignorant" of such Laws in the Covenant of Noah because they had not been taught by their spiritual leaders. So what else is new today? Mainline Gentile Christianity is totally ignorant for the most part of the Laws of Noah and the Covenant of Noah. Being ignorant of these Laws assures you that most likely you are not observing and obeying many of them; thus you are violating them and don't even know you are. I assure you that you will find out when you die. But even more so being a traditional Pauline Christian you have grown up in church with a "contempt" for the Law as Pauline theology had been taught to you more than the faith of Yeshua. I have taken great pains to show you that other like you had been deceived by Paul in Antioch and sternly rebuked by the men from James because of it. As if that was not enough such a condition of ignorance of the Laws of Noah by the Christian today is called "wickedness" and you surely understand this since these same Laws were once considered "necessary" and were said to have "seemed good to the Holy Spirit". **They still do!**

Answer for yourself: I wonder if the Holy Spirit considers Paul's contradictions to these Laws which God considers "good" and "necessary"?

Now the facts: The root word for "iniquity" in the Greek is Strong's # 459 anomos (an'-om-os); from 1 (as a negative particle) and 3551; lawless, i.e. (negatively) **not subject to (the Jewish) law; (by implication, a Gentile), or (positively) wicked**: KJV-- without law, lawless, transgressor, unlawful, wicked.

Answer for yourself: Did you notice that Yeshua's implication was for Gentiles especially; Gentiles who are ignorant and disobedient and violate and have contempt for Law; in this instance the Laws of Noah, which are the laws defining their Covenant (besides many of these are reiterated in the Laws of Moses)?

Answer for yourself: Dear one have you not seen that this was the problem with Paul at Antioch and that his theology has literally infected the hearts and minds of good non-Jews yet today who pride themselves not "being under the Law but under grace"?

SINNERS (GENTILES) ...ARE LAWLESS...TORAHLESS

Thus already in the LXX of the Psalms the link between 'sinner' and 'lawlessness' is well established (Ps. 27.3; 54.3; 91.7; 100.8; 124.3; 128.3 - LXX); the sinner is defined as one who forsakes the law, who does not seek God's statutes (Ps. 118.53, 155 - LXX). And in 1 Maccabees 'sinners' and 'lawless men' are parallel terms (1 Macc. 1.34; 2.44).

More striking is the way in which 'sinner' becomes synonymous with 'Gentile' - already in Psalm 9.17, and again in 1 Maccabees 2.48; also Psalms of Solomon 1.1; 2.1-2 (cf. Tob. 13.8; Jub. 23.23-4; 4 Ezra 4.23). It was evidently a well -established usage by the time of the first Christians: 'sinners' and 'Gentiles' stand as variant versions of the same Q saying (Luke 6.33- 'even sinners do the same'; Matt. 5.47 - 'even Gentiles do the same'); and the same equivalence is probably implied in the saying of Yeshua, 'the Son of Man is betrayed into the hands of sinners' (Mark 14.41//Matt.26.45; Luke 24.7), as the parallel with Mark 10.33 also suggests. Gentiles are 'sinners' by reason of the fact that they do not have the law and are disqualified by the law from covenant righteousness (cf. Clementine Homilies 11.16).

Having taken all that went before into consideration now let us hear clearly the implications from the ministry of Yeshua and its meaning for today's Christian

Still more striking for us is the evidence of how the word was used in relation to Yeshua's ministry, as a description of those within Israel whose way of life should have debarred them from the table -fellowship of the devout Jew. It applied not just to those who had abused the written Torah (Luke 7.37, 39 - a prostitute?; cf. Matt 21.32), but to tax collectors (Luke 19.7; cf. Matt. 5.46 with Luke 6.32), and it would seem also to other trades which put the practitioner beyond the pale of what was deemed acceptable (Mark 2.15-17; Matt. 11.19; Luke 7.34; Luke 15.1-2).

Here we are evidently once again back in an area where the limits of acceptability were being determined by the multiplying halakoth of the Pharisaic rabbis. That is to say, not just disobedience to the Torah but disregard for the rabbinic rulings on what obedience to the Torah entailed, that was what showed a person to be a sinner. This has become more explicit in the Mishnah: a sinner (rasha) is one who treats halakic rulings lightly (m. Edayyot 5.6; m. Abot 4.7; 5.14).

Given that so much of the Pharisaic teaching of our period was concerned with the limits of acceptable table fellowship, and given that the context of Galatians 2.15 is a dispute precisely about whether and under what circumstances a devout Jew could have table-fellowship with Gentiles, the presumption becomes compellingly strong that "sinners" in verse 15 belongs to the same range of usage.

That is, "sinners" was a word used of the Gentile believers by the men from James to express their disagreement or dismay at the table-fellowship being practiced by Peter and the other Jewish believers.

And it had the connotation of 'unclean' (= Gentile = sinner), one who by his very race was legally disqualified from participating in the table-fellowship of a faithful Jew: 'How could you Peter, a true-born Jew, have table-fellowship with a Gentile sinner?'

THE GOSPEL OF PAUL.....VS....THE GOSPEL OF YESHUATHE FINAL WORD!

The men from James came with the authority of the Jerusalem Church and found fault at table-fellowship with the non-Jews and Peter, Barnabas, and Paul because "necessary" Commandments were being violated under the authority of Paul at Antioch.

In reality the Acts 15 Council was called to do only two things:

- The Messianic Jews were to repent of forcing all non-Jews to be circumcised before coming to God
- They Messianic Church of Jerusalem, and James, corrected the teachings of Paul as he was teaching his own Gospel which led both Jews and non-Jews to break their Covenant and its Covenant stipulations.

Rom 2:16 16 In the day when God shall judge the secrets of men by Jesus Christ according to **my gospel**. (KJV)

Rom 16:25 25 Now to him that is of power to establish you according to **my gospel**..

Answer for yourself: Forgive me but was not Paul supposed to be teaching Jesus' Gospel?

Those who follow Pauline Christianity instead of the faith of Yeshua still are breaking many of their Covenant responsibilities and stipulations today in the Christian Church. We must no longer follow Pauline Christianity over the "Christianity of Yeshua". **Dear one, the Gospel of Paul is not the Gospel of Yeshua.** They clash and conflict. And table-fellowship is only where it starts as it can be shown that Paul's Gospel contradicts the teachings of Jesus and his religious belief system in numerous places; even in serious matters like atonement and redemption! You may have never noticed this in reading the New Testament, but your failure to discern this does not mean it does not exist! Truly, these two "Gospels" oppose each other in basic tenants. It is to these very issues and the need of repentance in these areas where we must now consider if we expect to be held in good standing within the "true" Church of Yeshua.

Shalom and blessings.



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ACTS 15-THE FIRST CHURCH COUNCIL AND AFTERMATH-IS THIS YOUR CHISTIAN EXPERIENCE?

***Matt 28:18-20** 18 And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth. 19 Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: 20 Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world. Amen. (KJV)*

This new "Jesus Movement" faced a problem of the highest magnitude within twenty years after the Cross of Christ: "What are we going to do with these Gentiles who claim to be followers of Yeshua Meshichenu (Yeshua, our Jewish Messiah)? The solution: "We should not make it difficult for the Gentiles who are turning to God." (Acts 15: 19-21). **Yacov (James) and the head zakenim (elders) then proceeded to mention "4 abstentions" for these Gentiles who wished to be part of the Jesus Movement:**

- **Don't eat food polluted by idols;**
- **Don't engage in sexual immorality;**
- **Don't eat the meat of strangled animals;**
- **Don't eat blood.**

To twentieth century Western people this list seems pretty simple--the only abstention those in our society have to worry about is #2--sexual immorality. So now it's clear sailing for all those Gentiles. Thanks a lot for reading this article.

But wait, that is not as simple as the English makes it seem, for Yeshua is Jewish, and without a proper understanding of the language of Hebrew, the Greek language from which the Hebrew was translated, the history, and the culture of the first century, you and I cannot be assured we have the correct understanding of this Acts 15 passage. Let us never forget that obedience is better than any sacrifice today as well as yesterday. **Also, let us understand that Jesus' church deemed that these things discussed in Acts 15 were "NECESSARY" for those who wished to be included in Jesus' Movement and church.**

***Acts 15:28-29** 28 For it seemed good to the Holy Ghost, and to us, to lay upon you no greater burden than these necessary things; 29 That ye abstain from meats offered to idols, and from blood, and from things strangled, and from fornication: from which if ye keep yourselves, ye shall do well. Fare ye well. (KJV)*

Answer for yourself: How certain that you have been taught, let alone follow, these "NECESSARY" things today? If you find out that you have not been taught, nor follow such things, are you a member in "good standing" in Jesus' church?

As you read this article, as well as others I have researched and prepared, you should have easily seen that reading the English often leads us astray from the mind of Christ. You may say "You mean it's not quite that easy and clear?" You may say "You mean to tell me there may be more to understanding what James is telling the Gentiles than meets the eye? "Do you mean more information is assumed as "given" in this situation than is normally understood by the normal Christian nowadays?" That is exactly what I am telling you as you will shortly understand. Let us investigate.

WHY SHOULD THE CHRISTIAN BE AWARE OF THE HISTORICAL SITUATION IN THE BOOK OF ACTS?

The historical situation in Acts 15 must be uncovered in order to understand the impact importance of these 4 abstentions for Gentile believers in the first century, so we as good Christians and followers of Jesus and "the Christ" can then apply that understanding of Biblical truth to today's circumstances. Add to this process the tragic observation that the vast majority of today's Gentile Christian congregations totally ignore these 4 simple instructions and it becomes clear that this decision from long ago has been blatantly misunderstood and or ignored for the past 19 centuries. Today's Christians who understand Yeshua's words "why do you say you love me and not obey ye" should be open to repentance when in-depth Bible study recovers long-lost truths which never changed that both challenge and correct their belief system and conduct. We must, with a good conscience, apply these truths to our lives today, regardless if they seem different from what you have heard or weren't previously aware of or not. If today's Christians want to uncover these truths and their significance for their lives, it will be a difficult but not an unfruitful task, but such is our test of the level of love we have for God. Let us continue in our search for truth for our love for God is manifested through obedience and not a mental faith which lacks righteous responses in obedience to *"every word that proceeds from the mouth of God."* This is of major importance if we truly love God, not to mention the rewards and treasure laid up in Heaven in our account that comes only in response to obedience. .

THE HISTORICAL SITUATION IN ACTS 15...INTRODUCING THE GOD-FEARERS

It is important as we begin to understand "who" these Gentile believers were that were being spoken of by James. The overwhelming majority, if not all, of these Gentiles wanted to be accepted as full participants in this Jewish faith in the Jewish Messiah. These non-Jews to whom James referred were in a special category of Gentiles called "Godfearers." Let's investigate these questions:

- 1) Who were Godfearers?
- 2) What was their belief and practice?
- 3) How did they fit into the theological and historical scheme of the time?
- 4) As Christians are we considered "Godfearing?"

WHO WERE THE GODFEARERS?

"Godfearers" in the technical sense of the word used by both Luke and Josephus. The terms "Sebomenoi" and or "Phoboumenoi" refer to that special group of Gentiles who worshipped in synagogues and adopted a Jewish belief system and a Jewish lifestyle for themselves, stopping just short of formal conversion (failed to be circumcised) and becoming proselytes.

The word Sebonenoi (with or without Theos) means "Godfearer" and is based on a parallel term for worshippers of pagan deities. Implicit in the term are the concepts that these people claim to worship the only true God, and that they worship Him with specific acts, not just with their "mental

attitude." The Book of Acts mentions Pheboumenos five times, and mentions sebonenos six times with or without the addition word "Theos-god" to denote Gentile adherents to the Jewish faith who were NOT proselytes. In this context, Bauer states that these two terms are a "functional equivalent" of each other. Thus, these Godfearers were NOT merely well-intentioned Gentiles walking around worshipping the God of Israel in their own private non-structured way or in a way that leaned on their own understanding. Rather, there were certain requirements and Laws which must be adhered to and obeyed to be considered as a "Godfearer."

Emil Schurer quotes archeological inscriptions which point to "a defined category of Gentile Godfearers attached to the Jewish community." The Dictionary of the New Testament Theology adds that "Sebonenos" was the regular term for non-Jews who attached themselves the synagogue in this precise and specific way. The clear conclusion reached about both terms in Acts (i.e. phoboumenoi and sebomenoi) is that "with this concept...we are dealing with a technical term (to be distinguished from Theosebes (godliness) which specifically describes a defined category of Gentiles associated with the synagogue.

It cannot be emphasized too strongly that the first Gentile believers in Yeshua as "the Messiah" mentioned in the Book of Acts are from this special and technical realm of Godfearers, as the Greek terms clearly indicate, and are NOT Gentiles who only felt warmth and attraction to the God of Israel. The Godfearers ALREADY had received considerable Jewish training and had made a considerable Jewish commitment as I am attempting to demonstrate through the continued teachings of Bet Emet Ministry. The Theological Dictionary of the New Testament sums up the situation: "Thus the first conversion of a Gentile under Peter in Acts 10 is strictly the winning of a marginal member of the Jewish community (Cornelius was ALREADY a worshipper of the true God of the Bible before the message of the Messiah was brought to him) for the Christian community." According to Schurer, John 12:20 probably reflects this group in describing "Greeks who went up to worship (at the Temple) at the Festival (Passover) time"

What most misunderstand about the Acts 10 account regarding Cornelius is that he was recognized as ALREADY "having a relationship with God" by the Jews. The message of Messiah through the Great Commission was brought to him for the benefit of the Jews as well as himself, for the religious and political environment of that day precluded "Gentile-Godfearers" from fellowshiping with Jews. Peter's reaction in witnessing that Cornelius (a Gentile) received the same gift of the Spirit as they had previously at Pentecost was the deciding factor in reporting to Jerusalem that the "middle wall" of separation between the Jews and Gentiles was removed, and it was removed because of the ministry of Yeshua which continued long after his resurrection and ascension. See my other articles about Shammai and Hillel and existing prejudices concerning the Gentiles.

WHAT WERE THE RELIGIOUS BELIEFS AND PRACTICES OF THE GODFEARERS?

It is important to realize that these Gentile Godfearers were integral parts of synagogues within Israel and throughout the Diaspora (exile). And as noted above, they worshipped God with specific Jewish acts, not just mental assent. These acts included:

- 1). Adherence to the 7-part Noachide commandments
- 2). Adherence to the Sabbath commandment
- 3). Adherence to many but not all of the dietary laws

These Laws, as seen in Second Temple Judaism (Judaism during the era 100 B.C.E.--70 C.E.), is the bedrock of Jewish observance even today. Any other Jewish observances beyond these would have been a matter of personal choice (Isa 56). Isaiah chapter 56 informs us that one a Gentile becomes part of the Israel of God through faith and repentance with limited obedience to the Commandments (the Laws of Noah), then he has the

"choice" to choose other Commandments over and above his "minimum" that can be incorporated into his life because do so "pleases God".

These Gentile Godfearers were encouraged by Jewish teachers within the synagogue structure to be circumcised, thus completing their "conversion" to Judaism; and according to G. F. Moore, *"it was not uncommon for the next generation (their children) to be circumcised.* This means the second generation of non-Jews usually made full conversion and were considered "born again" Jews. It is here we find the original and true meaning of this over-worked and sadly misinterpreted term as used in Gentile Christianity today.

CORNELIUS, THE GODFEARER

Cornelius, the Gentile Godfearer mentioned in Acts 10, was a centurion at Caesarea and serves as a good example of what a Godfearer did religiously. First, he and his household were devout (Eusebes) and Godfearing (Phoboumenos Ton Theon), a double adjective referring to him and his family which shows their exemplary lives characterized by Jewish norms and values. Please understand when I say "Jewish norms and values" I am not asserting conversion to Judaism, but let's face it, Jewish values and norms happened to be expressions of BIBLICAL VALUES AND NORMS! Luke also mentions that he prayed constantly to God and gave alms liberally to people in need (which the Rabbis call tzedekah). These two actions (prayer and alms giving) would be actions even beyond the call of "Jewish duty," even more than the minimum for Jews. Interestingly enough, one afternoon during his regular 3 o'clock prayer time ("ninth hour" was a prescribed Temple prayer time which survives in synagogue practice today and was the hour evening incense was offered in the Temple) an angel came to Cornelius in Caesarea (a totally Gentile-built and Gentile-run city), to tell him that his prayer that his alms "had come up for a memorial" before God. That means that they he been accepted by God in the same way that the incense at the Temple and the smoke of a burnt offering "went up" and were accepted by God. The same Greek word (snebenov) is used to translate in the Septuagint the Hebrew word for offering: "olah"-literally, "an ascending." Then the angel instructs Cornelius, to get in touch with Peter, who was in Jaffa, and the rest, as they say, is history. But note that what Cornelius did to deserve the commendation were Jewish religious acts and not his faith (not just any old good deeds would do) and that they (his righteous works) were accepted by the Jewish God using Jewish terminology and concepts, even though Cornelius was "technically" a Gentile.

Now for a real shocker, Cornelius was "accepted by God" and this condition existed long before Peter came to preach to him about Yeshua for Acts 10:35 states such. In fact, Peter is flabbergasted when this revelation (that Gentiles who turned from idols to serve the living God were equally acceptable to God as were Jews) become real to him for he realized that the stigma put upon the Gentile Godfearers by "pious" Jews headed by Shammai were totally false and such bigotry had prevented Israel from obeying God by not becoming a "light to the Gentiles" as was their calling. Once you understand that Shammai led Israel to believe that no Gentile was worthy of the world to come or of Eternal Life, then you can understand Peter's startled reaction. God was correcting the situation and news of this would quickly turn Jerusalem around.

Let us never forget that there were more than just this one man who was a Godfearer in Israel, in that there was a whole group of Godfearers at that time all around the Roman world who totally identified themselves with the Jewish community, except for circumcision which was the final step in commitment as a Jewish proselyte.

Many Gentiles, while not prepared to enter this Jewish community as full proselytes through circumcision, were attracted by the simple monotheism of Jewish synagogue worship and by the ethical standards of the Jewish way of life. We may indeed say that Cornelius had every qualification short of circumcision which could satisfy Jewish requirement for full inclusion into Israel with equal rights (own land, hold offices in synagogues). The middle-wall of inequality as not removed. It would be such Godfearers who would form the nucleus of the Christian community in one city after another. Sadly, the Godfearers would one day be replaced with "organized religion" in the form of anit-Semitic Constantinian theology.

HOW DID GODFEARERS FIT INTO THE HISTORICAL-THEOLOGICAL SCHEME OF THE WORLD AT THAT TIME?

Obviously, as we have seen, Godfearers were more than "pagans" or "foreigners" but less than proselytes. Let's examine now these differing communities of people and their status in the eyes of the Jewish community during Second Testament times.

CLASSES OF GENTILES: PROSELYTES, GODFEARERS, AND FOREIGNERS

Underlying the worldview of the Greco-Roman culture at the time is an unsympathetic attitude towards Jews. In Greek and Roman literature of the time the judgments about Jews are in general very derogatory. Seen in its most militant state, during Selucid rule, Greek culture felt that Judaism was extremely old-fashioned and too highly nationalistic to fit in with the concept of the modern Greek world. Roman culture, beginning in 70 B.C.E. in Israel under Pompey, tolerated Jewish belief as long as it allowed for Rome to have the final governmental power. Rome tended to want to keep peace in its provinces and allowed different groups under its rule to have their own religious and cultural differences. Jewishness to Rome was a "quaint," unattractive religion which served well to keep the Jewish nation "unified" and serving Roman interest.

Passages from writers of the time such as Josephus, Juvenal, and Tertullian give us the impression that the Greco-Roman culture saw Jewishness as quite ridiculous. Thus, becoming a Godfearing person was not a popular action designed to move a person to a more influential sphere, in fact, it would have quite the opposite effect.

Living within Israel itself at the time there were Godfearers, exemplified by Cornelius and presumably also the Centurion in Luke 7 and Matt. 10, but making proselytes in an active "missionary" way was not common within Israel. As a rule, proselytes (full converts) were welcomed by the Jews and regarded very highly, but there was in Palestine no active propaganda to further the cause of proselytism. Godfearers stood outside of this acceptance until they fully converted.

However, proselytism and Godfearers were very active in the Diaspora (the Jewish communities outside of Israel). According to Josephus in Antioch and Syria large numbers of Gentiles attended Jewish services. In Damascus almost the whole female part of the population was devoted to Judaism and it was quite often women of higher social standing who followed this trend. Evidently these Jewish communities encouraged and welcomed both Gentile proselytes and Godfearers.

Hellenistic Judaism developed an offensive against paganism. They were eager to show up the immorality and senselessness of idolatry and display the rationality and sublimity of Jewish monotheism. Hellenistic Judaism had an apologetic ideology as there were many Godfearers who accepted the one God of the Jews, but not all the Laws of the same God. Hellenistic Judaism had almost succeeded in making Judaism a world religion in the literal sense of the words. Early Christianity then won the victory over paganism using Jewish customs, traditions, and teachings.

This knowledge of history sheds much light on James' closing remarks to the zakenim (elders) and sh'likim (apostles) in Acts 15:21:

"For Moses (the Pentateuch) has been preached in every city (in the Diaspora) from the earliest times (since 722B.C.E., over 700 years) and is read in the synagogue on every Sabbath."

In other words, these Gentile Godfearers had ALREADY received Moses' instructions concerning how people are to live (as taught in the Noachide and Sinaitic covenants since when Moses [Pentateuch-first 5 books of the Bible] is taught, such teaching encompasses both the Laws of Noah and the Mosaic Covenant). Through attending synagogues in their own cities, Gentiles were ALREADY

familiar with the basics of having a relationship with the one true God of Israel. James, the pastor of the Messianic Movement within Judaism, is **REQUIRING** these 4 further instructions for Gentiles who want to be Messianists and a part of Jesus' church. Although these are sometimes seen as 4 of the 7 Laws of Classification of the Laws of Noah deeper study reveals that they apply in this situation to how the Jews and non-Jews were to have table fellowship together. [This fact is made plain by our study of the Antioch Problem which is available for your study.](#)

Notice, that it seemed "good to them and the Holy Spirit" to REQUIRE these adherences of Gentiles. These things were called "NECESSARY."

Acts 15:28-29 28 For it seemed good to the Holy Ghost, and to us, to lay upon you no greater burden than these necessary things; 29 That ye abstain from meats offered to idols, and from blood, and from things strangled, and from fornication: from which if ye keep yourselves, ye shall do well. Fare ye well. (KJV)

This was done to make sure that there is no question as to what the "bottom line" of observance is by Godfearing Gentiles: the Noachide commandments, the Sabbath and dietary laws, and these 4 requirements. **These were "NECESSARY" according to Acts 15:28-29.**

Let us be truthful:

- 1). Now, do you practice and have working knowledge of what these "necessary" things are as taught by the early church and does your church teach the same things?
- 2). Although you are in "good standing" with you pastor or your church; are you in "good standing" with God as a non-Jewish believer if you don't adhere to these "NECESSARY" things?
- 3). Are you aware that the Sabbath is Saturday and not Sunday as Christianity practices?
- 4). Are you aware that one of these "necessary" things is adherence to "clean and unclean" food laws for the non-Jew? Understand that this is not required by the Laws of Noah but necessary voluntarily if a non-Jew is to have table fellowship with the Jews around the Biblical Festivals and Sabbaths.

This is only the tip of the iceberg for those who wish to identify with the Jesus Movement of the Bible.

EXACTLY WHAT WAS EXPECTED OF GENTILES BY THE JEWISH COMMUNITY AT THAT TIME AND WHAT WAS NOT EXPECTED?

The Jewish religious concepts of the Second Temple period understood that the other nations of the world who did not follow the one true God were Godless (goyim-at least without the true God) and or pagan. However, for purposes of God's judgment of other nations (including his right to judge them), the Sinaitic covenant did not apply to these "goyim," having been given exclusively to Israel. Don't get tripped up by failing to understand that **WITHIN THE MOSAIC COVENANT AND LAWS IS CONTAINED ALL THE LAWS IN THE COVENANT OF NOAH.** Conversely, there were many Laws contained in the Mosaic Covenant that were not included in the Covenant of Noah. Instead the rabbis felt, as seems clear from the passage in Gen. 9:1-18, there is a covenant for all the children of Noah (i.e. the whole world), including not only people but all living creatures (see v.10). Based on this section of Scripture, **the rabbis found 7 major requirements incumbent for all nations:** 1) no idolatry; 2) no incest/adultery; 3) no murder; 4) no blasphemy (profanation of the name of God); 5) no theft; 6) justice towards others (see Gen. 9:5...); 7) no eating flesh with blood in it and or cutting off flesh from a living animals.

To these generally agreed tenents some rabbis added others such as taking blood from a living animal. Several also mention prohibitions against witchcraft and other spiritual sorcery (such things as horoscopes, ouiji boards,

palm readers, etc.) such as found in Dt. 18:10-11.

These then are the major categories by which God would judge all nations. To the rabbis it was clear that although God loved all His creatures and His creation, the goyim had turned away from Him and would not even follow the Noachide commandments. "Again if the children of Noah could not abide and observe the 7 commandments which were enjoined upon them, how much less could they have accepted and fulfilled all the commandments of the Sinaitic Law of Moses?"

The identifying terms used by the rabbis at this time for these goyim include: idolaters, the wicked, the enemies of Israel, the enemies of God, and the others. **There was a different category, however, for those goyim who did abide by the Noachide covenant. They were called foreigners or aliens.** Any Gentile who lived in the land of Israel and among Israelites was enjoined, at the very least, to keep the Noachide covenant. This was their "bottom line" and if they did not, they were to be expelled. If they did keep the Laws of Noah, they were no longer called goyim, but gerim. **The Talmud delineates them further by the new term ger toshev. These (ger toshev) were foreigners living in the land of Israel who were keeping the 7 Noachide commandments. By the time of the Septuagint (about 200 B.C.E.) the translators used the term "fearers" for the righteous outside of natural Israel in contrast to the term proselytes, those righteous Gentiles who formally identified with Israel through conversion which included circumcision, sacrifice, and mikveh (immersion).**

WHAT WAS THE NEXT STEP FOR THE GERIM WHO WANTED TO BECOME FULL JEWS?

The first "gerim" are mentioned in the Exodus narrative. Among the Jews who left Egypt there were Egyptians who also left their homes in Egypt and crossed the Red Sea, becoming part of the people of Israel (Ex. 12:38). Although they were known as "aliens-gerim" (simply meaning that they were not physical descendants of Jacob), they could be circumcised, thus formally converting to this very early form of Judaism, then partake of the Passover meal with the rest of Israel (at this point, Passover was the only Jewish festival). **Note the differentiation between "foreigner" in Ex. 12:43 and the "alien who lives among you":**

- **The foreigner may NOT eat the Passover (he is not circumcised and therefore not Jewish-Ex. 12:48), but**
- **The alien who is circumcised along with his/her household (they converted to Judaism and had become proselytes) MAY EAT the Passover (they are considered Jewish).**

Answer for yourself: But what of "native-born" Jews?

native-born Jews: "The same law applies to the native-born and alien." According to Ex. 12:19, the community of Israel is made up of aliens (believers/converts/proselytes who are circumcised) and native-born Jews. Consequently, these "gerim toshevim" who wanted to fully convert always could do so by becoming circumcised and then continuing to follow the Jewish way of life, which then adopted and followed the covenant at Mt. Sinai (Ex. 24) and the attending Laws. Note also that Sabbath observance was technically commanded BEFORE the acceptance of the Sinaitic code (Ex. 20:10 and 23:12). Then although they (Ger Toshevim) were recognized by outward appearances as "aliens," they were now "Jews" in that they had left behind their old country and family and now were subsequently circumcised in order to be "part of the Jewish community." Likewise they had been "adopted" by the native-born Jews as "their own." The rabbis' term for these Ger Toshevim who became circumcised ("proselytes") was **ger hazedek (righteous foreigners)**. How many proselytes there were down through the centuries is impossible to determine, but the rabbis are clear about the proselyte's relationship to the rest of Israel: **"A proselyte is like a newborn child."** **Do you see the comparison to being "born-again?" The proselyte is, however, required and expected to be as strictly observant as the native-born Jew, including paying the**

Temple tax. The book of Ruth, of course, portrays the most beautiful example of how God can highly honor a proselyte, by choosing her as the great-grandmother of David.

After the building of the Second Temple there was a recognized procedure for proselytes. For men, there was circumcision, followed by immersion (mikveh), then offering a sacrifice at the Temple. For women there was just the mikveh and Temple sacrifice. For Diaspora proselytes the Temple sacrifice was probably waived, or at least postponed, because of the great distance involved and its attendant difficulty to achieve..

As previously noted, the Godfearers' observance of the Law was located between the full proselyte (circumcised) and the gerim toshev (non circumcised). **Circumcised Ger toshev were known as ger hashair (foreigners of the gate). To the Godfearer's observance of the Noachide covenant they added Sabbath and dietary Law observance.** It seem that Godfearers stopped just short of circumcision which would mean total and formal conversion, thus no longer being considered a Godfearer but Ger hashair or proselyte in full conversion to Judaism (a good example is Cornelius who lacked circumcision). The reasons for their not formally joining Judaism are not clear to us twentieth century people. Some scholars, like Bruce, maintain that circumcision was both painful and shameful for men in that culture. Some also might have been fearful of anti-Semitism. **At any rate, we do know that these Godfearers were every bit as Jewishly observant as their Jewish friends as they had been undergoing discipling and instruction in their local synagogues. These people (Godfearers) were not just well-intentioned "Gentiles," but Jewishly educated and committed to the Jewish way of life which was the pattern given to Israel by God at Sinai.** It was "this pattern of obedience" which was spoken in 70 languages to the 70 nations at Sinai, for God called all men everywhere to repent and follow His will which was spoken to all the world at Sinai. Only Israel responded with a "yes" as seen in their memorial statement "we will do all that You say!" To this commitment God would in response call them a "holy people and a holy nation and a royal priesthood" which was to equip the nation of Israel to function as a mediator between God and mankind. Israel's function is still to bring the Gentiles to God for as Romans 9 states

Thus, Godfearing Gentiles, like our example of Cornelius, probably were more deeply devoted to Judaism than many native-born Jews.

In summary, let us tabulate our results from our search.

I. Goyim: idolators, wicked, pagans,

II. Foreigners (Ger toshev):

- **Non Jews living in Israel**
- **Any Gentile who wanted to be righteous (i.e. "saved)**
- **Required to observe the 7 Noachide commandments**

III. Godfearers (Ger hashair)

- **Required to observe the 7 & Noachide commandments**
- **Required to observe the Sabbath (expect voluntarily)**
- **Required to observe certain dietary Laws plus others as they choose**
- **Expected to maintain synagogue discipleship where "Moses is preached" and not Paul**
- **Lack circumcision**

IV. Jews: Native Born -plus- Proselyte

- **Proselytes were given all the requirements listed above for the Godfearer**
- **Required circumcision for males plus mikveh**
- **Required mikveh for females**

- Sacrifice in Temple (optional in Diaspora)**
- **Pay Temple tax yearly**

WHAT DOES ALL THIS MEAN FOR THE CHRISTIAN CONCERNING ACTS 15?

The vision related to Peter in Acts 10 and his subsequent experience with Cornelius and his household proved to Peter (also later to the zakenim (elders) and sh'likim (apostles) that is was **NOT NECESSARY for these "gerim" to proceed with full conversion to Judaism in order to receive God's provision of atonement.** They could come as they were..Godfearing Gentiles. There were only 4 further abstentions they needed to be clear about which actually delineated more clearly their already fully Jewish commitment.

First, they should not eat food sacrificed to idols which gave the appearance that they have not given up idolatrous practices. Notice Rav Shaul and Jochanan HaSchliach also objected to eating food sacrificed to idols in I Cor. 8:10-22; and Rev. 2 because of the outward meaning of the action to highly observant Jews and "weaker brothers" from pagan backgrounds. As this only refers to food, the underlying principle is that we should refrain from any conduct or behavior that gives the appearance that we have not given up idolatrous practices.

Second, they should not engage in sexual immorality as defined by Jewish standards which prohibit sex outside of marriage. Here again, the average "pagan Gentile" would see nothing wrong in visiting the prostitutes dedicated to serving and worshipping pagan Gods. Such conduct was not defined as immoral behavior outside of Israel. But it is a very grievous sin to be followers of the God of Israel (I Cor. 6:9-20), and should likewise be to those Godfearers who wish to follow Him.

Third, abstention from meat of strangled animals (animals killed with the blood still left in the body) and from eating blood in general are a stronger reiteration of the Noachide regulations already understood and practiced by Godfearers (Gen. 9:4). No I am fully aware that few of you kill an animal and eat from it as it slowly dies as do many different peoples in the Far East today, but what you are not aware of is within this categories of commandments is contained the admonition to refrain from eating "unclean" foods as was also given to the Jews. We fail to realize that this distinction in diet was originally given to Noah as he segregated the animals upon the Ark by categories of clean and unclean. Only later would this "oral law" be reiterated to Moses at Sinai when given the Laws of God on stone. James even concedes that these Godfearers probably already knew these abstentions.. "For Moses (the Pentateuch) has been preached in every city..." These tenets would be nothing new for Godfearers.

Fourth, Godfearers were to refrain from "blood." You might think this was a reiteration of the food laws, but it refers in Hebrew to violence and premeditated murder.

See my articles on the Law of Noah for more information.

WHAT DOES ALL THIS MEAN TO ME...A CHRISTIAN?

The Gentile Godfearers in Acts who formed a large share of the core of the congregations founded by Rav Shaul were not practicing pagans converted overnight. They were of a special class of Gentiles who had PREVIOUSLY been taught and nurtured in their local synagogues first, worshipping the God of Israel through Jewish acts and deeds. The "bottom line" of observance for Gentiles in the Jewish world of Second Temple Judaism would have been the 7 Noachide commandments. Godfearing Gentiles, however, went even further, observing the Sabbath, keeping the dietary laws, plus other Jewish observances that they had been taught by their local Jewish leaders. **Thus their lifestyle already identified them as Jews,** even if the final ritual of formal conversion had not yet taken place. Acts 15 describes the full acceptance of these Godfearers by the leadership of Messianic Jews in Jerusalem. The leaders added only 4 additional guidelines which were based on

what the Godfearers were already practicing. I am convinced that James' referral to these "4" additional guidelines included all the "7" as well. If they maintained their Torah based practices, they would have congregations and practices co-equal with that of their Jewish brothers and sisters. If they failed to maintain their Godfearing lifestyles and educational programs, they would fall into the traps of sin that were disrupting the Corinthian congregations.

Gentiles who maintain Torah practices like Biblical Godfearing Gentiles can be assured that they are in "good standing" in Yeshua's church, thus welcomed into full membership and leadership within the Spiritual Body of Messiah today. Those who fail to meet these qualifications should seriously consider if they "be in the faith." Dear brothers and sisters, heed the warning. Ask questions. Study to not be ashamed one day before the LORD. Many may say after studying Hebrew Roots that they wish to formally convert to Judaism, but it is not necessary for full acceptance for the Gentile believer and Godfearer into God's family is not dependent upon conversion within Judaism. That is what Acts 15 was all about, and it set the pattern and stage for Gentile evangelism throughout the world. As long as the Gentile believer (Godfearer) maintain their active Jewish lifestyle, they can rest assured that they are "in the faith once given to the saints."

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CONTROVERSY AT JERUSALEM: LAW OR GRACE? YOU WILL BE SURPRISED!

AN EXAMINATION OF ACTS 15:1-30

*And some men came down from Judea and began teaching the brethren,
"Unless you are circumcised according to the custom of Moses, you cannot
be saved."*

These words in Acts 15:1 introduce an issue which challenged the Christian church soon after its inception and would continue to be debated among the believers for years to come.

Answer for yourself: But where did this controversy originate? Was circumcision really required for non-Jews to be "saved" or was this ordinance imposed upon them by Jews who hated Gentiles so much that they knew that such an ordeal for an adult Gentile male assured that he most likely would not make any attempt to come to the God of the Hebrews?

Answer for yourself: Why was it such a crucial matter for the early church?

Answer for yourself: How did the apostles deal with this challenge and what were the repercussions of their decision?

This essay is an attempt to answer these and other questions surrounding this intriguing central episode in the book of Acts. First, the background and cause of the circumcision question will be considered; secondly, the nature and implications of the question itself; thirdly, the process of debate and decision followed by the Jerusalem council; and finally, the ramifications of the apostles' edict for the early church as a whole and what it means to a follower of Jesus today.

THE CAUSE

In order to trace this issue back to its roots, one must go back to the Old Testament and consider what it has to say about the relationship between Jew and Gentile. In the Garden of Eden and in the world of Noah's day, there was no separation between the two groups for everyone at that time were Gentiles. The Law of Moses given to Israel had not yet been given at Sinai, yet God's Laws existed in an oral form since the Garden of Eden when given to Adam. Certain admonitions and restrictions were given to Noah by God after the flood (Gen. 9:1-7), but these were few and general in nature. These were called the Laws of Noah within the Covenant of Noah given and intended for all mankind to observe, thus providing a way of fellowship and relationship with God. Not until God chose Abraham and his descendants to become his unique and special chosen people, Israel, and not until He raised up Moses to lead the Israelites out of bondage and to

communicate to them His Law, did a clear distinction emerge between Jew and Gentile.

Once the distinction appeared, however, God made it clear that He wished the separation between His people and the pagan nations to be readily apparent at all times (Deut. 7:6). First, all Jews were to undergo circumcision as an indelible mark of their relationship to God (Gen. 17:10-13). Of course, Israel was not the only middle eastern nation to practice circumcision, but for the Jews the ritual had special significance. In addition to this distinguishing mark, God gave the Israelites a detailed and complex set of dietary, religious and social laws designed to remind them of their call to holiness and to prevent them from associating too closely with their Canaanite neighbors (Lev. 20:23-26).

Although Jewishness was largely a matter of ancestry - descent from Abraham, Isaac and Jacob -- it was nevertheless possible for a non-Jew to become part of the nation. If, however, a Gentile wished to leave his pagan gods for the worship of Yahweh and enter in to God's covenant with Israel, he must first be circumcised (Ex. 12:48-49) and then accept the Mosaic Law as binding on himself. One could not claim to be a worshipper of Yahweh and yet refuse to revere and keep the Law.

Over the thousands of years mankind chose not to obey God's ways and lost much of the truth of God, including the revelation of Noah. At Sinai within the Laws of Moses we find the Laws of Noah contained; basically they were reiterated and elaborated upon to Moses. These Noahide statutes (66 laws) were intended for Gentiles and these again plus others which totaled 613 Mitzvot were given to the Jews. At that time there was no other means of approach to God [for both Gentile and Jew] except through the Mosaic ritual and regulations for mankind had lost the revelation of God and the knowledge of the Covenant and Laws of Noah; all that is except the Jewish people. Thus God was required to reiterate them plus others at Sinai once again.

For centuries -- even millennia -- this pattern persisted. Then Yeshua came, bringing with him a Re-Newed Covenant. Prior to Yeshua's coming, Israel had an intense hatred for the Gentiles and such animosity prevented them from making it easier for Gentiles to come to God by being a light to them of the Noahide Covenant with their 66 Laws. One only has to read about Rabbi Shammai to understand the intense hatred of the Jews for the non-Jewish nations (captivities, wars). To make it harder for these non-Jews to know God, the Jews insisted on circumcision, knowing full-well that most pagans and Gentile men who worshipped their false gods through fornication and fertility rites would object to such a sever measure, especially when circumcision was administered to their "organ" of worship since most Gentile nations were into fertility worship and fornication religious rites.

Jesus and his followers were to change that. At first his exclusively Jewish disciples understood the message of the gospel as belonging to the nation of Israel alone (as it had previously been customary to exclude Gentiles except upon full conversion and circumcision), but the Holy Spirit soon directed otherwise (circumcision and full conversion were not required by God for relationship with Gentile believers), and this message spread through Philip to the half-Jewish Samaritans (Acts 8:5-8) and the non-Jewish proselytes to Judaism (Acts 8:26-36), through Peter to the uncircumcised "God-fearers" like the Roman centurion Cornelius (Acts 10:1-2), and finally through Cypriot and Cyrenian disciples to the pagan and idolatrous Gentiles (Acts 11:19-21). With the advent of the apostle Paul's ministry, great numbers of Gentiles began coming to the Lord (Acts 13:48-49) without the need of circumcision. The issue of how these non-Jewish believers were to be incorporated into the church body, therefore, became crucial and it is important to know that the whole of the Galatians letter which seems to be "against the Law" was only concerning the Law of Circumcision which was being imposed incorrectly upon the non-Jews.

Answer for yourself: Was "Messianic" Israel to continue to make it difficult for Gentiles to come to God (as other Jews had done) by requiring circumcision which was never within the Covenant of Noah (given to all the Gentile nations of the world), or would they, since Yeshua, heed his words and the words of his Pastor James and repent and no longer require of Gentiles such an excluding rite?

Answer for yourself: Would the message of Yeshua and his church carry more weight than the anti-Gentile doctrines espoused by the majority of Israel and other Rabbis at that time?

The earliest converts to Christianity had been the Jerusalem Jews who heard Peter's stirring sermon on the day of Pentecost (Acts 2:14-36). They had been "pierced to the heart" by his call for repentance and a call to return to the Torah, and some three thousand of them had been baptized on that first day alone (Acts 2:37, 41). It was only natural, therefore, that these Jewish believers would feel anxious about seeing so many Gentiles entering the fellowship without undergoing the traditional conversion process (especially circumcision). After all, in the recent past no Gentile could be counted among God's people unless he was circumcised and submitted to ALL the Law (613 and not just 66): why should it be any different now?

So it was that while Paul was ministering in the Gentile territories of Asia, he encountered a number of Jewish Christians who had traveled up from the Jerusalem area to make sure that the Gentiles understood their legal obligations as imposed by the present Religious establishment in Jerusalem...circumcision was required by these Gentile hating Jews...but was never required by God according to the Covenant He made with the Gentile world.

THE CONTROVERSY

Paul's Pharisaic background (Phil. 3:5) certainly gave him a ready understanding of the Judaizers' position, but on the basis of his knowledge of the gospel of grace (circumcision was not required), he strongly opposed their teaching.

Let us understand the New Testament correctly; in order to do that often passages have to be read and understood both in a cultural and historical setting if one desires to derive the truth from the passage instead of reading into the passage what he wants it to say. Years later he would explain to the Galatians:

A man is not justified by the works of the Law (CIRCUMCISION) but through faith in Christ Jesus... by the works of the Law (CIRCUMCISION) shall no flesh be justified... if righteousness comes through the Law (CIRCUMCISION) , then Christ died needlessly. (Gal. 2:16,21)

Paul and Barnabas fought the Judaizers in Antioch for some time before it became clear that the debate must be resolved by official means (Acts 15:2). At last the church at Antioch decided to send a delegation, led by Paul and Barnabas, to Jerusalem to consult the apostles and elders there. Whatever was decided at the council would determine the practice of the Gentile believers throughout the Roman Empire and throughout subsequent history.

Arriving at Jerusalem, Paul and his company were welcomed by the apostles and gave a full report of their ministry among the Gentiles (vs. 4). However, when the specific reason for Paul's visit was discussed, some of the believers of Pharisaic background immediately declared their support for the Judaizers. Not only must the Gentile believers be circumcised, they said, but they must be made to observe the Law as proselytes to Judaism had done in the past. Otherwise they were not truly saved (vs. 1,5).

Answer for yourself: Was this really such an important issue?

Answer for yourself: Couldn't the Judaizers have been allowed to prevail to keep the peace, or, as a compromise, couldn't the issue have been left up to individual conscience?

The apostles and elders quickly saw the foolishness of any such superficial means of dealing with the situation. No, it must be discussed and debated thoroughly, and a firm decision made, even though large numbers of Jewish believers and potential believers might be alienated if the ruling were not in the Judaizers' favor. The issue was crucial because it struck at the very center of the Jewish faith -- obedience to the Law "because one is

saved by grace" and not "obedience to the Law to be saved," and that no further works of men (CIRCUMCISION) could add to or complete the salvation given by grace from God and justification of those who trusted in God through the Messianic outreach. If it were deemed necessary for a Gentile believer to accept circumcision and follow the Law "to be saved" (convert to Judaism as previously taught as customary by Biblical Judaism), then this would ultimately lead to an understanding that faith in God was superfluous and that non-Jews were not to approach God except through full conversion. But again God never said that and the Covenant of Noah proves it.

The debate among the apostles and elders went on at length, possibly for several days. They were struggling to get over their bigotry. No doubt many scriptures were consulted, many arguments raised. Luke does not record all the deliberations and all the evidence, but he does supply for us the closing remarks which decided the issue. First Peter rose up to speak, followed by Barnabas and Paul, and the final pronouncement was made by James "the Just", the half-brother of Christ who had become prominent in the Jerusalem church.

THE CONCLUSION

Peter's attempt to persuade his brethren was based on his personal experience of how God had worked in the hearts and lives of the Gentiles who had believed through his ministry. He described how God had not only directed him to share the gospel with pagan people, but had showed His approval by bestowing the Holy Spirit on those who had believed (vs. 8). **By giving the Spirit He had clearly shown that in His sight the Gentile believers (uncircumcised Cornelius) were no different from and no less privileged than the Jewish believers.**

Answer for yourself: This being the case, what grounds were there for saying that the uncircumcised Gentiles were inferior in God's sight and needed to do more to complete their salvation?

Answer for yourself: Had God Himself made a mistake in giving the Spirit prematurely to people who were not truly saved?

Surely not, said Peter.

Answer for yourself: Why, therefore, were the Judaizers attempting to be more strict than God Himself in this matter?

The burden of keeping the Law was heavy, and no man had ever been able to fulfill it completely (vs. 10). Therefore the Law could never be the means by which salvation came. Salvation was through faith in God as a free gift, and this was just as true of the Gentiles as it was of the Jews (vs. 11).

Paul and Barnabas' subsequent address to the council is not recorded, though it is summarized by Luke in verse 12 of the chapter. Their approach was similar to Peter's, in that they argued their case by relating their personal experience of God's mighty work among the Gentiles. Perhaps they related the incident at Lystra where God used Paul to heal a lame Gentile who had believed (Acts 14: 8-10) or told how God had set his stamp of approval on Paul's witness to the Gentiles by reviving him after he was stoned by a mob in the same city (14: 19-20).

In the face of the mounting evidence the crowd was silent, considering carefully the things they were hearing. But the final word must belong to James.

James was known and respected, even among unbelieving Jews, as a pious and Law-abiding man. His testimony in the world was impeccable and his authority highly regarded in the church. Because his love for the Old Testament was so well known, it was likely that the Judaizers believed he would be on their side. They were in for a surprise. James opened his argument with a quotation from the Old Testament, but the verses he gave came not from the Law but from the Prophets. Using a prophecy recorded by Amos, James described how in the past God had revealed that the Gentiles would come in to God's kingdom and be called by His name. God

would surely support and strengthen Israel (vs. 16), but not for her own sake: rather, she would be used to draw the rest of the nations to Himself (vs. 17).

In light of this prophecy, James explained, it would be wrong to hinder the Gentiles from receiving the gospel by putting extra requirements upon them (CIRCUMCISION). The Gentile nations as a whole had never been given the Law (613 which included CIRCUMCISION but only 66 which did not include CIRCUMCISION); the Law (613) had been given to Israel. In the past Gentiles who wished to follow God had joined the Israelite nation through full conversion with circumcision, but this was no longer the case: now they were joining themselves to God without the requirement of full conversion. In the past few Gentiles had believed; now great numbers were coming to faith. It was clear that the Jerusalem church had repented of their bigotry toward Gentiles due to the teachings of Yeshua and the demonstration of the Holy Spirit with the Cornelius incident. It was clear that something significant had changed in Israel's dealings with mankind, and this could not be ignored.

No, the Gentiles were not to be burdened with the observance of the ALL the Law (613 including CIRCUMCISION) to be accepted with Israel and with God any longer....the Messianic part of Biblical Judaism would return to teaching the Laws and Covenant of Noah for the non-Jews to be accepted with God

Rather they were to be encouraged and supported to accept God's gracious gift of Eternal Life which was being taken to them without the rigorous restrictions as before, and this was all done in the name of Yeshua, the one who is the ultimate goal and fulfillment of the Law (Rom. 10:4, Gal. 3:24-25).

Nevertheless, the issue of how to facilitate closer relations between Jewish and Gentile believers could not be ignored. There was no reason that Gentiles should give needless offense to the Jews by continuing in strongly pagan practices, and it was also necessary that Gentile believers should maintain some standard of godly conduct which might make them a testimony to their neighbors both Jewish and Gentile. Perhaps James also had in mind the basic commandments given to Noah prior to the Law, which Jews today still consider to be binding upon Gentiles.

James, Jesus' Pastor of the Jerusalem church ruled that although the Gentiles did not need any longer to be circumcised nor to accept the Mosaic Law (613) to be accepted by Israel or God (make full conversion), they are required by God to follow a few basic principles of morality and tablefellowship (called "necessary" in Acts).

I HATE TO TELL YOU THIS

Firstly, they should stay away from food which had been ritually offered to idols. Later, in his first epistle to the believers at Corinth, Paul would contradict James, pointing out that although such food was not evil in itself, and it was possible for a believer to eat it with a clear conscience, nevertheless Christians ought to refrain from such things if they caused others to stumble (1 Cor. 8:1-13, 10:19-20). In effect Paul was teaching that eating meat sacrificed to idols was permissible if a knowledgeable believer does not see you. This you need to know is a violation of the Covenant of Noah and Moses and constitutes idolatry. This was a second reason for the calling of the Acts 15 council in order to correct Paul in this matter. The Antioch incident will precipitate the convening of the Acts 15 council to deal not only with the Gentile

question but the Pauline Problem.

Answer for yourself: Who are we to believe here...James, Jesus' hand-picked Pastor of the Jerusalem Church, or Paul? Remember the ruling of James and not Paul was called "necessary" and it was said that it, and not Paul's views, "sounded good to the Holy Spirit" according to Luke.

James's second ruling was that the Gentiles should stay away from blood (eating of blood in pagan worship) and sexual immorality, which was an extremely common practice among the pagans who regarded sexual activity with cult prostitutes as a form of worship. But this is only half the story; besides the admonition prohibiting the eating of the soul "blood" as seen in the Gentiles worship with their Eucharist we find that the word used for "fornication" in Acts refers metaphorically to the worship of idols; used of the defilement of idolatry, as incurred by eating the sacrifices offered to idols. Again we have the issue of tablefellowship as before.

Paul also reiterated this teaching to the Corinthians (1 Cor. 6:15-20). The third ruling was not repeated by Paul in his epistles: the Gentiles were to abstain from the meat of strangled animals and from the eating of blood. Again we have the issue of tablefellowship as before.

None of these commandments were unreasonable or unduly burdensome, and they served to give some moral direction to the Gentiles and to remind them to be considerate of their Jewish brethren, while at the same time rebuffing the Judaizers. The whole council, including Paul and Barnabas, seems to have agreed willingly with James. A letter was drafted to send to the Gentile churches in Syria and in Asia Minor to notify them of the council's official decision. This letter served five purposes: one, it established that Gentiles who turned from idols to serve the living God were required to follow and adhere to the Laws of Noah as "minimum" requirements of fellowship with both Israel and God; second it made clear that the Judaizers who had come from Jerusalem were not officially sent by the apostles and did not have their approval (vs. 24); third, it showed unconditional approval for Barnabas and gave Paul a second chance to adhere to the official doctrine of the Jerusalem church which was to be taught among the Gentiles (vs. 25-26); fourth it commended Judas and Silas to the work among the Gentiles (vs. 27); and fifth, it laid out in writing the simple requirements the Gentiles were to follow, so that no legalist might misrepresent or add to them (vs. 28-29) as had been done before.

History teaches us that soon Paul would make an official break with the Jerusalem church shortly after this council's decision and this will require him being called again to Jerusalem to answer charges in Acts 21.

THE CONSEQUENCES

When the meeting at Jerusalem concluded, Barnabas, Paul and their new companions Judas and Silas promptly carried the apostolic letter to the church at Antioch, where it was received with great rejoicing (vs. 30:31). Although the issue of whether or not circumcision and Law-keeping were necessary to salvation remained a hotly debated one in the Christian community for some time afterward, and Paul was soon forced to write a lengthy epistle to the church at Galatia to counteract the grievously effective work of the Judaizers among them (requiring Gentiles to be CIRCUMCISED as a condition of acceptance with Israel and God which God accepted Gentiles in the Noahide Covenant without CIRCUMCISION), there could no longer be a doubt as to the opinion of the leading apostles and elders on this question. The official statement had been made:

Gentiles were justified by faith in God alone, and along with this came the recognition of Yeshua's death and resurrection which was the very catalyst to energize the breaking away from Gentile-hating Judaism a remnant of Jews (the Messianic followers of Yeshua) who would go into all the world and love their neighbors as themselves!

Neither circumcision nor observance of the Mosaic Law was necessary to complete their justification. Jewish believers, too, could see in this ruling a new freedom: knowing that the Law was not necessary to salvation, but is to be obeyed and adhered to because they are already saved. Obedience to the Law is the zenith of our demonstration of our love for God.

They could enjoy the positive aspects of their Jewish heritage while not being burdened by it. Thus we see that the first and earliest followers of Jesus/Yeshua commanded in fulfillment of the Great Commission the teaching not of a "new" Covenant which replaced the prior Covenants of God but a return to the Covenant and Laws of Noah for the Gentiles to have a saving relationship with God

Answer for yourself: Now you must ask yourself: Is this what you are being taught by your Christian Church and if not why not? What changed in the years following Yeshua's death and subsequent ministry by his followers? Nothing! Nothing that is until Rome will come in the 4th century and destroy the faith of Jesus and create a false faith about him.

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"GODFEARERS" IN THE NEW TESTAMENT: THE PATTERN FOR GENTILE PARTICIPATION IN THE ISRAEL OF GOD #1

The Holy Spirit recorded for us in the fifteenth chapter of the Book of Acts one of the most important events recorded in all of Scripture. That event is often overlooked by the majority of Christians who lack understanding of the dynamics of the New Testament as well as the attending history and culture of the first century. What you will see in this article, and the ones which follow, is that **God gives us a "pattern" for Gentile engrafting into Israel, the people of God.** Let me say it another way. The New Testament reveals to us a specific manner by which Gentiles could become part of the Israel of God. Thus we will explore the inclusion of Gentiles in the Yeshua Movement recorded for us in the New Testament. This of course was the Messianic Movement within Judaism which we find enumerated for us by James as well as Paul in the writings of the New Testament. **Dear students and "truth seekers" this "pattern of inclusion of the non-Jew into Jewish worship" was followed well into the fourth and early 5th century before Roman paganism stamped it out.** I must remind you that these instructions and commands from the Jerusalem synagogue/church, concerning how Gentiles were to be added and engrafted into believing Israel, all transpired AFTER THE CROSS which has dramatic importance for us as "Christians" today. The sad part about the whole matter is that few Christians today know the history of their faith and how the Jerusalem Apostles established rigid conditions for Gentiles to become part of believing Israel, the people of God. Today, lacking such information and knowledge, we as mainline Christianity accept what is done by our denominations as being the "standard," yet is it? And if not, don't you want to know before your die when it is too late to do anything about it? With this in mind, I have prepared a detailed examination that will not only challenge you and your religious belief system, but hopefully stimulate your repentance in areas of belief and conduct. May God bless your efforts in studying His Word to show yourself approved. Let us begin.

Answer for yourself: Was the Book of Acts written following the cross and therefore the truths found within the book must therefore apply to the Christian and the Christian Church today? Yes.

Answer for yourself: When we read that Yeshua commanded his disciples and Apostles to go into all the world and ***"teach them (Gentiles) to observe those things I have commanded you,"*** can we say for certain that one of "those things" which was to be taught and obeyed by Gentiles was the truths contained within the decisions and teachings that came out of the first "church council" in 50 C.E. which laid the foundation for what was ***"necessary" for Gentiles to be "saved" (Acts 15:28)*** and also be ***"included in the Yeshua (Jesus) Messianic Movement and Yeshua's church"***? Most assuredly we can and must!

Answer for yourself: As you read the following article, I ask you to be honest in asking yourself that if Gentiles like you and me are to be "taught to obey those things Yeshua commanded," ***then why is it that you have been in church your whole life and never were acquainted with nor taught to obey the things that you will discover in these articles?*** You must answer that for yourself.

Answer for yourself: Is it of the remotest possibility that you, after finishing these articles, will come to the

inescapable conclusion that you have not been taught the truths concerning many of the foundations of what your faith in God should consist of as commanded by the Jerusalem Church which was not only held in 50 C.E. but which set the very foundations for taking the Gospel and the message of God to the Gentiles like you and me? Most assuredly!

So often many mistakenly believe that the "cross of Christ" altered "this or that" whereby they mistakenly lean on their own understanding or other's erroneous teachings in arriving at conclusions that often set the course of their **beliefs, conduct and their behavior which CANNOT be supported by comparison with many Scriptures that "contradict" such conclusions. Therefore, our beliefs, faith, behavior and conduct cannot be RIGHT if contradicted by Scripture and accurate historical analysis** and thus we cannot be sure that we are accepted by God if our lives and beliefs do not line up with these facts. Unknowingly, much of the traditional Christian's reasoning violates many Scriptures and such historical analysis and often such reasoning, when conceived in actions and well intentioned deeds, are defined by the Bible as sin and we don't seem to notice it. The root of such is false teaching or the lack of in-depth teaching by the vast majority of Christianity today which seems to focus on "milk" instead of "meat."

Let us begin our study with foundational truths from the Book of Hebrews chapter 5:

Hebr 5:12 (KJV) For <1063> when for <1223> the time <5550> ye ought <3784> (5723) to be <1511> (5750) **teachers <1320>**, ye have <2192> (5719) need <5532> that one teach <1321> (5721) you <5209> again <3825> which <5101> [be] the first <746> principles <4747> **of the oracles <3051>** of God <2316>; and <2532> are become such as <1096> (5754) have <2192> (5723) need <5532> **of milk <1051>**, and <2532> not <3756> **of strong <4731>** meat <5160>. 13 For <1063> every one <3956> **that useth <3348>** (5723) **milk <1051>** [is] **unskillful <552> in the word <3056> of righteousness <1343>**: for <1063> he is <2076> (5748) a babe <3516>. {is skillful: Gr. hath no experience} 14 But <1161> **strong <4731>** meat <5160> belongeth to them that are <2076> (5748) of full age <5046>, [even] those who by reason <1223> **of use <1838> have <2192>** (5723) their senses <145> exercised <1128> (5772) to <4314> discern <1253> both <5037> good <2570> and <2532> evil <2556>. {of full age: or, perfect} {use: or, an habit, or, perfection}

Let us examine the Greek word for "teachers":

Lexicon Greek 1320

1320 didaskalos {did-as'-kal-os} from 1321; TDNT - 2:148,161; n m AV - Master (Yeshua) 40, teacher 10, master 7, doctor 1; 58

- 1) a teacher
- **2) in the NT one who teaches concerning the things of God, and the duties of man**
- 1a) one who is fitted to teach, or thinks himself so
- **1b) the teachers of the Jewish religion**
- 1c) of those who by their great power as teachers draw crowds around them i.e. John the Baptist, Yeshua
- 1d) by preeminence used of Yeshua by himself, as one who showed men the way of salvation
- 1e) of the apostles, and of Paul
- 1f) of those who in the religious assemblies of the Christians, undertook the work of teaching, with the special assistance of the Holy Spirit
- 1g) of false teachers among Christians

Answer for yourself: Did the author of Hebrews tell us that only hired preachers are to teach the things of God to others? No.

Answer for yourself: Did the author of Hebrews tell us that we (all) are to teach the "duties" of man toward God to others? Yes. **That means we all have to accept our individual personal responsibility to become mature in handling the Word of God; it is not just the responsibility of Pastors and Teachers but all of God's children.**

Answer for yourself: Could it be possible that we as adult Christians could be mistaken about much of the Bible and many interpretations of various passages because of the lack of personal in-depth Bible study and by default have failed to teach others correctly because we were taught in error concerning many of the fundamental duties required of us toward God and to our fellowman? It sure is!

Answer for yourself: Did you notice that according to the definition of the Greek word, as found in Christian Lexicons and dictionaries, that the word used by the Holy Spirit for "teachers" relate that **we are to "TEACH THE JEWISH RELIGION?"** I hope so for this is very important and overlooked by the vast majority of Christians and pastors today. **It is in coming to this understanding that we can recover our Jewish Roots of the Christian faith and recover the true "Pattern of Worship" once given by God to Israel to share with all mankind (Gentiles).**

Answer for yourself: Did you notice that according to the definition of the Greek word used by the Holy Spirit that those in the religious assemblies of Christians were taught the JEWISH RELIGION? I hope so. **This seems almost impossible to believe in light of our personal Christians experiences but yet not only do we find this in the Greek word used in our New Testament but historical analysis as well verifies that non-Jewish believers in God practiced "the Jewish faith"; that is until men like Ignatius, Justin Martyr, Irenaeus, and Constantine went to great lengths to change all of that.**

Answer for yourself: In your Christian Church, be it Baptist, Catholic, Church of Christ, etc., are you being taught the Jewish Religion as James and the Apostles like Paul intended as seen from the original language in which we find the manuscripts of the New Testament? I would say no and you should as well.

Answer for yourself: If not, why not since this was the Apostle Paul's intention (that is if he is the writer of the Epistle to the Hebrews)?

Answer for yourself: As a Christian, have you been taught the JEWISH RELIGION (understood as Messianic Judaism) in your churches or have you been taught a REPLACEMENT RELIGION that considers most everything "Jewish" as being outdated, replaced, or cursed? More than likely the latter.

Let us now examine the Greek word for "oracles":

Lexicon Greek 3051

3051 logion {log'-ee-on} from 3052; TDNT - 4:137,505; n n AV - oracle 4; 4

- 1) a brief utterance, a divine oracle (doubtless because oracles were generally brief)
- 1a) in the NT, the words or utterances of God
- **1b) of the contents of the Mosaic law**

Answer for yourself: Did you notice that according to the Greek word used by the Holy Spirit in this New Testament Scripture that these believers in Yeshua (Jesus) in the Book of Hebrews **were needing to be TAUGHT AGAIN the contents of the Mosaic law** because they had not grasped the necessities within the Mosaic Law required for them to begin teaching others? I hope so.

WHO WERE THE RECIPIENTS OF THE EPISTLE TO THE HEBREWS AND WHAT ARE THE IMPLICATIONS FOR THE NON-JEW?

The title "To the Hebrews" designates Jews in distinction from Gentiles. This title was not originally a part of the letter. It may have been added in the second century, when the letters of the New Testament were beginning to be assembled into a collection. It has been suggested that the title "To The Hebrews" was written on the

outside of the script rolls to identify the document as the letter we know as the Letter to the Hebrews. Since there is no greeting at the outset of the letter which identifies the original recipients, who they were can only be inferred from the internal evidence within the letter itself. The entire letter indicates the original recipients were a group of Jewish Christians who had endured persecution and who were therefore considering giving up their Messianic beliefs in Yeshua. For them the Messiah had not come and history verifies that according to the Hebrew Scriptures.

Answer for yourself: But what should we see as regarding the non-Jew in this Epistle? We should take strong notice that after the death of Jesus the Laws of Moses were still being taught and the writer of the Epistle of Hebrews did not intend a replacement religion but rather the opposite.

Answer for yourself: Does you Pastor agree with Paul that Christian churches should teach the Mosaic Law (remember this all occurred after the cross and crucifixion and resurrection of Yeshua)?

Acts 15:19-21 19 Wherefore my sentence is, that we trouble not them (the non-Jews), which from among the Gentiles are turned to God: 20 But that we write unto them, that they abstain from pollutions of idols, and from fornication, and from things strangled, and from blood. 21 For Moses of old time hath in every city them that preach him, being read in the synagogues every sabbath day. (KJV)

Answer for yourself: Were you aware previously that believers in Yeshua in the first century, both Jew and Gentile (remember this is written 30 years AFTER THE CROSS) were being taught the contents of the Mosaic Law not only in the synagogues of Palestine but Asia, Minor as well?

Most likely not. It was in the Jewish synagogues in Asia, Minor, and not only in Palestine, that non-Jews were setting under the instruction of the Rabbis and being instructed in their responsibilities regarding their Covenant with God and the Laws and Commandments that framed it. And let us not forget that such instruction came out of the Laws of Moses which we saw above in Hebrews 5. We need realize that it is in this teaching of the Laws of Moses after the time of Jesus' death according to the New Testament that non-Jews found their instruction concerning this "Pattern of Worship" intended for them as found in God's Sabbaths and Holy Days let alone in other forms of worship like prayer, "proper giving", etc.

This is startling and should arouse you from your spiritual slumber as we proceed to discover more truths for too long overlooked by the Gentile Church.

Answer for yourself: If the churches founded by Paul were being taught the Mosaic Law, then why aren't you?

Answer for yourself: Do we pattern ourselves as Christians today after the "Pattern of Worship" taught by James and the other Apostles of the first century? If we can see that these non-Jews kept the Biblical Holy Days and Sabbaths of God then why do we stand for substitutes today? Why do we quote "they continued in the Apostle's doctrine" when we don't?

Please share these papers with your Pastors and see how they will try to refute what the words given by God really say in the original languages in your Bible. It is so simple, for the most part most who will deny what I show you will do so only because they lack the necessary language skill in Greek and Hebrew, for if they had these skills they would have discovered what I and hundreds of other diligent Pastors and Teachers in the Body of Christ have discovered that altered the courses of our lives.

Let us examine the Greek word for "milk":

Lexicon Greek 1051

1051 gala {gal'-ah} of uncertain affinity; TDNT - 1:645,111; n n AV - milk 5; 5

1) milk

1. a metaphor. for the less difficult Christian truths

Answer for yourself: Do you see where we as believers are admonished by Paul to **not** be focused on or dwell on "less difficult Christian truths?" I hope so.

Let us examine the Greek word for "strong":

Lexicon Greek 4731

4731 stereos {ster-eh-os'} from 2476; TDNT - 7:609,1077; adj AV - strong 2, sure 1, steadfast 1; 4

- 1) strong, firm, immovable, solid, hard, rigid
- 1a) in a bad sense, cruel, stiff, stubborn, hard
- 1b) in a good sense, firm, steadfast

Answer for yourself: Do you see that by no longer dwelling on "less difficult Christian truths" and beginning to focus on the deeper truths contained in the Laws of Moses and the [Laws of Noah contained within them](#) [for instance that Gentiles are commanded to study and follow the Mosaic Law such as rejecting all forms of idolatry surrounding the "godman", celebrating and observing the Biblical Festivals and Sabbaths of the Lord and not pagan "Christianized" holidays which we have done, keeping the Sabbath instead of Sunday, righteously giving the Tithe to areas where God said it should be given and applied and not where your church often directs it, and voluntarily eating "kosher" which is a Biblical truth "hidden" in the English wording and translation of your Bibles] will cause our lives to be strong, steadfast, and we will not be tossed "to-and-fro" by every conflicting wind of doctrine, even Christian doctrine, much of which is in error because of the failure of the Pastors and Teachers to study deeply the truths in the Bible? I hope so.

Let us now examine the Greek word for "useth":

Lexicon Greek 3348

3348 metecho {met-ekh'-o} from 3326 and 2192; TDNT - 2:830,286; v AV - be partaker 5, take part 1, use 1, pertain 1; 8 1) to be or become partaker

1. to partake

Let us now examine the Greek word for "have":

Lexicon Greek 2192

2192 echo {ekh'-o} including an alternate form scheo {skheh'-o}, used in certain tenses only), a primary verb; TDNT - 2:816,286; v

AV - have 613, be 22, need + 5532 12, misc 63, vr have 2; 712

- 1) to have, i.e. to hold
- 1a) to have (hold) in the hand, in the sense of wearing, to have (hold) possession of the mind (refers to alarm, agitating emotions, etc.), to hold fast keep, to have or comprise or involve, to regard or consider or hold as
- 2) to have i.e. own, possess
- 2a) external things such as pertain to property or riches or furniture or utensils or goods or food etc.
- 2b) used of those joined to any one by the bonds of natural blood or marriage or friendship or duty or law etc, of attendance or companionship

- 3) to hold one's self or find one's self so and so, to be in such or such a condition
- 4) to hold one's self to a thing, to lay hold of a thing, to adhere or cling to
- 4a) to be closely joined to a person or a thing

Answer for yourself: Is the author of the Book of Hebrews telling us that if we hold to, cling to, possess in our minds, or find ourselves focusing on the elementary truths of our faith, to the neglect of the deeper truths of God's Word, that we will be unskillful in our understanding of the Word of God? He sure is as we see below.

Let us examine the Greek word for "unskillful":

Lexicon Greek 552

552 apeiros {ap'-i-ros} from 1 (as a negative particle) and 3984;; adj AV - unskillful 1; 1

1) inexperienced in, without experience of

Answer for yourself: Is the author of the Book of Hebrews telling us that if we hold to, cling to, possess in our minds, or find ourselves focusing on the elementary truths of our faith, to the neglect of the deeper truths of God's Word, that we will be unskillful in our understanding of the Word of God and will not learn to experience the deeper things of God? He sure is.

This is a monumental statement because I dare say that we have failed, due to lack of study to understand the real message in many Scriptures and passages (both Old and New Testaments), thus we have failed to grasp the truths that the first century church both knew and experienced and commanded be taken into all the world to the Gentiles in the Great Commission. All we have to do is look around and compare our experience to what we read in the Book of Acts and we can easily see that "something" is missing.

Let us now examine the Greek word for "word," as in Word of God:

Lexicon Greek 3056

3056 logos {log'-os} from 3004; TDNT - 4:69,505; n m

AV - word 218, saying 50, account 8, speech 8, Word (Christ) 7, thing 5, not tr 2, misc 32; 330

- 1) of speech
 - 1a) a word, uttered by a living voice, embodies a conception or idea
 - 1b) what someone has said
 - 1b1) a word
 - 1b2) the sayings of God
 - 1b3) decree, mandate or order
 - 1b4) of the moral precepts given by God
 - 1b5) Old Testament prophecy given by the prophets
 - 1b6) what is declared, a thought, declaration, aphorism, a weighty saying, a dictum, a maxim
 - 1c) discourse
 - 1c1) the act of speaking, speech

- 1c2) the faculty of speech, skill and practice in speaking
- 1c3) a kind or style of speaking
- 1c4) a continuous speaking discourse - instruction
- **1d) doctrine, teaching**
- 1e) anything reported in speech; a narration, narrative
- 1f) matter under discussion, thing spoken of, affair, a matter in dispute, case, suit at law
- 1g) the thing spoken of or talked about; event, deed
- 2) its use as respect to the MIND alone
 - 2a) reason, the mental faculty of thinking, meditating, reasoning, calculating
 - 2b) account, i.e. regard, consideration
 - 2c) account, i.e. reckoning, score
 - 2d) account, i.e. answer or explanation in reference to judgment
 - 2e) relation, i.e. with whom as judge we stand in relation
 - 2e1) reason would
 - 2f) reason, cause, ground

Answer for yourself: Is the author of the Book of Hebrews telling us that if we hold to, cling to, possess in our minds, or find ourselves focusing on the elementary truths of our faith, to the neglect of the deeper truths of God's Word, that we will be unskillful in our understanding of the Word of God and **will not learn to experience the deeper things of God concerning the "sayings of God, the moral precepts of God, the doctrines and teachings of God?"** He sure is!

Answer for yourself: Does God desires His children to be "unskillful and ignorant" in His words that lead to our righteousness? No. Let us investigate.

Please, dear saints, pay close attention to the Greek word for "righteousness":

Lexicon Greek 1343

1343 dikaiosune {dik-ah-yos-oo'-nay} from 1342; TDNT - 2:192,168; n f AV - righteousness 92; 92

- **1) in a broad sense: state of him who is as he ought to be, righteousness, the condition acceptable to God**
- **1a) the doctrine concerning the way in which man may attain a state approved of God (notice there is a way a man can attain approval of God by something he does!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!)....THE JEWS HAVE ALWAYS KNOWN THIS.....BUT NOT THE CHRISTIANS**
- **1b) integrity, virtue, purity of life, rightness, correctness of thinking feeling, and acting**
- 2) in a narrower sense, justice or the virtue which gives each his due

Answer for yourself: Does one's correctness of thinking, feeling, and acting, which are a direct result of what he believes, have a bearing upon him be acceptable to God? It sure does.

Answer for yourself: Can you see the importance of believing correctly, for if the truths we affix our actions upon are faulty or incorrect, then our conduct and behavior is less than pleasing to God?

Answer for yourself: Is the author of the Book of Hebrews telling us that if we hold to, cling to, possess in our minds, or find ourselves focusing on the elementary truths of our faith, to the neglect of the deeper truths of God's Word **(and in the context of Hebrews this meant failing to understand the Mosaic Laws which provide the foundations for one's beliefs and appropriate actions)**, that we will be unskillful in our

understanding of the Word of God and fail to achieve that position of acceptableness before God? He sure is.

Answer for yourself: Are you aware that when Paul said "all Scripture is inspired by God and profitable for doctrine, reproof, correction, and instruction" that NONE of the New Testament had been written yet and could only refer to the Old Testament (the Law, Prophets, and Writings)?

Answer for yourself: Are you aware that it would take almost 400 years for the New Testament to be put together?

Please don't quit reading the article at this point, for let me remind you that I didn't choose these words or orchestrate Biblical history but the Holy Spirit did, and although we might not have heard of these concepts and doctrines preached from the pulpits of our churches, it does not change the fact that we will be judged by the Word of God and not by our denominational doctrines and what we have earnestly believed to be correct. We must learn today the truth as taken from analysis of the original words of the passages and Scriptures, Biblical history, Biblical culture, archeology, etc.

Answer for yourself: Is the author of the Book of Hebrews telling us that if we hold to, cling to, possess in our minds, or find ourselves focusing on the elementary truths of our faith, to the neglect of the deeper truths of God's Word, that we will be unskillful in our understanding of the Word of God and fail to understand and obey the doctrines concerning the way in which we MAY attain a state of approval before God? He sure is.

Answer for yourself: Do you see that besides the sacrifice of Messiah that we play a role in making ourselves acceptable to God as indicated by the Greek word for "righteousness"?

Answer for yourself: Is the author of the Book of Hebrews telling us that if we hold to, cling to, possess in our minds, or find ourselves focusing on the elementary truths of our faith, to the neglect of the deeper truths of God's Word, that we will be unskillful in our understanding of the Word of God and fail to obtain the CORRECT way of thinking and feeling that ultimately leads to our CORRECT behavior, obedience, and conduct; thus assuring our position of approval before God? He sure is.

Now please pay close attention to this next word!

Let us examine the Greek root word for "righteousness" which occurs so often in the New Testament:

Lexicon Greek 1342

1342 dikaios {dik'-ah-yos} from 1349; TDNT - 2:182,168; adj AV - righteous 41, just 33, right 5, meet 2; 81

- 1) righteous, observing divine laws
- 1a) in a wide sense, upright, righteous, virtuous, keeping the commands of God
- 1a1) of those who seem to themselves to be righteous, who pride themselves to be righteous, who pride themselves in their virtues, whether real or imagined
- 1a2) innocent, faultless, guiltless
- 1a3) used of him whose way of thinking, feeling, and acting is wholly conformed to

the will of God, and who therefore needs no rectification in the heart or life

- 1a3a) only Christ truly
- **1a4) approved of or acceptable of God**
- 1b) in a narrower sense, rendering to each his due and that in a judicial sense, passing just judgment on others, whether expressed in words or shown by the manner of dealing with them

Answer for yourself: Were you aware before you read this article that being "righteous" contains man's responsibility for observing divine laws and keeping the commands of God?

Answer for yourself: Do you see again the concept of "being approved or acceptable of God" tied to keeping the commands of God and His divine laws?

Answer for yourself: Is the author of the Book of Hebrews telling us that if we hold to, cling to, possess in our minds, or find ourselves focusing on the elementary truths of our faith, to the neglect of the deeper truths of God's Word, **that we will be unskillful in our understanding of the Word of God and will fail to observe Divine laws and Commandments intended to make us acceptable to God?**

Answer for yourself: Is the author of the Book of Hebrews telling us that if we hold to, cling to, possess in our minds, or find ourselves focusing on the elementary truths of our faith, to the neglect of the deeper truths of God's Word, **that we will be unskillful in our understanding of the Word of God, believing that these Divine Laws and Commandments have passed away, thereby assuring that we will fail to observe these Divine laws and Commandments, thereby hampering making ourselves acceptable to God?** Most assuredly.

Answer for yourself: Is the author of the Book of Hebrews telling us that if we hold to, cling to, possess in our minds, or find ourselves focusing on the elementary truths of our faith, to the neglect of the deeper truths of God's Word, that we will be unskillful in our understanding of the Word of God and **fail to realize that the commandments of God have NOT passed away, and much more, fail to obey them?** He sure is.

Answer for yourself: Is the author of the Book of Hebrews telling us that if we hold to, cling to, possess in our minds, or find ourselves focusing on the elementary truths of our faith, to the neglect of the deeper truths of God's Word, that we will be unskillful in our understanding of the Word of God and **fail to think, feel, and thus act in a manner pleasing to God, thus not assuring our "acceptance" before God?** As hard as it may be for you to accept this concept, the original words of the Greek manuscripts from which we take a poor English translation say otherwise.

Let us examine the Greek word for "babe":

Lexicon Greek 3516

3516 nepios {nay'-pee-os} from an obsolete particle ne- (implying negation) and 2031; TDNT - 4:912,631; adj

AV - child 7, babe 6, childish 1; 14

- 1) an infant, little child
- 2) a minor, not of age
- 3) metaph. childish, untaught, unskilled

Answer for yourself: In other words, if we fail to study for ourselves, is there any way we can be assured that we are being taught Biblical truths by those we subject ourselves unto? **No!** The sad thing is that we spend our whole lives "hoping" our life-styles are pleasing to God, where if we would have studied, learned, and repented where necessary, we could have had confident assurance that we are both acceptable to God and a good witness of Him to others.

Answer for yourself: Has the failure on our part to study the Bible, the original languages of the Bible, Biblical history and culture "in-depth" robbed us of vital information so necessary to our proper love and obedience to God? Most definitely.

Answer for yourself: Is the first church council of Jerusalem, which was headed up by the Apostle James in 50 C.E. LOADED with hidden truths which, when known, should alter the course of the Christian's life? Most definitely! Let us continue our investigation as we dig out these truths for our lives.

As you can see, this momentous church council occurred in 50 C.E. in Jerusalem and speaks to the Christian today. Sadly, very few Christians have known the extent of what is taught in Acts 15, nor heard their Pastor or Teacher teach on the subject. The participants at this first church council are the zakenim (elders) and sh'liikim (apostles) which formed the foundation for this new Messianic movement within Biblical Judaism. **Let us never forget that Yeshua's church is built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, and not the Baptists or the Catholics,** yet the majority of Christians today know very little about "apostolic doctrine," and it was this "apostolic doctrine" which the church of Jesus Christ "steadfastly continued in!" **This means that the "Apostle's Doctrine" is Jewish Doctrine! It is time we reinterpret "Jewish" not as "cursed" but "Biblical"!!!**

Instead we know only our "denominational and non-denominational" doctrines, which more often than not, conflicts and opposes "Apostolic Doctrine" which Yeshua and the Apostles both believed, taught, and commanded taken to the Gentiles throughout the world in fulfillment of the Great Commission.

You may have never noticed, but the Great Commission of Matt. 28 **DOES NOT SAY** to take Yeshua or his "identity" to the world, or some later "hammered-out Christology" conceived over the next 3 centuries by Rome or their disguised "Sun Worship" be taken into all the world but **rather it commands that the Commandments, the Torah and the Law of Moses is to taken unto the Gentiles throughout the whole world for it is within these Laws of Moses we find our Laws of Noah repeated and the ways by which we can make ourselves "acceptable to God" as had the Jews. This is so, so important to realize!**

"Not so" you say, well lets investigate and I promise you that you will be amazed by what you will now learn.

Let us continue in the second article to lay the foundations that are necessary for us to correctly understand how Gentiles were to come to God and be accepted into Yeshua's church ("fitting" into Yeshua's church is called "engrafted" by Paul in Romans 9-11). Shalom

Now let us continue in the second article in this series.



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"GODFEARERS" IN THE NEW TESTAMENT: THE PATTERN FOR GENTILE PARTICIPATION IN THE ISRAEL OF GOD #2

This new Messianic movement of the first century following the death, burial, and resurrection of Yeshua (Jesus) faced a problem of the highest magnitude within twenty years after the Cross of Christ: ***"What are we going to do with these Gentiles who claim to be followers of Yeshua Meshichenu (Yeshua, our Jewish Messiah)?"*** The solution: "We should not make it difficult for the Gentiles who are turning to God." (Acts 15: 19-21). Yacov (James) and the head zakenim (elders) then proceeded to mention "4 abstentions" for these Gentiles who wished to be part of the Yeshua Movement:

- **1) Don't eat food polluted by idols;**
- **2) Don't engage in sexual immorality;**
- **4) Don't eat blood.**
- **5) Don't eat the meat of strangled animals;**

To twentieth century Western people this list seems pretty simple--the only abstention those in our society have to worry about is #2--sexual immorality. So now it's clear sailing for all those Gentiles. Thanks a lot for reading this article. But wait, that is not as simple as the English makes it seem, for Yeshua is Jewish, and without a proper understanding of the language of Hebrew, the Greek language from which the Hebrew was translated, the history, and the culture of the first century, you and I cannot be assured we have the correct understanding of this Acts 15 passage. **Since God is the same yesterday, today, and tomorrow, then let us never forget that obedience is better than any sacrifice today as well as yesterday (first century church).**

As you read this article, as well as others I have researched and prepared, you should have easily seen that reading the English often leads us astray from the mind of Christ. You may say "You mean it's not quite that easy and clear?" You may say "You mean to tell me there may be more to understanding what James is telling the Gentiles than meets the eye? Do you mean more information is assumed as "given" in this situation than is normally understood by the normal Christian nowadays?" That is exactly what I am telling you as you will shortly understand. Let us investigate.

WHY SHOULD THE CHRISTIAN BE AWARE OF THE HISTORICAL SITUATION IN THE BOOK OF ACTS?

The historical situation in Acts 15 must be uncovered in order to understand the impact and importance of these 4 abstentions for Gentile believers in the first century, **so we as good Christians and followers of "the Christ" can then apply that understanding of Biblical truth to today's circumstances.** Add to this process the tragic observation that the vast majority of today's Gentile Christian congregations totally ignore these 4 simple instructions and it becomes clear that **this decision by Yeshua's church from long ago which was intended for ALL GENTILE BELIEVERS has been blatantly misunderstood and or ignored**

for the past 19 centuries.

Today's Christians who understand Yeshua's words "why do you say you love me and not obey ye" should be open to repentance when in-depth Bible study recovers long-lost truth which never changed that both challenge and correct their religious belief system and conduct

We must, with a good conscience, apply these truths to our lives today, regardless if they seem different from what you have heard or weren't previously aware of or not. If today's Christians want to uncover these truths and their significance for their lives, it will be a difficult but not unfruitful task, **but such is our test of the level of love we have for God and His son who died for us. Let us continue for our love for God is manifested through obedience and not mental faith which lacks righteous responses in obedience to "every word that proceeds from the mouth of God."** This is of major importance if we truly love God, not to mention the rewards and treasure laid up in Heaven in our account that comes only in response to obedience.

THE HISTORICAL SITUATION IN ACTS 15

It is important as we begin to understand who these Gentile believers were that were being spoken of by James. The overwhelming majority, if not all, of these Gentiles wanted to be accepted as full participants in this Jewish faith through the ministry of Yeshua. They were in a special category of **believing Gentiles called "Godfearers."** Whether you are aware of it or not, we as Christians are called "Godfearers" in the New Testament. Let's investigate these questions:

- Who were Godfearers?
- What was their belief and practice?
- How did they fit into the theological and historical scheme of the time?
- As Christians are we considered "Godfearing?"

WHO WERE THE GODFEARERS?

"Godfearers" in the technical sense of the word used by both Luke and Josephus (Sebomenoi and or Phoboumenoi in Greek) and refer to that special group of Gentiles who worshipped in synagogues and adopted a Jewish belief system and a Jewish life-style for themselves, stopping just short of formal conversion (failed to be circumcised) and becoming proselytes.

Answer for yourself: As Christians, have you accepted the God of Israel and worship Him in your churches?

Answer for yourself: As Christians, do you follow the Old and New Testament to the best of your ability and worship the God who brought you these revelations?

Answer for yourself: As Christians, can you see that you fit the "pattern" of the New Testament "Godfearer" in that you have not made conversion to Judaism and not become a proselyte to the Jewish faith?

The word Sebomenoi (with or without Theos) means "Godfearer" and is based on a parallel term for worshippers of pagan deities. **Implicit in the term** are the concepts that these people claim to worship the only true God, and that **they worship Him with specific acts, not just with their "mental attitude."** The Book of Acts mentions "Phoboumenos" five times, and mentions "sebomenos" six times with or without the addition word "Theos-god" to denote **Gentile adherents to the Jewish faith who were NOT proselytes.** In this

context, these two terms are a "functional equivalent" of each other. Thus, these Godfearers were NOT merely well-intentioned Gentiles walking around worshipping the God of Israel in their own private non-structured way or in a way that leaned on their own understanding. Rather, there were certain requirements and Laws which must be adhered to and obeyed to be considered as a "Godfearer."

Answer for yourself: Has your church or Pastor instructed you in these Laws and requirements to be part of Yeshua's church in the same way both James and Paul commanded?

Emil Schurer quotes archeological inscriptions which point to "a defined category of Gentile Godfearers attached to the Jewish community" (Grafted into Israel as Paul describes in Romans). The Dictionary of the New Testament Theology adds that "Sebonenos" was the regular term for non-Jews who attached (grafted into Israel) themselves the synagogue in this precise and specific way. The clear conclusion reached about both terms in Acts (i.e. phoboumenoi and sebomenoi) is that "with this concept...we are dealing with a technical term (to be distinguished from Theosebes (godliness) which specifically describes a defined category of Gentiles associated with the synagogue.

It cannot be emphasized too strongly that the first Gentile believers in Yeshua as Messiah mentioned in the Book of Acts are from this special and technical realm of Godfearers, as the Greek terms clearly indicate, and are NOT Gentiles who only felt warmth and attraction to the God of Israel. The Godfearers ALREADY had received considerable Jewish (understood as Biblical) training and had made a considerable Jewish (understood as Biblical) commitment as I am attempting to demonstrate through the continued teachings of Bet Emet Ministry. The Theological Dictionary of the New Testament sums up the situation: "Thus the first conversion of a Gentile under Peter in Acts 10 is strictly the winning of a marginal member of the Jewish community (Cornelius was ALREADY a worshipper of the true God of the Bible before the message of Yeshua was brought to him) for the Christian community." According to Schurer, John 12:20 probably reflects this group in describing "Greeks (Godfearers) who went up to worship (at the Temple) at the Festival (Passover) time". Again we see Greeks (Gentile Godfearers) keeping the Biblical Festivals such as Passover.

WHAT WERE THE BELIEFS AND PRACTICES OF THE GODFEARERS?

It is important to realize that these Gentile Godfearers were integral parts of synagogues within Israel and throughout the Diaspora (exile). And as noted above, Gentile Godfearers worshipped God with specific Jewish (understood as Biblical) acts after the cross of Christ, and not just with mental assent to a set of beliefs or doctrines. These specific acts required of Gentiles which are called "necessary things" in Acts 15:28 PRIOR to being admitted to Yeshua's Church following the Jerusalem Council of 50 C.E. (which was headed by James and which wrote letters given to Paul to be given to all of his Gentile churches in Asia Minor) included:

- 1). Adherence to the 7-part Noachide commandments
- 2). Adherence to the Sabbath commandment
- 3). Adherence to the dietary laws

Answer for yourself: If this was required of Gentiles to be part of Yeshua's church, can we be a part of the church Yeshua is building (for I will build MY church) without obedience to these "necessary things" or are we members in good standing in man's church (the word "church" is understood as an "assembly"?)

These Laws, as seen in Second Temple Judaism (Judaism during the era 100 B.C.E.--70 C.E.), is the bedrock of Jewish observance even today. Gentiles desiring to "imitate Yeshua" will do these things or else they as Christians are but a "poor shadow" of the real Yeshua.

Dear Christians please understand that ANY other Jewish observances beyond these "necessary things" (understood as the Laws of Noah) would have been a matter of **personal choice (Isa 56)**. These Gentile Godfearers were encouraged by Jewish teachers within the synagogue structure to be circumcised, thus completing their "conversion" to Judaism; and according to G. F. Moore, "it was not uncommon for the next generation (their children) to be circumcised." But understood for "Godfearers" circumcision is optional and never commanded of them by God as was required of the Jew.

CORNELIUS, THE GODFEARER

Cornelius, the Gentile Godfearer mentioned in Acts 10, was a centurion at Caesarea and serves as a good example of what a Godfearer did religiously. First, he and his household were devout (the Greek word is Eusebes) and Godfearing (Phoboumenos Ton Theon), which is a double adjective referring to him and his family which shows their exemplary lives characterized by Jewish norms and values.

Please understand when I say "Jewish norms and values" I am not asserting conversion to Judaism, but lets face it, Jewish values and norms happened to be expressions of BIBLICAL VALUES AND NORMS! Luke also mentions that Cornelius prayed constantly to God and gave alms liberally to people in need (which the Rabbis call tzedekah). These two actions (prayer and alms giving) would be actions even beyond the call of "Jewish duty," even more than the minimum for Jews. Interestingly enough, one afternoon during his regular 3 o'clock prayer time ("ninth hour" was a prescribed Temple prayer time which survives in synagogue practice today and was the hour evening incense was offered in the Temple) an angel came to Cornelius in Caesarea (a totally Gentile-built and Gentile-run city), to tell him that his prayer that his alms "had come up for a memorial" before God. That means that Cornelius' (an uncircumcised Gentile believer in God who followed the Laws of Noah and whom at that time knew nothing about Yeshua as the Messiah) prayers and alms had been accepted by God in the same way that the incense at the Temple and the smoke of a burnt offering "went up" and were accepted by God on behalf of the Jews. The same Greek word (snebenov) is used to translate in the Septuagint (Greek translation of the Hebrew Old Testament) the Hebrew word for offering: "olah"-literally, "an ascending" (understood as smoke ascending to God in an acceptable sacrifice).

Answer for yourself: Was a Godfearer who prayed continuously and gave alms acceptable to God prior to his understanding about Yeshua? This may be hard for you to admit considering what you have heard your whole life in the Christian Church, but the text I just showed you, as well as Jewish history of their faith say otherwise.

Then the angel instructs Cornelius, to get in touch with Peter, who was in Jaffa, and the rest, as they say, is history. But note that what Cornelius did to deserve the commendation were Jewish religious acts and not his faith (not just any old good deeds would do) and that they (his righteous works) were accepted by the Jewish God using Jewish terminology and concepts, even though Cornelius was "technically" a Gentile. Let us never forget that there were more than just this one man who was a Godfearer in that there was a whole groups of Godfearers all around the Roman world who totally identified themselves with the Jewish community, except for circumcision which was the final step in commitment as a Jewish proselyte in the process of conversion.

Many Gentiles, while not prepared to enter this Jewish community as full proselytes through circumcision, were attracted by the simple monotheism of Jewish synagogue worship and by the ethical standards of the Jewish way of life. We may indeed say that Cornelius had every qualification short of circumcision which could satisfy Jewish requirement for full inclusion into Israel (grafted into Israel) with equal rights (could own land, hold

offices in synagogues, etc.). It would be such Gentile Godfearers who would form the nucleus of the Christian communities in one city after another throughout the nations of the world in the first century follow the cross of Christ.

HOW DID GODFEARERS FIT INTO THE HISTORICAL - THEOLOGICAL SCHEME OF THE WORLD AT THAT TIME?

Obviously, as we have seen, Godfearers were more than "pagans" or "foreigners" but less than proselytes. Let's examine now these differing communities of people and their status in the eyes of the Jewish community during Second Testament times.

CLASSES OF NON-JEWISH BELIEVERS: PROSELYTES, GODFEARERS, AND FOREIGNER

Underlying the worldview of the Greco-Roman culture at the time is an unsympathetic attitude towards Jews. In Greek and Roman literature of the time the judgments about Jews are in general very derogatory. Seen in its most militant state, during Seleucid rule, Greek culture felt that Judaism was extremely old-fashioned and too highly nationalistic to fit in with the concept of the modern Greek world. Roman culture, beginning in 70 B.C.E. in Israel under Pompey, tolerated Jewish belief as long as it allowed for Rome to have the final governmental power. Rome tended to want to keep peace in its provinces and allowed different groups under its rule to have their own religious and cultural differences. Jewishness to Rome was a "quaint," unattractive religion which served well to keep the Jewish nation "unified" and serving Roman interest.

Passages from writers of the time such as Josephus, Juvenal, and Tertullian give us the impression that the Greco-Roman culture saw Jewishness as quite ridiculous. Thus, becoming a Godfearing person was not a popular action designed to move a person to a more influential sphere, in fact, it would have quite the opposite effect.

Living within Israel itself at the time there were Godfearers, exemplified by Cornelius and presumably also the Centurion in Luke 7 and Matt. 10, but "making proselytes" in an active "missionary" way was not common within Israel. As a rule, proselytes and Godfearers were welcomed by the Jews and regarded very highly, but there was in Palestine no active propaganda to further the cause of proselytism.

However, proselytism and Godfearers were very active in the Diaspora (the Jewish communities outside of Israel). According to Josephus in Antioch and Syria large numbers of Gentiles attended Jewish services. In Damascus almost the whole female part of the population was devoted to Judaism and it was quite often women of higher social standing who followed this trend. Evidently these Jewish communities encouraged and welcomed both Gentile proselytes and Godfearers.

Hellenistic Judaism developed an offensive against paganism. They were eager to show up the immorality and senselessness of idolatry and display the rationality and sublimity of Jewish monotheism. Hellenistic Judaism had an apologetic ideology as there were many Godfearers who accepted the one God of the Jews, but not all the Laws of the same God. Hellenistic Judaism had almost succeeded in making Judaism a world religion in the literal sense of the words. Early Christianity then won the victory over paganism using Jewish customs, traditions, and teachings.

This knowledge of history sheds much light on James' closing remarks to the zakenim (elders) and sh'likim (apostles) in Acts 15:21: "For Moses (the Pentateuch) has been preached in every city (in the Diaspora) from the earliest times (since 722B.C.E., over 700 years) and is read in the synagogue on every Sabbath." In other words, these Gentile Godfearers who want to become full-fledged believers in God through the ministry of Yeshua have ALREADY received Moses' instructions concerning how people are to live (as taught in the Noachide and Sinatic covenants since when Moses (Pentateuch-first 5 books of the Bible) is

taught, such teaching encompasses both the Laws of Noah and the Mosaic Covenant).

*Through attending synagogues in their own cities where the Torah (Mosaic writings were taught), Gentiles were **ALREADY** familiar with the basics of having a relationship with the one true God of Israel.*

Now please pay close attention to what comes next.

*James, the pastor of Yeshua's Church called the Messianic Movement within Judaism, is **REQUIRING** these 4 further instructions for Gentiles who want to be Messianists and a part of Yeshua's church.*

*Notice Acts 15:28 states , that it seemed "good to them and the Holy Spirit" to **REQUIRE** these adherences of Gentiles.*

Answer for yourself: Since God is the same yesterday, today, and tomorrow, and since it seemed good to the Holy Spirit (20 years after the death of Jesus) to require as "necessary" of Gentiles to be adherent to the Laws of Noah, to be adherent to the Sabbath requirements, and to be adherent to "clean/unclean" food laws to BE INCLUDED WITHIN JESUS' CHURCH, then does these "required things" apply to us today as well?

Answer for yourself? If these "necessary things" [adherence to Laws of Noah, adherence to Sabbath requirement, adherence to kosher] were required before Gentiles could be part of Yeshua's Church as commanded by James, the Lord's brother and head of the first Christian Church, then are we part of Yeshua's church if we neglect or are ignorant of them in our lives?

This Apostolic decision was made to make sure that there is no question as to what the "bottom line" of observance is by Godfearing Gentiles: the Noachide commandments, the Sabbath and dietary laws.

EXACTLY WHAT WAS EXPECTED OF GENTILES BY THE JEWISH COMMUNITY AT THAT TIME AND WHAT WAS NOT EXPECTED?

The Jewish religious concepts of the Second Temple period understood that the other nations of the world who did not follow the one true God were Godless (goyim-at least without the true God) and or pagan. However, for purposes of God's judgment of other nations (including his right to judge them), the Sinaitic covenant did not apply to these "goyim," having been given exclusively to Israel (Israel must be understood as a mixed multitude of Jews and Gentiles as well who accepted God's Covenant as Sinai). Don't get tripped up by failing to understand that **WITHIN THE MOSAIC COVENANT AND LAWS IS CONTAINED ALL THE LAWS IN THE COVENANT OF NOAH.** Conversely, there were many Laws contained in the Mosaic Covenant that were not included in the Covenant of Noah (Gentiles were not given all of the Mosaic Laws). Instead the rabbis felt, as seems clear from the passage in Gen. 9:1-18, there is a covenant for all the children of Noah (i.e. the whole world), including not only people but all living creatures (see v.10). Based on this section of Scripture, the rabbis found 7 major requirements incumbent for all nations:

- 1) no idolatry;
- 2) no incest/adultery;
- 3) no murder;
- 4) no blasphemy (profanation of the name of God);
- 5) no theft;
- 6) justice towards others (see Gen. 9:5...);
- 7) no eating flesh with blood in it and or cutting off flesh from a living animals.

To these generally agreed tenants some rabbis added others such as taking blood from a living animal. Several also mention prohibitions against witchcraft and other spiritual sorcery such as found in Dt. 18:10-11.

These then are the major categories by which God would judge all nations. To the rabbis it was clear that although God loved all His creatures and His creation, the goyim (Gentiles) had turned away from Him and would not even follow the Noachide commandments. Again if the children of Noah could not abide and observe the 7 commandments which were enjoined upon them, how much less could they have accepted and fulfilled all the commandments of the Sinaitic Law of Moses?

The identifying terms used by the rabbis at this time for these goyim (Gentiles who are not Godfearers and who do not practice the Laws of Noah, kosher, and Sabbath) include: idolaters, the wicked, the enemies of Israel, the enemies of God, and the others. There was a different category, however, for those goyim who did abide by the Noachide covenant. They were called foreigners or aliens. Any Gentile who lived in the land of Israel and among Israelites was enjoined, at the very least, to keep the Noachide covenant. Keeping the Noachide Laws was their "bottom line" and if they did not, they were to be expelled. If they did keep the Laws of Noah, they were no longer called goyim, but gerim. The Talmud delineates them further by the new term ger toshev. These (ger toshev) were foreigners living in the land of Israel who were keeping the 7 Noachide commandments. By the time of the Septuagint (about 200 B.C.E.) the translators used the term "fearers" for the righteous Gentiles outside of natural Israel in contrast to the term proselytes, those righteous Gentiles who formally identified with Israel through conversion which included circumcision, sacrifice, and mikveh (baptism).

WHAT WAS THE NEXT STEP FOR THE NON-JEWISH BELIEVER? CONVERSION TO JUDASIM...THE PROSELYTE

The first "gerim" are mentioned in the Exodus narrative. Among the Jews who left Egypt there were Egyptians who also left their homes in Egypt and crossed the Red Sea, becoming part of the people of Israel [grafted into Israel] (Ex. 12:38). Although they were known as "aliens-gerim" (simply meaning that they were not physical descendants of Jacob), they could be circumcised, thus formally converting to this very early form of Judaism, then partake of the Passover meal with the rest of Israel (at this point, Passover was the only Jewish festival). Note the differentiation between "foreigner" in Ex. 12:43 and the "alien who lives among you." The foreigner may NOT eat the Passover (he is not circumcised and therefore not Jewish-Ex. 12:48), but the alien who is circumcised along with his/her household (converted to Judaism and had become proselytes) MAY EAT the Passover (they are considered Jewish). Verse 49 indicates that the proselyte was to have the same rights and privileges as the native-born Jews: "The same law applies to the native-born and alien." According to Ex. 12:19, the community of Israel is made up of aliens (believers/converts/proselytes who are circumcised) and native-born Jews. Consequently, these "gerim toshevim" who wanted to fully convert always could do so by becoming circumcised and then continuing to follow the Jewish (Biblical) way of life, which then adopted and followed the covenant at Mt. Sinai (Ex. 24) and the attending Laws. Note also that Sabbath observance was technically commanded BEFORE the acceptance of the Sinaitic code (Ex. 20:10 and 23:12). Then although they (Ger Toshevim") were recognized by outward appearances as "aliens," they were now "Jews" in that they had left behind their old country and family and now were subsequently circumcised in order to be "part of the Jewish community." Likewise they had been "adopted" by the native-born Jews as "their own." The rabbis' term for these Ger Toshevim who became circumcised ("proselytes") was ger hazedek (righteous foreigners). How many proselytes there were down through the centuries is impossible to determine, but the rabbis are clear about the proselyte's relationship to the rest of Israel: "A proselyte is like a newborn child."

Answer for yourself: Does the above "newborn child" remind you of the term "born again" and historically could this term mean the conversion of the non-Jew to Judaism? This brings a whole new meaning to John 4 and Jesus and Nicodemus. More on that later in the website.

Let us examine being "born again" as understood as becoming a "new creature":

The Apostle Paul instructs Gentiles in Corinth that is they accept God through Yeshua, thus being in Christ, then God will consider these pagan Gentiles as "new creatures" whereby their old sinful life-styles pass away in repentance as they come to knowledge and obedience of God's will for their lives.

2 Cor 5:17

17 Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a **new creature**: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new.

The Greek word for "creature" is Strong's # 2937 ktisis which is understood in Greek as: the act of founding, establishing, building, etc.

- a) the act of creating, creation
- b) creation, that is, a thing created; used of individual things, beings, a creature, a creation
- 1) anything created
- **2) after a rabbinical usage (by which a man converted from idolatry to Judaism was called)**
- 3) the sum or aggregate of things created
- c) an institution, an ordinance

Answer for yourself: Do you see for yourself that when the Apostle Paul instructs Gentiles in Corinth to come to God through Yeshua he intends them to become "new creatures" by leaving their idolatry and convert to Judaism and not Catholic or Protestant Christianity as we know it today?

Answer for yourself: As a Christian you consider yourself a "new creature," and although you or others call yourself a "new creature" are you really a "new creature" as defined by the words of your Bible, and as understood by the Apostle Paul if you neglect or are ignorant of the Laws of Noah, kosher, Sabbath, and Biblical Festivals such as Passover (Pesach), First Fruits (Bikkurim), Unleavened Bread (Hag HaMatzah), Pentecost (Shavuot), Rosh HaShannah, Feast of Trumpets (Yom Teruah), Day of Atonement (Yom Kippur), Tabernacles (Sukkoth), etc?

Answer for yourself: What will you do having been a Christian your whole life, having done precious study on your own and relied on preaching for Biblical truths (and there are over 22,000 different denominations and varieties of disunity and preaching to choose from), and one day die and find out that you were never a "new creature" in the Biblical sense of the inspired word as understood by Paul, James, the Apostles, and the Yeshua's church which followed Yeshua's command to take this information to Gentiles worldwide?

Answer for yourself: Do you now see a much deeper meaning than believing in Yeshua as a condition for being considered by Paul and Yeshua as a "new creature"? I surely hope so!

The proselyte is, however, required and expected to be as strictly observant as the native-born Jew, including paying the Temple tax (this is he funds demanded of God to build buildings of worship and not as is done today with the misappropriation of the Tithe). The book of Ruth, of course, portrays the most beautiful example of how God can highly honor a proselyte, by choosing her as the great-grandmother of David.

After the building of the Second Temple there was a recognized procedure for proselytes. For men, there was circumcision, followed by immersion (mikveh/baptism), then offering a sacrifice at the Temple. For women there was just the mikveh and Temple sacrifice. For Diaspora proselytes (outside the land of Israel) the Temple sacrifice was probably waived, or at least postponed, because of the great distance involved and its attendant difficulty to achieve..

As previously noted, the **Godfearers' observance of the Law was located between the full proselyte**

(circumcised) and the gerim toshev (non circumcised).

Answer for yourself: Can you better understand now that this is where the Christian should stand today in faith and obedience since the matter was legislated by Yeshua's hand picked Pastor as well as the Apostle Paul who were in agreement on the matter?

Circumcised Ger toshev were known as ger hashair (foreigners of the gate). To the Godfearer's observance of the Noachide covenant they added Sabbath and dietary Law observance. It seem that Godfearers stopped just short of circumcision which would mean total and formal conversion, thus no longer being considered a Godfearer but Ger hashair or proselyte in full conversion to Judaism (a good example is Cornelius who lacked circumcision). Today in America with male babies being circumcised as a matter of routine without any religious significance by all but the Jewish people, then circumcision would not apply and would not mean that Christians who study, understand, and accept the Laws of Noah, kosher, and Sabbaths would be considered as if they had made full conversion to Judaism which they have not, and rightfully so since as Gentiles we need to be an accurate expression of Gentiles who worship God in Spirit and in Truth. If every Christian Gentile converted to Judaism, or if every Jew converted to Christianity then there would not be in the earth the witness of "two olive branches" or the "two candlesticks" whom are to have the same witness of God to non believers. The reasons for Godfearers in the first century not formally joining Judaism are not clear to us twentieth century people. Some scholars, like Bruce, maintain that circumcision was both painful and shameful for men in that culture (since Gentile pagans had practiced a form of sexual immorality as a form of false religion, let alone risky considering health factors, where 8 day of babies have a double immunity (grown men do not) against infection for 6 months of their early lives and can better withstand the dangers of circumcision. Some also might have been fearful of anti-Semitism. At any rate, we do know that these Gentile believers in God through Yeshua, called Godfearers in the New Testament, were every bit as Jewishly observant as their Jewish friends as they had been undergoing discipling and instruction in their local synagogues. These people (Godfearers) were not just well-intentioned "Gentiles," but Jewishly educated and committed to the Jewish way of life which was the pattern given to Israel (consisting of a mixed multitude of Gentiles and Jews at Sinai). It was "this pattern of obedience" which was spoken orally by God in 70 languages to the 70 nations of the world at Sinai, for God called all men everywhere to repent and follow His will which was spoken orally and surrounded the whole world at the giving of the Torah (teaching, instruction, Law in Hebrew) at Sinai. Only Israel, a mixture of Jews and Gentiles at Sinai, responded with a "yes" as seen in their memorial statement "we will do all that You say!" To this commitment God would in response call them (a mixture of Jews and Gentiles) a "holy people and a holy nation and a royal priesthood" which was to equip the nation of Israel to function as a mediator between God and rest of mankind. Israel's (Judaism as well as Messianic Judaism as seen in a distorted fashion in most of Christianity today) function is still to bring the Gentiles to God for as Romans 9 states.

Thus, Godfearing Gentiles, like our example of Cornelius, probably were more deeply devoted to Judaism than many native-born Jews.

In summary, let us tabulate our results from our search so far:

- I. Goyim: idolators, wicked, pagans,
- II. Foreigners (Ger toshev):
 - 1. Non Jews living in Israel
 - 2. Any Gentile who wanted to be righteous (i.e. "saved)
 - 3. Required to observe the 7 Noachide commandments
- III. Godfearers (Ger hashair)
 - 1. Required to observe the & Noachide commandments
 - 2. Required to observe the Sabbath
 - 3. Required to observe the dietary Laws plus others as they choose (Isa. 56)
 - 4. Expected to maintain synagogue discipleship where "Moses is preached" and not Paul
 - 5. Lack circumcision
- IV. Jews: Native Born -plus- Proselyte

- 1. Proselytes were given all the requirements listed above for the Godfearer
- 2. Required circumcision for males
- 3. Required mikveh for females
- 4. Sacrifice in Temple (optional in Diaspora)
- 5. Pay Temple tax yearly

WHAT DOES ALL THIS MEAN FOR THE CHRISTIAN CONCERNING ACTS 15?

The vision related to Peter in Acts 10 and his subsequent experience with Cornelius and his household proved to Peter [also later to the zakenim (elders) and sh'likim (apostles)] that it was **NOT NECESSARY for these "gerim" to proceed with full conversion to Judaism in order to receive God's provision of atonement through the faith of Yeshua.** They could come as they were.....Godfearing Gentiles. There were only 4 further abstentions they needed to be clear about which actually delineated more clearly their already fully Jewish commitment.

- First, they should not eat food sacrificed to idols which gave the appearance that they have not given up idolatrous practices. Notice Rav Shaul and Jochanan HaSchliach also objected to eating food sacrificed to idols in I Cor. 8:10-22; and Rev. 2 because of the outward meaning of the action to highly observant Jews and "weaker brothers" from pagan backgrounds.
- Second, they should not engage in "blood" which is understood in the Laws of Noah as violence and premeditated murder for such destroys the very image of God within His creation.
- Third, they should not engage in sexual immorality as defined by Jewish standards which prohibit sex outside of marriage. Here again, the average "pagan Gentile" would see nothing wrong in visiting the prostitutes dedicated to serving and worshipping pagan Gods. Such conduct was not defined as immoral behavior outside of Israel but was so by God. But it is a very grievous sin to the followers of the God of Israel (I Cor. 6:9-20), and should likewise be to those Godfearers who wish to follow Him.
- Lastly, abstention from meat of strangled animals (animals killed with the blood still left in the body) and from eating blood in general are a stronger reiteration of the Noachide regulations already understood and practiced by Godfearers (Gen. 9:4). James even concedes that they probably already knew these abstentions.. "For Moses (the Pentateuch) has been preached in every city..." These tenets would be nothing new for Godfearers.

WAS CIRCUMCISION AND FORMAL ENTRY INTO JUDAISM MANDATORY FOR GODFEARERS WHO BELIEVED IN MESSIAH?

No. These former Gentile pagans who were now known as Godfearers were already practicing the Torah in their household, where as most Christians today do not or at least are unknowledgeable about Torah. **These Godfearers were accepted within Messianic Judaism WITHOUT CIRCUMCISION [which was unheard of in Yeshua's day] as being a branch among "Messianic Judaism" once they accepted Israel's Messiah (or should I say that only that part of Judaism influenced by the death, burial, and resurrection of Yeshua which had repented of their hatred toward Gentiles [such hatred seen in forced circumcision for acceptance of Gentiles among Jews] and accepted these Gentile believes in as equals in God WITHOUT CIRCUMCISION when normative Judaism would not.** Understand that the Great Commission only emanated from the Messianic branch of Judaism and not Judaism proper in the first century. It was understood that these Gentile Godfearers would continue to study in the local synagogue and follow God Jewishly (understood as Biblical). By this time this included also following the 4 abstentions from **Acts 15 (read the chapter for yourself for these Laws of Noah are mentioned twice in this chapter and are called "necessary things which seemed good to the Apostles and the Holy Spirit as well).** But as we have seen, these abstentions were based on guidelines they were already following anyway.

A good example of a congregation that failed even in these basic instructions is Corinth. It is noteworthy that Rav Shaul (the Apostle Paul) has to deal with several areas in which the Corinthian Gentile believers have failed to uphold the Acts 15 stipulations for inclusion into the Messianic Community: e.g. sexual immorality (one man sleeping with his father's wife, some congregates sleeping with prostitutes), and eating meat sacrificed to idols, etc.

Answer for yourself: Why all these problems with these new Gentile believers in Corinth?

These Gentile believers in the Church of Corinth are so uninformed of their Jewish roots that they use the occasion of the 4 Passover cups at the "Lord's Supper" to get drunk! **The Godfearing guidelines for the congregation have already been lost and the people are in disarray.**

Answer for yourself: Does your Christian Church or your Pastor teach and adhere to these "necessary things" which seemed good to the Holy Spirit and required by Yeshua's church and its leadership for Gentile believers to be considered a part of Yeshua's Church?

Dear brothers and sisters in the Lord, I have studied diligently for years and discovered these little known, and mostly forgotten FACTS which should serve as a clear warning to those Gentile congregations who are unknowledgeable of or openly flout the Acts 15 requirements which Yeshua through the Holy Spirit intended all Gentiles of the world to know, understand, adhere to, and observe.

WHAT DOES ALL THIS MEAN TO ME...A CHRISTIAN?

The Gentile Godfearers in Acts who formed a large share of the core of the congregations founded by Rav Shaul (the Apostle Paul) were not practicing pagans who were converted overnight. They were of **a special class of Gentiles who had PREVIOUSLY been taught and nurtured in their local synagogues first, worshipping the God of Israel in Spirit and in Truth through specific Jewish acts and deeds as "new creatures" who turned from idolatry to Judaism.** The "bottom line" of observance for Gentiles in the Jewish world of Second Temple Judaism and which were commanded to be taken in letters to strengthen Gentile churches throughout the world following the Acts 15 council would have been the 7 Noachide commandments (of which only 4 are mentioned in Acts 15).

Godfearing Gentiles, however, went even further "by choosing those things that please the Father" (Isa 56), observing the Sabbath, keeping the dietary laws, plus other Jewish observances that they had been taught by their local Jewish church leaders. Thus their life-style already identified them as Jews, even if the final ritual of formal conversion had not yet taken place. Acts 15 describes the full acceptance of these Godfearers by the leadership of Messianic Judaism in Jerusalem. The leaders of Yeshua's church reemphasized 4 of the 7 guidelines contained in the Laws of Noah, which is a Covenant with Noah for all Gentiles of the world prior to progressive revelations and Covenants with the Jewish people which we discover were already what the Godfearers were already practicing. If they maintained their Torah based practices, they would have congregations and practices co-equal with that of their Jewish brothers and sisters. If they failed to maintain their Godfearing life-styles and educational programs, they would fall into the traps of sin that were disrupting as seen in the Corinthian congregation.

It should be very plain by now that Christian Gentiles are intended to maintain Torah practices like those seen in the Biblical Godfearing Gentiles of Yeshua's Church in Acts 15 and Paul's Churches throughout the Book of Acts and following. Such obedient Gentile Christians to the Gospel of Christ and Apostolic Doctrines, instead of adherence to "other Gospels" from denominational and non-denominational creeds and doctrines, which either contradict or neglect such Apostolic teachings, are to be desired by the Christian today who is honest with himself and his God.

[More to follow in article 3.](#) Shalom.



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"GODFEARERS" IN THE NEW TESTAMENT: THE PATTERN FOR GENTILE PARTICIPATION IN THE ISRAEL OF GOD #3

Recorded for us in the fifteenth chapter of the Book of Acts one of the most important events recorded in all of Scripture. That event is often overlooked by the majority of Christians who lack understanding of the dynamics of the New Testament as well as the attending history and culture of the first century. What we will see in this article is that "the pattern" for Gentile inclusion into the Yeshua Messianic Movement within Judaism is given by the Holy Spirit and enumerated by the Yeshua's hand-picked pastor Yacov (James) as well as the other Apostles and elders of the first century church. I must remind you that these instructions and commands that came from "Yeshua's (Jesus') church was **AFTER THE CROSS** which has dramatic importance for us as "Christians" today.

Let us begin with a more detailed account of the history surrounding the events that precipitated the Apostolic Council of 50 C.E.

On reaching Antioch in Syria, from which place they had been sent forth on their mission, Paul and Barnabas took advantage of an early opportunity to assemble the believers and rehearse "all that God had done with them, and how He had opened the door of faith unto the Gentiles." Acts 14:27. The church at Antioch was a large and growing one. A center of missionary activity, it was one of the most important of the groups of Christian believers. Its membership was made up of many classes of people from among both Jews and Gentiles.

While the apostles united with the ministers and lay members at Antioch in an earnest effort to reach the Gentiles with the Gospel of Christ, certain Jewish believers from Judea "of the sect of the Pharisees" [some but not all believed this heresy] succeeded in introducing a question that soon led to wide-spread controversy in the church and brought consternation to the believing Gentiles. With great assurance **these Judaizing teachers asserted that in order for Gentiles to be saved and accepted within believing Israel, the believing Gentile must be circumcised and must keep the entire Law of Moses just the way the Jew has to [613 mitzvot which included circumcision].**

Answer for yourself: Having read the previous two articles, do you remember that Gentiles were not **REQUIRED BY GOD** to be circumcised to be Godfearers and "accepted by Him" as was Cornelius [circumcision was not part of the Noachide Laws], but only circumcised if they wanted to be fully converted to Judaism and be considered as if they were themselves "Jews"?

Answer for yourself: Are you beginning to see the mercy of God which was expressed through Yeshua's death and resurrection which catalyzed a movement within Judaism to take Eternal Life through the Torah to Gentiles throughout the world which did not require the rite of circumcision which was objectionable to the majority of Gentile men and which caused many of them, as well as their families to reject monotheism of Judaism and die eternally lost?

Paul and Barnabas, aware of the Laws of Noah and the Noachide Covenant, and no longer bigoted in keeping such a simple salvation message from multitudes of Gentiles (like Jonah had previously), met this false doctrine [requiring circumcision and obedience to 613 Laws for Gentiles to be accepted within the Jewish community and become "saved"] with promptness and opposed the continued enforcement by Judaizing Jews of such measures upon the Gentiles which God never gave them in the first place for acceptance with Him (remember Cornelius?).

On the other hand, many of the believing Jews of Antioch favored the position of these "circumcising and Judaizing" brethren which had recently come from Judea. for after all up until this time the only way Gentiles had full acceptance with Jews and Judaism was through circumcision, thereby making full conversion (proselyte) to Judaism which then made these Gentile converts subject to all the Law like the Jews (613 Commandments).

From the result of the efforts and labors of Paul and Barnabas among the Gentiles it was evident that their "converts" to Messianic Judaism (whereby believing Gentiles were accepted within Judaism through adherence to the Laws of Noah, kosher, and Sabbaths [including Feasts and Festivals] without circumcision) would far exceed the Jewish converts in number [requiring circumcision]. The Judaizing Jews feared that if all the Law (613 Mitzvoth which included circumcision) and commandments were not made obligatory upon the Gentiles as a condition of synagogue and church fellowship, the national peculiarities of the Jews, which had hitherto kept them distinct from all other people, would finally disappear from among those who received the gospel message.

The Jews had always prided themselves upon their divinely appointed services, and many of those who had been accepted Yeshua as Messiah understood that God had once clearly outlined the Hebrew manner of worship, and that it was improbable that He would ever authorize a change in any of its specifications. They made one fatal flaw because of their racial prejudices...they imposed upon the Gentiles as conditions of acceptance measures which God never commanded of them; namely circumcision and adherence to all the 613 Commandments in the Law of Moses (as a Noachide believer God gave 7 Commandments or Categories with 66 subsets or manifestations, not 613). These bigoted Judaizing Jews insisted that circumcision and adherence to all 613 of the Mosaic Laws should be incorporated into the rites of Messianic Judaism as far as the Gentiles were concerned (we call Messianic Judaism today Messianic Christianity).

In the church at Antioch the consideration of the question of circumcision resulted in much discussion and contention. Finally, the members of the church, fearing that a division among them would be the outcome of continued discussion, decided to send Paul and Barnabas, with some responsible men from the Antioch Assembly, to Jerusalem to lay the matter before the apostles and elders. There they were to meet delegates from the different churches and those who had come to Jerusalem to attend the approaching festivals. Meanwhile all controversy was to cease until a final decision should be given in general council by the leadership of Yeshua's church which were, in this case, hand-picked by Yeshua himself to lead the movement in its infancy. This decision on the matter was then to be universally accepted by the different churches throughout the world as letters recounting the final decision were to be circulated among the Gentile churches worldwide.

On the way to Jerusalem the apostles visited the believers in the cities through which they passed, and encouraged them by relating their experience in the work of God and the conversion of the Gentiles.

At Jerusalem the delegates from Antioch met the brethren of the various churches, who had gathered for a general meeting, and to them they related the success that had attended their ministry among the Gentiles. They then gave a clear outline of the confusion that had resulted because "certain" converted Pharisees (who had accepted Yeshua as Messiah) had gone to Antioch declaring that, in order for the Gentiles who repented and believed in God through Yeshua to be saved, these Gentile converts must be circumcised and keep the law of Moses. Again we must understand that although the Bible records this statement, it does not instruct us that this statement is true, but to the contrary it instructs us that this view held by these Judaizing Jews who believed in Yeshua was incorrect and not of God.

This question was warmly discussed in the assembly. Intimately connected with the question of circumcision were several others demanding careful study. One was the problem as to what attitude should be taken toward the use of meats offered to idols. Many of the Gentile converts were living among ignorant and superstitious people who made frequent sacrifices and offerings to idols. The priests of this heathen worship carried on an extensive merchandise with the offerings brought to them, and the Jews feared that the Gentile converts would bring Christianity into disrepute by purchasing that which had been offered to idols, thereby sanctioning, in some measure, idolatrous customs.

Again, the Gentiles were accustomed to eat the flesh of animals that has been strangled, while the Jews had been divinely instructed that when beasts were killed for food, particular care was to be taken that the blood should flow from the body; otherwise the meat would not be regarded as wholesome. God had given these injunctions to the Jews for the purpose of preserving their health. The Jews regarded it as sinful to use blood as an article of diet. They held that the blood was the life, and that the shedding of blood was in consequence of sin.

The Gentiles, on the contrary, practiced catching the blood that flowed from the sacrificial victim and using it in the preparation of food. The Jews could not believe that they ought to change the customs they had adopted under the special direction of God. Therefore, as things then stood, if Jew and Gentile should attempt to eat at the same table, the former would be shocked and outraged by the latter.

The Gentiles, and especially the Greeks, were extremely licentious, and there was danger that some, unconverted in heart, would make a profession of faith without repenting of their evil practices. The Jewish Christians could not tolerate the immorality that was not even regarded as criminal by the heathen. With this understanding you can see why some of the Jewish Messianic believers considered it as highly proper that circumcision and the observance of the Jewish Law should be enjoined on the Gentile converts as a test of their sincerity and devotion. This, they believed, would prevent the addition to the church of those who, adopting the faith without true conversion of heart, might afterward bring reproach upon the cause by immorality and excess.

The various points involved in the settlement of the main question at issue seemed to present before the council insurmountable difficulties. But the Holy Spirit had, in reality, already settled this question, upon the decision of which seemed to depend the prosperity, if not the very existence and influence, of the Christian church.

"When there had been much disputing, Peter rose up, and said unto them, Men and brethren, ye know how that a good while ago God made choice among us, that the Gentiles by my mouth should hear the word of the gospel, and believe." **He reasoned that the Holy Spirit had decided the matter under dispute by**

descending with equal power upon the uncircumcised Gentiles and the

circumcised Jews. He recounted his vision, in which God had presented before him a sheet filled with all manner of four-footed beasts and had bidden him kill and eat. When he refused, affirming that he had never eaten that which was common or unclean, the answer had been, "What God hath cleansed, that call not thou common." Acts 10:15.

Peter related the plain interpretation of these words, which was given him almost immediately in his summons to go to the centurion and instruct him in the faith of Yeshua. This message showed that **God was no respecter of persons but rather accepted and acknowledged all men everywhere who feared Him (regardless if circumcised [Jews] or uncircumcised [Gentiles]).** Peter told of his astonishment when, in speaking the words of truth to those assembled at the home of Cornelius, he witnessed the Holy Spirit taking possession of his hearers, Gentiles as well as Jews. The same light and glory that was reflected upon the circumcised Jews shone also upon the faces of the uncircumcised Gentiles. This was God's warning that Peter was not to regard one as inferior to the other, for through faith, repentance, and obedience all of God's children are accepted with Him.

Once before, Peter had reasoned with his brethren concerning the conversion of Cornelius and his friends, and his fellowship with them. As he on that occasion related how the Holy Spirit fell on the Gentiles he declared, "Forasmuch then as God gave them the like gift as He did unto us, who believed on the Lord Jesus Christ;

what was I, that I could withstand God?" Acts 11:17. Now, with equal fervor and force, he said: "God, which knoweth the hearts, bare them witness, giving them (uncircumcised Gentiles who had not made full conversion to Judaism) the Holy Ghost, even as He did unto us (circumcised Jews); and put no difference between us and them, purifying their hearts by faith. Now therefore why tempt ye God, to put a yoke upon the neck of the disciples, which neither our fathers nor we were able to bear?"

Answer for yourself: What was this yoke that these Judaizing believing Jews tried to put on Gentile believers in God through Yeshua?

You see, God never promised salvation to the Jewish people by obedience to the Law, but by faith only. Obedience was expected by God for His precious gift of forgiveness of sins.

This "yoke" which was being Placed upon believing uncircumcised Gentiles was "obedience for salvation" [in particular circumcision and obeying all the 613 Laws]. These Judaizing believing Jews had forgotten that God never put on them circumcision and obedience to all the 613 Laws "FOR SALVATION," and to do so in regard to these Gentiles who are coming to God without circumcision was not of God.

Peter's address brought the assembly to a point where they could listen with patience to Paul and Barnabas, who related their experience in working for the Gentiles. "All the multitude kept silence, and gave audience to Barnabas and Paul, declaring what miracles and wonders God had wrought among the Gentiles by them."

James, the Pastor of the Jerusalem Church also bore his testimony with decision, declaring that it was God's purpose to bestow upon the Gentiles the same privileges and blessings that had been granted to the Jews.

The Holy Spirit saw good not to impose the law of circumcision, as well as all the 613 Laws of Moses on the Gentile converts, and the mind of the apostles regarding this matter was as the mind of the Spirit of God.

James presided at the council, and his final decision was, "Wherefore my sentence is, that we trouble not them (by imposing mandatory circumcision and adherence to 613 Laws of Moses upon these Gentiles who are only by God the Laws of Noah), which from among the Gentiles are turned to God." If the Gentiles wanted to acquire commandments that would be their free choice whereby they could choose to obey those things which pleased God (Isa. 56).

In this instance James seems to have been chosen as the one to announce the decision arrived at by the council. It was his sentence that the entire Mosaic Law, which had previously been required by Jews for acceptance of Gentiles, and especially the ordinance of circumcision, should not be urged upon the Gentiles, or even recommended to them any longer.

Compelled by the love of Christ, the Apostles repented of their racial bigotry and returned to what God had originally given all Gentiles (the Covenant and Laws of Noah), which when accepted and

applied in their lives, brought acceptance with Him (remember Cornelius' prayers and alms was accepted with God **before he was instructed by the Apostle Peter and had faith in Yeshua.**

James, the Pastor of Yeshua's Church, sought to impress upon the minds of his brethren the fact that, in turning to God and accepting the tenants of Biblical Judaism (becoming new creatures as 2 Cor. 5:17 showed in the last article), the Gentiles had made a great change in their lives and that much caution should be used not to trouble them with perplexing and doubtful questions of minor importance, lest they be discouraged in following God.

The Gentile converts, however, were to give up the customs that were inconsistent with the principles contained in the Law of Moses. The apostles and elders therefore agreed to instruct the Gentiles in the Gentile nations of the world by letter to abstain from meats offered to idols, from fornication, from things strangled, and from blood (4 of the 7 Laws of Noah). **These proto-Christians (Godfearers) were to be urged to keep the commandments which applied to them and which God had given them and to lead holy lives. They were not required by God or the Messianic Community (Yeshua's Church" to adhere to or observe Laws and Commandments which men laid upon them! Also, they were free to choose others commandments and incorporate them within their lives as such pleases God, but this was a matter for their further education, and such choices were to be manifestations of their love for God and their fellow man. They were also to be assured that the men who had declared circumcision to be binding were not authorized to do so by the apostles, because James distinctly tells us that he, nor any others under his authority gave such a command (Acts 15:24).**

Paul and Barnabas were recommended to them as men who had hazarded their lives for the Lord. Judas and Silas were sent with these apostles **to declare to the Gentiles worldwide by word of mouth the decision of the council: "It seemed good to the Holy Ghost, and to us, to lay upon you no greater burden than these necessary things; that ye abstain from meats offered to idols, and from blood, and from things strangled, and from fornication: from which if ye keep yourselves, ye shall do well."** The four servants of God were sent to Antioch with the epistle and message of the First Church Council that was to put an end to all controversy; **for it was the voice of the highest authority upon the earth; namely the continued ministry of Yeshua through the Holy Spirit!**

Answer for yourself: As a Christian today, have you been made aware of the Noachide Laws and that they are considered as "necessary things" by the Holy Spirit and Yeshua for you to be part of His Church?

Answer for yourself: If these "**necessary things**" concerning the Laws of Noah were required to be a member in Yeshua's Church, then if you are not as Godfearers and believing Gentiles like Cornelius adhering to such things as kosher laws which are contained within the Laws of the Covenant of Noah, then, according to Yeshua's Church and the decision rendered which seemed good to James and the Apostles as well as the Holy Spirit, are you SPIRITUALLY and OBEDIENTLY actually part of Christ's Church or man's church (even though you attend a gathering somewhere)?

Answer for yourself: Since you were most likely not aware of the gravity of the situation, what do you think would have happened to you once you died and only then came to the truth?

Answer for yourself: Now, having come to the truth, do you remember that Yeshua said: "why do you say you love me and not obey me?" Well it is quite evident that Yeshua has commanded certain things be done by Gentile believers (Godfearers), and the omission of those in the light of Scriptural knowledge can only be understood as rebellion which is as bad a sin as witchcraft!

Answer for yourself: I understand that if asked you will say you love Yeshua, *but how strong is that love for him if you fail to take to heart the message presented in this article and repent of false belief systems you inherited in Gentile anti-Semitic churches your whole life because your traditional Gentile Pastors have failed to study out such truths?*

The council which decided this case was composed of apostles and teachers who had been prominent in raising up the Jewish and Gentile Christian churches, with chosen delegates from various places. Elders from Jerusalem and deputies from Antioch were present, and the most influential churches were represented. The council moved in accordance with the dictates of enlightened judgment, and with the dignity of a church established by the divine will. As a result of their deliberations they all saw that God Himself had answered the question at issue by bestowing upon the Gentiles the Holy Ghost; and they realized that it was their part to follow the guidance of the Spirit by re-affirming the Laws of Noah upon all Gentile believers as "necessary" for their inclusion and right fellowship in the Israel of God..

The entire body of Christians was not called to vote upon the question. The "apostles and elders," men of influence and judgment, framed and issued the decree, which was thereupon generally accepted by the Christian churches. **Not all, however, were pleased with the decision; not will be with these articles. But the truth is the truth!** There was a faction of ambitious and self-confident brethren who disagreed with it, and will with what I have exposed in this article. **But dear child of God, Biblical history as well as the original languages of the Bible does not lie and is the final authority in all issues of disagreement!** Those who disagree with what is written in these articles by murmuring and faultfinding, and proposing new plans and seeking to pull down the work of the men whom God had ordained to teach the gospel message to a world full of Gentiles (no less James, John, Peter, Paul) will get their full reward for being false teachers! From the first the church has had such obstacles to meet and ever will have till the close of time.

The broad and far-reaching decisions of the general council brought confidence into the ranks of the Gentile believers, and the cause of God prospered. In Antioch the church was favored with the presence of Judas and Silas, the special messengers who had returned with the apostles from the meeting in Jerusalem. "Being prophets also themselves," Judas and Silas, "exhorted the brethren with many words, and confirmed them" by sharing the decision of the Jerusalem Council and James. These godly men tarried in Antioch for a time. "Paul also and Barnabas continued in Antioch, teaching and preaching the word of the Lord, with many others also."

The history of this momentous event in the spread of the Gospel to the Gentiles like you and me stands as a solemn warning to men in positions of trust in the cause of God, that they may not fail in integrity, but firmly adhere to principle. The greater the responsibilities placed upon the human agent, and the larger his opportunities to dictate and control, the more harm he is sure to do if he does not carefully follow the way of the Lord and labor in harmony with the decisions arrived at by the general body of believers in united council.

In his ministry, Paul was often compelled to stand alone. He was specially taught of God and dared make no concessions that would involve principle. At times the burden was heavy, but Paul stood firm for the right. He realized that the church must never be brought under the control of human power. The traditions and maxims of men must not take the place of revealed truth. The advance of the gospel message must not be hindered by the prejudices and preferences of men, whatever might be their position in the church. It is such a spirit that Bet Emet Ministries continues to illuminate the way of obedience and holiness which is a measure of our love for God.

Answer for yourself: Was the Book of Acts written following the cross? Yes.

Answer for yourself: If we discover major teachings from Yeshua's church issued AFTER THE CROSS which were directed to ALL the Gentiles of the known world, then should this teaching and practice intended for Gentiles (like you and me-remember that it came AFTER THE CROSS OF THE MESSIAH), also apply to us today? Most assuredly!

Answer for yourself: When Yeshua commanded his disciples and Apostles to go into all the world and "teach them (Gentiles) to observe those things I have commanded you," can we say for certain that some of "those things" which were to be taught and obeyed by ALL the Gentiles was the decision and teachings that would later come from the first "church council" in 50 C.E. since such teaching is said to "seem right to the Holy Spirit?" Most assuredly!

Answer for yourself: Do you see that the momentous decisions reached at the first church council literally laid the foundation for what was "necessary" for Gentiles to be "saved" and included in the Yeshua (Jesus) Messianic Movement and church? Most assuredly we can and must since it not only "seemed right to the Holy Spirit" but was understood as being taught by Yeshua to the disciples previously (yet unrecorded for us)? Yes.

Answer for yourself: As you read the following articles, I ask you to be honest in asking yourself that if Gentiles like you and me are to be "taught to obey those things Yeshua commanded them," then why is it that you have been attending Christian Churches your whole life and never were acquainted with nor taught to obey the things that you discovered in these articles? You must answer that for yourself.

Answer for yourself: Is it of the remotest possibility that you, after finishing this article, will come to the inescapable conclusion that you have definitely failed to be taught many fundament truths concerning the foundations of what your faith in Yeshua should consist of and commanded by the first church of Yeshua? Most assuredly!

So often many mistakenly believe that the "cross of Christ" altered "this or that" whereby many mistakenly lean on their own understanding or other's erroneous teachings in arriving at conclusions that often set the course of their beliefs, conduct and behavior which, unfortunately, **CANNOT** be supported and affirmed when compared with many Scriptures that "correct" such conclusions. Thus, our faith and conduct cannot be **RIGHT**, and thus accepted by God if it does not line up with **EVERY SCRIPTURE**. **Unknowingly, much of the traditional Christian's reasoning violates Scripture and often such reasoning, when conceived in acts and deed, is defined by the Bible as "sin."** The root of such "sin" and error is "false teachings" which often is caused by the lack of in-depth teaching by the vast majority of Christianity today which seems to focus on "milk" instead of the "meat" of the Word of God. Without knowledge of the Bible as it was taught and understood when written and received by the "hearers," we cannot be sure that our understanding is right because, as you have seen, and continue to see, the English language does great injustice to both the Greek and Hebrew language, thus distorting and completely changing the original meanings of Scripture in numerous instances.

The sad thing is that we spend our whole lives "thinking" our life-style is pleasing to God, where if we would have studied, learned, and repented where necessary, we could have spotted hidden sins from our lack of understanding of the Bible, therefore having confident assurance we both are acceptable to God and a good witness to others.

Answer for yourself: Has the failure on your part to study in-depth robbed you of vital information so necessary to your obedience to God? Most definitely.

Answer for yourself: Is the church council of 50 C.E. LOADED with hidden truths which, when known, should alter the course of the Christian's life? Most definitely!

As you can see, this momentous church council occurred in 50 C.E. in Jerusalem and speaks to the Christian today. Sadly, very few Christians have known the extent of what is taught in Acts 15, nor heard their pastor teach on the subject. The participants at this first church council are the zakenim (elders) and sh'liikim (apostles) which formed the foundation for this new Messianic movement which was headed by Yeshua, the chief cornerstone. Let us never forget that Yeshua's church is built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, and not the Baptists or the Catholics, yet the majority of Christians today know very little about the "apostolic doctrine" taught by the early church of the first century.

Ephesians chapter two draws out attention now.

Eph 2:19 Now <3767> therefore <686> ye are <2075> (5748) no more <3765> strangers <3581> and <2532> foreigners <3941>, but <235> fellowcitizens <4847> with the saints <40>, and <2532> of the household <3609> of God <2316>;

20 And are built <2026> (5685) upon <1909> **the foundation <2310>** of the apostles <652> and <2532> prophets

<4396>, Jesus <2424> Christ <5547> himself <846> being <5607> (5752) the chief corner <204> [stone]

Lexicon Greek 2310

2310 themelios {them-el'-ee-os} or themelion {them-el'-ee-on} from a derivative of 5087; TDNT - 3:63,322; adj AV - foundation 16; 16

- 1) laid down as a foundation, the foundation (of a building, wall, city)
- 2) **metaph. the foundations, beginnings, first principals**
- **2a) of institution or system of truth**

Notice that in verse 19 the subject of the verse are Gentiles who are coming to God through Yeshua. **It is these Gentiles, like you and I, who are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, and NOT DENOMINATIONAL AND NON-DENOMINATIONAL doctrines and teachings which can be shown to violate and contradict Scripture.** The Bible clearly and distinctly tells we are to be built upon the foundation of the Apostle's Doctrine (the Apostle's system of truth).

Answer for yourself: Are you confident that what you have heard preached in your church your whole life is the Apostle's system of truth? How can you be sure?

You are mistaken if you said yes, for the vast majority of contemporary Christian churches today teach and preach an anti-Semitic and anti-Judaic doctrine, either knowingly or unknowingly. Either way, this doctrine is incorrect and leads to major violations of obedience that the Bible terms "sin." The tragic part is that the vast majority of good Christians are not aware of such "sin" that is robed in religious doctrines.

Instead, the average Christian knows only their "denominational and denominational" doctrines, which more often than not, **conflicts and opposes "Apostolic Doctrine" which Yeshua and the Apostles both believed, taught, and took to the Gentiles in fulfillment of the Great Commission. You may have never noticed, but the Great Commission of Matt. 28 DOES NOT SAY to take Yeshua to the world, but the Torah and the Law of Moses in the form of obedience to Commandments. Maybe you should read it for yourself slowly and think what it is really saying and not rely on what you have heard others say it says!**

"Not so you say," well lets investigate the Great Commission in the next article and I promise you that you will be amazed by what you will now learn. Shalom!

[Let us continue our study in the next article.](#)

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"GODFEARERS" IN THE NEW TESTAMENT: THE PATTERN FOR GENTILE PARTICIPATION IN THE ISRAEL OF GOD #4

We concluded the previous article with anticipation as we were to see just "what" was to be taken to the Gentiles of the world in fulfillment of Yeshua's Great Commission given not only to his disciples and apostles, but to you and me as well as believers in God through Yeshua.

*Let me fore warn you that a study of the Greek words will not only challenge what you have been told and heard from preachers who stopped with the English translation, but what is more startling, understanding of the original meanings of the Greek and Hebrew words will **CORRECT** what you have been incorrectly informed by well-meaning pastors and teachers who lack these necessary language skills!*

Answer for yourself: When Yeshua commanded his disciples and Apostles to go into all the world in an effort to teach and disciple all men everywhere (the Gentiles) to observe those things he had previously commanded them (the Torah), do you think he was aware that he would have to wait a thousand years for the English language to be developed in order for the real meaning of what he intended could be conveyed to the hearers? Or do you think Yeshua understood perfectly what was to be conveyed to his disciples and did perfectly convey to the Apostles such message, and they, correctly understanding the message set out in obedience to his commands and accomplished the task (ie. The Jerusalem Council and how Gentiles become part of believing Israel and the Church) ?

Answer for yourself: Is it possible we lost much of the truths God intended we receive when Yeshua's message was translated from Hebrew Gospels into the Greek language and lost even more when this Greek translation of Hebrew thoughts and words was finally translated into English?

Answer for yourself: Do you know that linguists tell us words change meaning every 70 years, and that being so how much have we failed to understand of God's revelation and Yeshua, as well as the Apostles' words which undeniably have changed in meaning since the original context in which they were spoken or written almost 2000 years ago?

Luke 1:2

Until the day in which he was taken up, after that he (Yeshua) through the Holy Spirit had given commandments to the Apostles whom he had chosen...

Answer for yourself: Do you see that Yeshua continued to direct the Apostles (Jerusalem Church and the Acts

Council) through the ministry of the Holy Spirit ("it seemed good to us and the Holy Spirit...that Gentiles adhere to these 4 'necessary things' to be part of the Yeshua Movement and Yeshua's Church")?

Answer for yourself: Since I have shown you through examination of the original language as well as the Biblical history surrounding the events concerning the inclusion of believing Gentiles in Israel and Messianic Judaism (Yeshua's Church) following the cross of Christ (without the necessity of circumcision as had been previously required by bigoted Jews) and since we have seen as well that Yeshua continued to direct and spiritually lead the Apostles up and through the Jerusalem Council through the Holy Spirit, then if you have a faith or belief system that ignores, neglects, or says that such things as kosher is just for the Jews, that the Sabbaths of the Lord are just for the Jews, or that you are a New Covenant believer without understanding that Yeshua commanded adherence to the Covenant of Noah AFTER his last supper, then can you not see that you have been deceived and have not been given the correct message Yeshua intended all Gentiles like you and me receive?

As you can see the above scenario illustrates an important point; namely that in any translation of languages (for example from Hebrew to Greek, and then from Greek to English) the concepts and meanings carried by the "original word" or words from the original language MUST be faithfully carried over to the second language or third language if the intent of the speaker (ie. Yeshua/ Apostles/Paul) is to be retained uncorrupted.

Answer for yourself: Since Yeshua is a Jew and spoke Hebrew, do we as Gentile believers today, when reading the English language of our Bibles (which is a translation of a Greek translation that is a translation of the original Hebrew) receive the original thoughts intended by Yeshua when commanding his followers to go into all the world with his message in the Great Commission? Before you answer "yes" to this question I suggest you read a book entitled Understanding the Difficult Words of Jesus by Roy Blizzard and David Bivin and you will get the shock of your life.

Such "disclosure of truth" from the original language is good because we are finally getting to the REAL WORDS OF YESHUA, and only that way, can we truly understand his message both then and NOW. To do otherwise, by trusting translations in English without personal evaluation on the believer's part, often leads us into sins of conduct and behavior of which we are not aware because the English words fail to convey to us the original intended meaning of the Word of God and their corresponding actions which are required by God.

THE GREAT COMMISSION-A CLOSE EXAMINATION:

Let us examine the Great Commission from Matthew 28 and its implication for Gentile evangelism and the impact on the Godfearing Gentiles as seen in the Book of Acts.

Matt 28:18 (KJS) And <2532> Jesus <2424> came <4334> (5631) and spake <2980> (5656) unto them <846>, saying <3004> (5723), All <3956> power <1849> is given <1325> (5681) unto me <3427> in <1722> heaven <3772> and <2532> in <1909> earth <1093>. 19 **Go ye <4198> (5679) therefore <3767>, and teach <3100> (5657) all <3956> nations <1484>, baptizing <907> (5723) them <846> in <1519> the name <3686> of the Father <3962>, and <2532> of the Son <5207>, and <2532> of the Holy <40> Ghost <4151>: {teach...: or, make disciples of all nations}** 20 **Teaching <1321> (5723) them <846> to observe <5083> (5721) all things <3956> whatsoever <3745> I have commanded <1781> (5662) you <5213>: and <2532>, lo <2400> (5628), I <1473> am <1510> (5748) with <3326> you <5216> always <3956> <2250>, [even] unto <2193> the end <4930> of the world <165>. Amen <281>.**

Let us continue this very important study by looking at the word "go":

Lexicon Greek 4198

4198 poreuomai {por-yoo'-om-ahee} middle voice from a derivative of the same as 3984; TDNT - 6:566,915; v AV - go 117, depart 11, walk 9, go (one's) way 8, misc 9; 154

- 1) to lead over, carry over, transfer
- 1a) to pursue the journey on which one has entered, to continue on one's journey
- 1b) to depart from life
- 1c) to follow one, that is: become his adherent
- 1c1) to lead or order one's life

Let us now examine the tenses for the word "go":

Lexicon Greek 5679

5679 Tense - Aorist See 5777 Voice - Passive Deponent See 5789 Mood - Participle See 5796

Answer for yourself: Did you notice that the word "go" in the Greek IS NOT A VERB, BUT A PARTICIPLE and is used by the Holy Spirit in the "passive voice" ?

A proper interpretation would be as follows: "as you go through life and as you order your life in its daily course, journey, and routine, without any big fan-fare or big productions (like renting football stadiums or coliseums and holding massive evangelist crusades), order your life in such a way that you let your light of your correct beliefs and obedience shine and be for a witness and a teaching tool to those you influence and have contact, thereby bringing them into the knowledge of the God of Israel and what He requires and deems "necessary" to be part of Yeshua's Church (being a Godfearer...who adheres to the decision of the Jerusalem Council concerning Gentiles who are to accept the Covenant of Noah and who can afterward choose those things that please God 'as Moses is read' as shown in Isa. 56... such as the Sabbaths [Feasts, Festivals, and Weekly Sabbaths])."

Answer for yourself: What amazes me is that most Christian churches gear up for big productions and events in hoping to win some to Christ, not realizing that the best evangelism is person-to-person, not person-to-crowd evangelism that has little or no follow-up with little or no accountability and discipleship. Notice again that "go" is in the passive voice, meaning don't make a special attempt or don't go out of your way to evangelize or plan for such large promotions that detract from the personal approach which is best done by the example of your life (one-on-one).

Answer for yourself: Can you now better understand that the failure of the Christian Church to "win the world" over the last 1900 years is not for lack of "effort" in hold big meetings, big crusades, and building big monstrous churches that can house a lot of strangers," rather we have failed because we have put on the "few who we hire as representative ministers" OUR PERSONAL RESPONSIBILITY found in the Great Commission that requires that all believers let their lives be a "model" that would attract those to whom we have influence and contact to God? I hope so.

Let us look at the Greek word used by the Holy Spirit for "teach."

Lexicon Greek 3100

3100 matheteuo {math-ayt-yoo'-o} from 3101; TDNT - 4:461,552; v AV - teach 2, instruct 1, be disciple 1; 4

- 1) to be a disciple of one
- 1a) to follow his precepts and instructions
- 2) to make a disciple
- 2a) to teach, instruct

The **"root"** word in the Greek for "teach" is as follows:

Lexicon Greek 3101 3101 mathetes {math-ay-tes'} from 3129; TDNT - 4:415,552; n m AV - disciple 268, vr disciple 1; 269

1) a learner, pupil, disciple

Let us now examine the voice and mood:

Lexicon Greek 5657 5657 Tense - Aorist See 5777 Voice - Active See 5784

Mood - **Imperative** See 5794 Count - 376

Answer for yourself: What does the imperative tense mean?

Lexicon Greek 5794 5794 Mood - **Imperative**

The imperative mood corresponds to the English imperative, and expresses **a command to the hearer to perform a certain action by the order and authority of the one commanding.** Thus, Yeshua's phrase, "Repent ye, and believe the gospel" (Mk.1:15) is not at all an "invitation," but an absolute command requiring full obedience on the part of all hearers.

Answer for yourself: Do you see that the Holy Spirit used the imperative mood of the word "teach" to instruct us that we HAVE BEEN COMMANDED by orders of the one commanding (Yeshua), to teach the doctrines and precepts of Yeshua, and which was verified to the Jerusalem Council by the Holy Spirit to ALL Gentiles, thus helping all Gentiles of all nations become disciples of Yeshua and his faith? I hope so.

Answer for yourself: Did you see that we have been given an absolute command requiring our absolute obedience to teach ONLY THOSE THINGS WHICH HE COMMANDED and not the traditions and doctrines of men which make what he commanded and the Commandments of God of none effect? I hope so.

Answer for yourself: Are you aware from these previous studies that in many instances the Christian Church has done just the opposite of what Yeshua commanded, and stands guilty of "Sin" for having replaced many of the teachings of Yeshua, as well as many which were given to his Apostles which seemed good to the Holy Spirit, with those of their own creation which have anti-Semitic and anti-Judaic motives? I hope so.

Notice that Yeshua's disciples and Apostles were to teach all Gentiles in all nations to observe the things both believed and taught by Yeshua.

One small look at Gentile Christian Doctrine, as compared with Biblical Judaism, and one notices right away the wide gulf that exists between what Jews believe and what Christians believe.

Answer for yourself: If Yeshua believed things which you do not, should you not repent and accept the mind of Christ and his beliefs and cast down beliefs you hold when shown to be incorrect?

Answer for yourself: If we as Christians have a belief system that can be shown to be contradicted by the teachings of Yeshua, his Apostles, the original languages of the Bible, or the Holy Spirit as revealed in Scripture, should we not cast down, no matter what the source, our vain imaginations that exalt themselves against the truth and knowledge of God contained in the Bible when correctly understood?

Answer for yourself: Yeshua in Jn. 7:16 states "My doctrine is not mine, but His that sent me." Knowing this, can Yeshua teach or preach something other than the doctrines of God that existed then and which can be

traced to Sinai and the giving of the commandments of God? No.

Answer for yourself: Yeshua in Jn. 14:23 states (KJS): "Jesus answered and said unto him, If a man love me, he will keep my words: and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him. 24 He that loveth me not keepeth not my sayings: and the word which ye hear is not mine, but the Father's which sent me." If we don't keep Yeshua's words, which are the Father's Words spoken to the Apostles through the Holy Spirit, can we say we really love him since he says our failure to keep his words is anything but an expression of love?

WE HAVE ALREADY SEEN IN THIS SITE HOW YESHUA AND PAUL DISAGREE ON SALVATION AND AT OTHER OF OUR SITES WE EXAMINE INDIVIDUAL RELIGIOUS DOCTRINES WHERE PAUL ABSOLUTELY CORRECTS AND CHANGES THE TEACHINGS OF YESHUA.

No, our failure to obey him is evidence of a lack of love for him.

Answer for yourself: Did Yeshua say that our failure to obey his words is an indication we don't love him, and are his words found in the Acts 15 Church Council's decision? Yes.

Answer for yourself: Did Yeshua say that his word was not his, but his Father's word? Yes.

Answer for yourself: Can we be certain...absolutely certain... that Yeshua NEVER changed his Father's words, and those things he commanded his disciples to take to the Gentiles was his Father's Words ("teach them [Gentiles] to observe the commandments") as well as the words spoken by the Holy Spirit in Acts 15 which affirm the Laws of Noah for all Gentiles as necessary to be part of Yeshua movement and his church? Absolutely.

Answer for yourself: Since Yeshua did not have the authority or desire to change his Father's Laws, then what give us as Christians the right to change the Father's Words (Acts 15 for an example since our traditional Christian experience contradicts what is recorded and commanded by the church of Yeshua in Acts 15).....or even more, to violate his words by substituting our denomination's faith and message, their visions, plans, desires and programs, and even worse, doing so in his name?.

Let us examine the word for "nations" as found in the Great Commission:

Lexicon Greek 1484 1484 ethnos {eth'-nos} probably from 1486; TDNT - 2:364,201; n n AV - Gentiles 93, nation 64, heathen 5, people 2; 164

- 1) a multitude (whether of men or of beasts) associated or living together
- 1a) a company, troop, swarm
- 2) a multitude of individuals of the same nature or genus
- 2a) the human race
- 3) a race, nation, people group
- 4) foreign nations not worshipping the true God, pagans, Gentiles
- 5) Paul uses the term for Gentile Christians*****

Answer for yourself: Did you notice that in the Great Commission only Gentiles, and not Jews were to be taught? I hope so.

Answer for yourself: Do you see that Yeshua intended the Jews, who according to Romans 9:4 ("Who are Israelites (Jews) to whom pertaineth the adoption, and the glory, and the covenants, and the giving of the

Law, and the service of God, and the promises) had these Godly truths and manifestations of their religion, were to share with the Gentiles their religion (Second Temple Conservative Pharisaical Judaism) along with the fulfillment of the first coming of Messiah?

Answer for yourself: Why did the Gentiles need adoption, glory, covenants, Law, service of God and the promises?

Simply because the Gentiles of the world had false religion and their worship of God was in vain!

Answer for yourself: How could the Apostle Paul, after the cross of Christ, use the term "Gentiles" **[which according to our definition inferred false religion and worship]** for "Christian Gentiles" after they had come to the knowledge of God (Monotheism) and Messiah? That's easy. The Apostle Paul understood, **like you should**, that just because you come to the faith and knowledge of God as the ONLY God, along with the understanding of the Messiah's death for your sins, **your "converted" Gentile Christian religious belief system and lives are yet filled with memories of "what you used to do in a religious setting "before you learn from the Jew about God's adoption, glory, covenants, Law, service of God, and the promises of God.**

It would be so much easier today if we did not have to unlearn much of what we have accepted in religious teachings believing what we were told was God's truth. But much of what has been passed off as truths from God are in reality manifestations of Replacement Religion begun long ago by the early Gentile Christian Church of the Dark Ages, who being very anti-Semitic and anti-Judaic, changed and substituted "their understandings" for what Yeshua commanded the Jew to teach them. Scholarship reveals the tragic events of such a deception which you and I have accepted wholeheartedly without questioning and study to verify if what we were told is the truth as it existed in Yeshua's day and thereafter before changed by Constantine in the fourth century and others like him because of hatred toward the Jews.

Answer for yourself: Is it possible to go to Christian Churches who do not teach the Hebrew Roots of the Church and be completely devoid in your religious belief system of truths **concerning adoption, glory, covenants** [NOTICE it is in the "plural" meaning more than one yet Christian Churches only tell you about one...ie. "new"), **Law, service of God [Hebrew for worship], and the promises of God?** Let me answer that for you. I was! Even after Baptist Seminary I was to a large extent for I was taught from a Gentile "perspective" all the while forgetting that Yeshua said **"salvation is of the Jews"....not "was of the Jews"!**

As the disciples and Apostles of Yeshua "went" in fulfillment of the Great Commission they were to be teaching the Gentiles to observe those things commanded by Yeshua.

Let us focus on the Greek term for "teaching" as found in the Great Commission:

Lexicon Greek 1321 1321 didasko {did-as'-ko} a prolonged (causative) form of a primary verb dao (to learn);

TDNT - 2:135,161; v AV - teach 93, taught + 2258 4; 97

- 1) to teach
- 1a) to hold discourse with others in order to instruct them, deliver didactic discourses
- 1b) to be a teacher
- 1c) to discharge the office of a teacher, conduct one's self as a teacher
- 2) to teach one
- **2a) to impart instruction**
- **2b) instill doctrine into one**
- 2c) the thing taught or enjoined
- **2d) to explain or expound a thing**

- 2f) to teach one something

Answer for yourself: Was Yeshua intending the Gentiles of the world to learn "Apostolic doctrines" as it existed then and which the early church "steadfastly continued in according to Acts 2:42" or was he referring to Greek Catholic doctrines, Reformation doctrines, or Protestant doctrines which would be created much later? That should not be hard for you to understand.

Answer for yourself: Do you see that Yeshua intended his Apostles and Paul, as well as others, to share with Gentiles, to instruct them, teach them, impart instruction, instill doctrine into them, and explain and expound the things he taught? I hope so.

Answer for yourself: Can you instruct others in doctrines which have not been created yet?

Answer for yourself: Having heard repeatedly in churches that we are to take Yeshua (Jesus) to the nations and for them to accept him and believe IN HIM, does not the Great Commission actually say JUST THE OPPOSITE; that we are to **TEACH GENTILES TO OBSERVE** what Yeshua **COMMANDED** and not replace such an absolute commandment from Yeshua which was given to his Apostles and disciples about "what doctrines to teach which existed in that day" with the doctrine of getting the Gentiles to believe in his "identity" for salvation? It sure does.

Let us examine the Greek word for "observe."

Lexicon Greek 5083 5083 tereo {tay-reh'-o} from teros (a watch, perhaps akin to 2334); TDNT - 8:140,1174; v

AV - keep 57, reserve 8, observe 4, watch 2, preserve 2, keeper 1, hold fast 1; 75

- 1) to attend to carefully, take care of
- 1a) to guard
- 1b) metaph. to keep, one in the state in which he is
- 1c) to observe
- 1d) to reserve: to undergo something

Answer for yourself: Did Yeshua command his followers to teach other Gentiles in all the world to KEEP, OBSERVE, WATCH OVER, AND PRESERVE those things he had taught and carefully take this teaching and commandments to the Gentiles? He sure did.

Answer for yourself: Did Yeshua command his followers to teach other Gentiles in all the world to attend to carefully to his commandments and to observe those thing he had commanded? He sure did.

Answer for yourself: Did Yeshua command his followers to teach the Gentiles in all the world to "hold fast" and carefully observe "all those things which he had previously commanded the Jews?" He sure did.

Answer for yourself: As a Gentile Christian, and according to the words used by the Holy Spirit, have you been taught, let alone observe, things commanded of the Jews? Sadly, most likely not!

Answer for yourself: Since it can be clearly shown, upon study, that Gentiles kept the Biblical Feasts and Saturday Sabbath well after the cross of Yeshua until the fourth century before changed by Roman paganism, do you carefully observe all those things Yeshua had previously commanded the Jews such as the Feasts and Sabbaths?

Answer for Yourself: Why not if this is the true message of the Great Commission?

Answer for yourself: Can you preserve those things both taught and commanded by Yeshua if you ascribe to REPLACEMENT THEOLOGY which says that the Law and the Biblical Feasts have passed away and that we

are no longer under the Law (remember the Apostle Paul commended the Law to the Romans church in Romans 9:4)? No way.

Answer for yourself: Can you preserve and obey those things both taught and commanded by Yeshua if you believe that the writings and letters of Paul (New Testament) have replaced the writings of Moses (Old Testament) [understand it was 400 years after the cross before there was a New Testament]? No.

Answer for yourself: Are you aware that Yeshua never read one thing Paul wrote, and would be appalled today to know that the New Testament has replaced the Old Testament in his churches? I bet you didn't, but it is a sobering thought once you see the scope of what is being said.

Answer for yourself: Are you aware that almost all of Paul's letters are for "correction of Gentile beliefs and actions" and none are for doctrine, reproof, correction and instruction of Jews except for a small number of Judaizers who themselves believed in Messiah?

"Let us now investigate the Greek word for "command" as Yeshua taught his followers to teach all Gentiles to observe all those things which he had previously commanded to be done.

Lexicon Greek 1781

1781 entellomai {en-tel'-lom-ahee} from 1722 and the base of 5056; TDNT - 2:544,234; v AV - command 10, give commandment 3, give charge 2, enjoin 1, charge 1; 17

1) to order, command to be done, enjoin

Having looked extensively at the Great Commission, we now know for sure that Yeshua never intended for the Gentiles in the various nations of the world to be taught anything OTHER THAN the COMMANDMENTS AND HOW TO CORRECTLY OBSERVE THEM!

I'm sure that now you see the importance of such a commandment issued to all Gentiles as they were shortly to be included in the Yeshua Messianic Movement without having to make complete and formal conversion to Judaism as was previously expected and required. Not only that but their previous beliefs and religious pagan ceremonies were to be repented of and a new "service of God" instituted whereby they would worship the Father in Spirit and Truth instead of darkness as previously done.

This new Messianic movement within Judaism of the Second Temple Period, having obeyed the Great Commission, would now face a problem of the highest magnitude within twenty years after the Cross of Christ: "What are we going to do with these Gentiles who claim to be followers of Yeshua? The solution came in the form of a declaration by the Apostle James, both the Lord's brother and head of Yeshua's church: "We should not make it difficult for the Gentiles who are turning to God." (Acts 15: 19-21).

[It is to this issue we again turn in the next article.](#)



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"GODFEARERS" IN THE NEW TESTAMENT: THE PATTERN FOR GENTILE PARTICIPATION IN THE ISRAEL OF GOD #5

Having looked extensively at the Great Commission, we now know for sure that Yeshua never intended for the Gentiles in the various nations of the world to be taught anything OTHER THAN the COMMANDMENTS AND HOW TO CORRECTLY OBSERVE THEM! I'm sure that now you see the importance of such a commandment issued to all Gentiles as they were shortly to be included in the Yeshua Messianic Movement without having to make complete and formal conversion to Judaism as was previously expected and required. Not only that but their previous beliefs and religious pagan ceremonies were to be repented of and a new worship and "service of God" instituted whereby they would worship the Father in Spirit and Truth instead of darkness as previously done.

This new Messianic movement within Judaism of the Second Temple Period, having obeyed the Great Commission, would now face a problem of the highest magnitude within twenty years after the Cross of Christ: "What are we going to do with these Gentiles who claim to be followers of Yeshua, and who are turning to Biblical Judaism and Biblical Faith? The solution came in the form of a declaration by the Apostle James, both the Lord's brother and head of Yeshua's church: "We should not make it difficult for the Gentiles who are turning to God." (Acts 15: 19-21).

Not only in the Old Testament, but also the New Testament delineates the various REQUIREMENTS given to every Gentile who will name himself by the name of Yeshua, thereby allowing the Gentile believer in God, through Yeshua, to become grafted into the Israel of God without the need for full-conversion which required circumcision which the Jews had previously mandated for all Gentiles previously.

As you read this article, as well as others I have researched and prepared, you should have easily seen that reading the English often leads us astray from the mind of Christ. You may say " You mean it's not quite that easy and clear?" You may say "You mean to tell me there may be more to the understanding what James is telling the Gentiles than meets the eye? Do you mean more information is assumed as "given" in this situation than is normally understood by the normal Christian nowadays?" That is exactly what I am telling you as you will shortly understand.

"THE" FAITH ONCE GIVEN TO THE SAINTS ...NOT FAITHS!

The conviction that Messianic Biblical Judaism, and not the current manifestation of Rabbinic Judaism as we now see, is the one true religion given by God for all men and that it is destined to become the universal religion for all mankind has been the conclusion which not only I, but others who study the Bible in its original languages, along with its culture and history in which it was written. This concept was not only a peculiarity of the Jews, but Yeshua as well as he commanded its tenants, precepts, ordinances, and commandments be taken unto all the Gentile world in the Great Commission of Matt. 28. No other religion in

the world and time made any such pretensions or cherished such aspirations. It was an exclusiveness the rest of mankind did not understand and therefore doubly resented. It is today as well. Such a belief in the future universality of the "true religion," the coming of an age when "the Lord shall be King over all the earth," when "the Lord shall be one and His name One," led to efforts to convert the Gentiles to the worship of the one true God and to adherence to both faith and obedience according to the revelation God had given. Thus Judaism became the first great missionary religion of the Mediterranean world. Let me also say as well, that Christianity, when stripped of its anti-Semitism, anti-Judaism, its false sabbaths and replacement doctrines which originated from false religion and pagan sources, and when immersed in Biblical truths which restore the Lord's Sabbath, Feasts and Festivals, Apostolic doctrines, and correct use of the Biblical Tithe becomes acceptable to those who today, like God, see it for what it truly is. God warns us that His people perish for lack of knowledge, and when confronted with it, reject it. I pray that is not you.

THE VEHICLE FOR INSTRUCTION:

Judaism's religious influence was exerted chiefly through the synagogues, which the Jews set up for themselves, but which were open to all whom interest or curiosity drew to their services. To Gentiles, these services consisted essentially of readings from the Scriptures and a discourse, along with prayers and hymns of praise. Such was inviting to the Gentiles. In that time period in the Hellenistic world (Greek influenced), polytheism (belief in many gods) and idolatry was so decisively prevalent, that the souls of men cried out for something more. Such was the difference between the Gentile and the Jew. As a Gentile came to renounce heathenism and adopt Judaism along with observations such as the Sabbath, Festivals, and conformity to the rules of clean and unclean foods which were necessary conditions of social intercourse, it was seen to be a respectable degree of commitment and conversion on behalf of the Gentile that he be accepted alongside the Jew as God's people. Let us understand that this was before faith in Christ which only solidified such a commitment. The rejection of idolatry by the Gentile was an acknowledgment of the whole law, since one who renounces idolatry is called in Scripture a "Jew."

CONVERTS & VARIETIES:

Such converts were called religious persons who "worship, or revere God," although in a strict sense outside of the mainstream of Judaism. Yet, they were expected to share with "Jews by birth" the favor of the God they had adopted, and were encouraged in this hope by their Jewish teachers. It was not uncommon for the next generation to seek incorporation in the Jewish people by circumcision, thus becoming a full-fledged "convert to Judaism." These Gentiles were seen as the ones "clinging to the skirt (prayer shawl) of the Jew" (Zech. 8:23).

23 Thus saith <559> (8804) the LORD <3068> of hosts <6635>; In those days <3117> [it shall come to pass], that ten <6235> men <582> shall take hold <2388> (8686) out of all languages <3956> of the nations <1471>, even shall take hold <2388> (8689) of the skirt <3671> of him that is a Jew <376> <3064>, saying <559> (8800), We will go <3212> (8799) with you: for we have heard <8085> (8804) [that] God <430> [is] with you.

Answer for yourself: In this prophetic passage, do you see that ten (Biblical number for completeness-referring to all Gentiles from all nations) will take hold of the skirt (prayer shawl) of the Jew and will go with them up to Zion for God is "with the Jew?" I hope so.

Answer for yourself: Did you know that the nations will be coming up to God with Jews and not Christians? I hope so.

Answer for yourself: Can you see that this passage is very problematic for those who ascribe to REPLACEMENT THEOLOGY, falsely believing that the church has taken the place of the Jew and Israel? I hope so.

Oh, by the way, let me remind you once again that this passage is prophetic and is yet to occur.

Answer for yourself: How is it that Gentiles will follow the Jews to Zion to learn of God if we Protestants and Catholics have all truth as we have been led to believe? Think on that for a while.

CUTTING THROUGH THE MAZE:

Much confusion has arisen from the habit of describing such Gentile adherents of the synagogue as a class of proselytes or semi-proselytes, and trying to find a category for them in Jewish law. Jewish law knows no such semi-proselytes, nor any other kind of proselytes than such as have, by conversion and baptism, not only become members of the Jewish church but has been naturalized in the Jewish nation. One should NOT make a distinction where none existed.

PHILO'S DEFINITION OF A PROSELYTE:

"Proselytes are such as have resolved to change over to the true religion, and are called proselytes because they have become naturalized in a new and godly commonwealth, renouncing the mythical fictions and adhering to the unadulterated truth." Under the Laws of Noah (7 commandments containing some but not all the Laws of Moses unless fully converted), proselytes enjoy equal rights in all respects with the native born Jews, as is only just, inasmuch as they have left country, friends, and kinfolk for the sake of virtue and holiness. There can be no question that Philo means by "proselyte" one who has deserted his false gods and his people to cast in his lot with the Jews.

OTHER VIEWS ON THE PROSELYTE:

Tacitus (a roman historian) speaks of proselytes as such as "practice circumcision like the Jews." A proselyte is not one who had merely embraced the monotheistic theology of Judaism, but has addicted himself to the Jewish ordinances and customs, and in doing so severed himself from his people, friends, and kinsmen; for which reason he is to be treated with peculiar benevolence. He has become a naturalized citizen of a new religious commonwealth in which he has a full quality of rights and duties with born Jews. NOTICE a proselyte was considered as part of Israel!

Answer for yourself: Does a "proselyte" (former Gentile) adhere to the same Jewish ordinances and customs as other Jews? Yes.

Answer for yourself: Is the "proselyte" (former Gentile) required to be circumcised? Yes.

Answer for yourself: Does the "proselyte" (former Gentile) become a naturalized citizen of a new religious commonwealth called Israel in which he has a full quality of rights and duties with natural-born Jews? Yes.

THE "GER" - HEBREW FOR PROSELYTE:

In the Greek Bible, "proselyte" is the usual translation of the Hebrew "ger." The older associations of this word were both civil and social. The "ger" was an alien immigrant, or the descendant of such an immigrant, resident in Israelite territory by permission, without any civil rights. This is the position of the "ger" in the older Hebrew legislation and in Deuteronomy. They are distinguished from foreigners (nokrim), who may be casually and temporarily in the country, and from the descendants of the ancient Canaanites. Israelites are commanded not to oppress these aliens, who had no legal protection; and they are frequently presented as objects of charity.

Later, in the Persian period, the word "ger" comes to be applied to foreigners (men of other than Jewish descent) who joint themselves to Jehovah, or to Israel as the worshippers of Jehovah. Thus in Isaiah 14:1, in the restoration, when God reestablished Israel in its own land, "the 'ger' (converts the Jews have

made in the exile) will join themselves to them and attach themselves to the house of Jacob." Such converts are described in Isa. 56:6ff.

"The aliens who join themselves to Jehovah to minister unto him, and to love the name of Jehovah, to be his servants, every one that keeps the Sabbath from profaning it, and hold firmly to my covenant (laws), I will bring them to my holy mountain and make them rejoice in my house of prayer; their burnt offerings and their sacrifices shall be acceptable upon my altar, for my house shall be called a house of prayer for all peoples. Thus saith the Lord Jehovah who gathers the dispersed of Israel, yet will gather others unto him (Israel), besides those that are gathered of (Israel) himself."

The laws for the "ger" (Gentile proselyte) or "gerim" (Gentile proselytes) in Lev. 17-25 put them, so far as religious duties and privileges go, in all respects on the same footing with Israelites by birth: they are subject to all the obligations of the Law, precisely as the "gerim" (proselytes) in the rabbinical law are. This is true, not only of religious commandments and prohibitions but also civil law: "You shall have one civil law; the proselyte (ger) shall be treated like the native born, for I am the Lord your God." For living as a resident alien ("ger," in the original civil sense) in the land of Israel the verb is "gur," as in sojourn; for conversion to Judaism and adoption into the people as well as their religion a new form was needed and created, the "ger in a religious sense" understood as "becoming a proselyte."

THE "GER" RESTS BENEATH THE WINGS OF THE ALMIGHTY:

A favorite figure in the Psalms for the confident security of the religious man is having a refuge, or shelter, beneath the wings of God, or beneath the shade of his wings, as the young of birds do under their mother's wings for safety from danger. The same figure is frequently employed of conversion. The proselyte came beneath the wings of the Shekinah; one who converts a Gentile brings him under the wings of the Shekinah. The origin of this use is doubtless Ruth 2:12, where Boaz speaks for the Moabitish convert the reward for her goodness to Naomi from "the God of Israel, beneath whose wings thou are come to take refuge."

The legislation in the middle books of the Pentateuch (first 5 books of the Bible) thus puts the "gerim" on the same footing with native Israelites, not only before the civil law, but in religious duties and privileges, and Philo repeatedly emphasizes this parity of the naturalized and the native Jew as one of the notable features of the Mosaic Law.

DISTINCTIONS DO EXIST HOWEVER:

The Passover was the most distinctively national of all the festivals, but the law admits the proselyte to it, though no foreigner, no settler, no hired servant may eat of it. For such participation it is necessary that one be circumcised, "for no uncircumcised man shall eat of it" (Ex. 12:48). In Num. 9:14 it is assumed that the proselyte is circumcised, and the only requirement is that he shall conform strictly to the ritual of the Passover: "Whether proselyte or native, you shall have the same ordinance." This Scripture puts the proselyte on the same footing as the native in all the commandments contained in the Law. "As the native born Jew takes upon himself to obey all the words of the Law," so the proselyte takes upon him all the words of the Law. The authorities said, "if a proselyte takes upon himself to obey all the words of the Law except one single commandment, he is not to be received." Thus Paul would say in Gal. 5:2 to the Galatians: "I solemnly warn every man that gets himself circumcised (Paul was referring to Gentile conversion to Judaism) that he (the newly circumcised Gentile) is under obligation to fulfill the whole law (613 commandments).

Answer for yourself: Why? Circumcision was the final ordinance to be adopted by the Gentile believer before he makes complete conversion to Judaism.

Since Paul was reared as a Pharisee, he made reference to both the Written Law and the Oral Law in this passage.

Answer for yourself: Are Gentiles who become circumcised, thus making full conversion to Judaism, allowed to partake of the Passover lamb? Yes, circumcision was required.

Answer for yourself: Are Gentiles who become circumcised, thus making full conversion to Judaism, required to take upon themselves the full yoke of the Torah which is responsibility for 613 commandments instead of the 66 from the Laws of Noah? Yes.

REQUIREMENTS FOR CONVERSION:

The initiatory rite by which a man was made a proselyte comprised three parts:

- **circumcision,**
- **immersion in water (baptism) and**
- **the presentation of an offering in the Temple.**

In the case of a woman there was no circumcision, and after the destruction of the Temple no offering could be made. Circumcision alone is prescribed in the Written Law. The offering of a sacrifice is, thus, not one of the conditions of becoming a proselyte, but only a condition precedent to the exercise of one of the rights which belong to him as a sacrificial meal. **As soon as he was circumcised and baptized, he was in full standing in the religious community, having all the legal rights and powers and being subject to all the obligations of the Jew by birth. He had "entered the covenant."** It is interesting to note that this baptism of conversion was different from other baptisms of purification in that the presence of official witnesses was required for conversion. Two scholars would stand by him and rehearse to him orally some of the lighter and some of the weightier commandments. **When he had been immersed and had come up from the water (following circumcision if a male), one is like an Israelite in all that he does.** In the case of the woman proselyte, women made her sit in the water up to her neck, while two scholars recited the same commandments, both positive and negative and it was assumed that the **initiant assumed "the yoke of the commandments."** **As the Israelite came into the covenant only by three things, circumcision, baptism, and sacrifice, precisely so the Gentile proselyte comes into the covenant by the same three things.** (Israel was circumcised before leaving Egypt, they were baptized in the Sinai desert, and after they pledged themselves to keep all God's commandments they were sprinkled with the blood of the covenant sacrifice).

Answer for yourself: Was the Gentile convert to Judaism required to fulfill the same three requirement for conversion as was the Jew when he was BarMitzvahed? Yes.

PROSELYTES WERE BORN AGAIN:

Now listen well, the status of a proselyte who embraces Judaism is at the moment of his reception like that of a "new born child" or as if "born again." (Being "born again" is not a Christian concept by and of itself. More on that at a later).

Answer for yourself: Does the concept of "being born again" refers only to Christians and not Gentile converts to Judaism? No, because the typical Christian is unaware that "being born again" is a Hebrew term for repentance associated with immersion, which was one of the 3 requirements for Gentile proselytes in their conversion to Judaism and being grafted into the Israel of God.

THE LAWS OF NOAH-FOUNDATIONAL FOR A GENTILE PROSELYTE:

Before a proselyte converted to Judaism, it was customary that before his initiation that he adhere to the seven Laws of Noah which were given to all heathen to observe if they lived within the land of Israel. The laws of Noah were the foundation from which one pursued righteousness.

TERMINOLOGY: WE MUST SEE THE PICTURE CLEARLY

I am fully aware that today we call those who believe in God through Yeshua "Christians." Yet, in quoting Roy Blizzard "I believe we should call Biblical things by Biblical names". In doing so we discover nuances of meanings from terms which should influence what we should believe and how we should respond in faith. In the spirit of truth, the follow is presented to you, and some is of a technical nature, but try to follow the truth along.

Answer for yourself: In others words correct understanding of terms will lead us to perfect obedience and what higher manifestation of our love for God could there be?

The sincere and genuine proselyte (fully converted through circumcision, immersion, and having brought a sacrifice) is called "**ger zedek**," or "**righteous proselyte**" (Psalm 118:20). They are such as embrace the Jewish religion from religious motives, "for the sake of God," and therefore live in conformity to His will revealed in the Oral and Written Laws as they pledged themselves at their reception. Another name for such converts is the "**get emet**," or "**true proselyte**." To the "righteous proselytes" are sometimes applied texts in the Old Testament which speak of the righteous, or of such as fear God, the "truly righteous." In the daily prayers in the Temple petitions for God's blessings upon the righteous proselyte are invoked.

The word "**ger**" by itself having come to mean proselyte or convert to Judaism who has received circumcision and baptism not only into the religion of Judaism but into the Jewish people (Israel), occasioned the necessity to find a distinctive term for the resident alien.

Answer for yourself: Has the word "ger" come to mean a proselyte and convert to Judaism? Yes.

Answer for yourself: Has the "ger" received immersion and circumcision as well as bring an offering to the Temple? Yes.

Answer for yourself: Is the "ger tzedek" another name for the full convert to Judaism as is the word "ger?" Yes.

Answer for yourself: Does the term "righteous proselyte" refer to a full-convert to Judaism? Yes.

THE GER TOSHAV AND THE GER SHA'AR

The "**ger toshav**" was an alien, resident in Jewish lands by permission but on the condition that while he resides that he not engage in the worship of other gods or in idolatrous practices, and do not blaspheme the name of God (adhere to the Covenant and Laws of Noah). He had to pledge himself in the presence of 3 observant persons to abstain from idolatry. They also had to be subject to the jurisdiction of Jewish courts and keep free of flagrant crimes, homicide, robbery, theft, adultery and fornication. He also had to abstain from eating flesh with the blood or "life" in it (part of the Laws of Noah). Along with this came the seven commandments that God gave to Adam and Noah and were consequently binding upon all mankind. He was not required to join in the worship of Israel nor to take upon himself any further obligations to observe the commandments of God to Israel (Mosaic Law), thought he enjoyed the exemption from labor on the Sabbath which gives rest on that day to slaves and hirelings of every race, as well as animals. He was not required to be circumcised. Upon his circumcision he would become fully Israel.

There "**ger toshav**" is not a proselyte or a "**semi-proselyte**" and was not considered a convert to Judaism at all. The "ger toshav," as uncircumcised, also was called the "**ger arel**," and is not to be confused with the circumcised proselyte "**ger ben berit**" who has come into the covenant of God with Israel (ger mahul). The

"ger toshav" was a heathen and was allowed to eat "carion" or the flesh of animals not correctly slaughtered which no Israelite or proselyte could partake. The "ger" to whom an Israelite may give it in Deut. 14:21 is the "ger toshav"....Also, it was permissible to take usury from a "ger toshav" as with any heathen, but forbidden to take usury from an Israelite or "true proselyte;" the "ger zedek."

Answer for yourself: Was resident alien-heathen in the land of Israel required to be circumcised? No.

Answer for yourself: Was the resident alien-heathen in the land of Israel required to live by the Laws of Noah? Yes.

Answer for yourself: Was the resident alien-heathen called the Ger Toshav? Yes.

Answer for yourself: Was the resident alien-heathen allowed to eat foods that were not killed in a kosher manner? Yes.

Answer for yourself: Was the resident alien-heathen required to observe the 7 Laws of Noah? Yes.

Since the 18th century another category of proselytes emerged, the "proselyte of the gate" which is distinct from the "ger tzedek," or full proselyte or God-fearing Gentile. The "ger sha'ar" or "proselyte of the gate" suggests converts who lingered at the door of the synagogue as derived from passages in the Bible which speak of the "ger (alien) who is in thy gates" or residents in Israelite towns and cities (Ex. 20:10, Deut. 5:14).

In the 4th century a question arose as to whom the 4th Commandment concerning the Sabbath applied to, the "ger sedek" or "ger sha'ar" and the former opinion prevailed. In other words the full-convert is required to observe and keep the Sabbath, having become as one born in the land, while the ger toshav was not, yet he still could choose those things that pleased God if he so desired (Isa. 56). Often such "strangers" are listed with names in Deut. along with the widows, orphans, and the landless Levites. Here we find the proselyte of the gate who was likewise often the object of charity.

ATTITUDES TOWARD PROSELYTES:

The attitude of the religious leaders of Judaism toward proselytes differed in different circumstances, and individual teachers had their own beliefs. Rabbi Shammai would have nothing to do with one who was not prepared to give implicit assent, before knowing its contents to the unwritten Law as well as the written Law. Many had bad opinions of all proselytes, fearing that with persecution that they would fall back into their old ways because they were naturally bad people. It is for this reason the Scriptures had so often admonished Israelites not to give them offense by word or deed. The School of Hillel, unlike the School of Shammai, welcomed converts, and admitted them even though their knowledge was imperfect and the observance of Judaism faulty. Hillel, to whom Yeshua agreed, coined a motto: "Be one of the disciples of Aaron, a lover of peace, following after peace, loving mankind, and drawing them to the Law (religion)." A tradition illustrating the different temper of the two masters states that a foreigner came to Shammai saying, "Make a proselyte of me, on condition that you teach me the whole of the Law while I stand on one foot." Shammai drove him off, beating him with a measuring stick, whereupon he gave Hillel the same proposition. Hillel received him as a proselyte and taught him: "What you do not like to have done to you, do not do to your fellow man. This is the whole of the Law; the rest is explanation of it. Go, learn it."

NO DIFFERENCE BETWEEN THE JEW AND THE GENTILE PROSELYTE:

Proselytes are dear to God, for you will find that the same things are said about them as about Israel: the Israelites are servants (Lev. 25:23) and proselytes are called servants, as it is said, "To love the name of the Lord and to be servants to him" (Isa. 56:60); the Israelites are called ministers, as it is said, "And ye shall be

called the priests of the Lord, ministers to our God shall be said of you" (Isa. 61:1), and the proselytes are called ministers, as it is said, "The foreigners who attach themselves to the Lord to minister unto him (Isa. 56:6); the Israelites are called friends, as it is said, "The offspring of Abraham, my friend" (Isa. 41:8) and the proselytes are called friends, as it is said (of God), "Friend of the proselyte (Deut. 10:18). The word "covenant" is used of the Israelites in Gen. 17:13 and so it is used of proselytes "Who hold fast my covenant" (Isa. 56:6).

IN CONCLUSION:

The preaching of Yeshua's Apostles made converts among Gentiles to Biblical Judaism. According to Acts 2 those "Jews" from seventy nations from all over the world who had made pilgrimage to Jerusalem to observe the Feast of Shavuot (Pentecost), were previously Gentiles who had converted to Judaism by turning from idols to serve the living God. According to Biblical Law (Jewish Law), God required these Gentiles who had repented and come to faith in Him to be present at His appointed times three times a year.

The account in Acts 2 describes Gentile proselytes to Judaism who came over from all over the Gentile world to observe the special Sabbaths of God. Much later, in times of persecution, Gentile "Christians" sometimes joined the Jews to evade the test applied by the Roman officials to adore the emperor, to which Jews were not subject. Later, Christian emperors would make conversion of Gentiles to Judaism a crime in itself with severe penalties both for the Gentile convert and the Jew who converted him. Against all such attempts of pagan or Christian rulers to shut up Judaism in itself and prevent its spread in the first three centuries the Jews persisted in their missionary efforts to make the religion God had revealed to their fathers at Sinai the religion of all mankind. It is with this understanding that we will continue in the next newsletter our study of Gentile conversion as traced through the Bible.

So in closing I leave you with these thoughts:

As a Gentile Christian you find the example of what is required of you as:

1. Adhering to the Laws of Noah as well as...

1. Choosing those things that please God since we have accepted Christ (grafted into Israel) and have today a better covenant. See Isa 56 for details. More later.

[Let us continue our study in the last article in this series](#)



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"GODFEARERS" IN THE NEW TESTAMENT: THE PATTERN FOR GENTILE PARTICIPATION IN THE ISRAEL OF GOD #6

In the previous articles I have gone into detail to relay to you specific information concerning the Biblical language, religious history, and the Biblical culture which surrounds the events concerning believing Gentiles and their relationship to God through the New Testament. We have seen, contrary to what we have been told by Gentile Christianity, that the Bible has a very different picture of what a Gentile believer is to believe and do to be considered a part of Yeshua's church. We saw that God has given very specific commandments for your inclusion into His Son's Church. We saw in short summary that it was required of Gentiles to:

- Adhering to the Laws of Noah (66 commandments) as well as.
- Choosing those things that please God since we have accepted Christ (become grafted into Israel) and have today a better covenant (Isa 56).

Having reviewed all of the information presented I know some of you are prone to say or think "as a Christian I am under the "New Covenant" and that information does not apply to me. Many may feel that the information previously presented does not apply to them for some reason and claim New Testament exclusion. Let me remind you that these events chronicled and explained in the previous articles ARE New Testament events that occurred after the cross of Christ and in fulfillment of the Great Commission.

In order to deal with the "New Covenant" and "New Testament" defense which some will appeal to, I believe it to be very rewarding if we ruthlessly look at this New Covenant we hear so much about. But let me warn you, what you will discover will be very disconcerting to you because at present most of you hold a religious belief system based upon untruths in many areas and when presented with "the truth" you will tend to want to reject it and defend long held and cherished beliefs held most of your life.

Answer for yourself: Do you want the truth or a lie?

Answer for yourself: Before dealing with the "new" or "renewed" covenant, do you remember that all the events that transpired in the Book of Acts happened after the cross and were "New Testament" events? Having agreed with this statement then let us proceed.

Answer for yourself: Is it possible that you have gone to church your whole life and called yourself a "New Testament" believer and never fully understood what covenant you are under in the first place?

Answer for yourself: Is it possible that you don't know God's intended meaning for the word "new" as used in "New Covenant" as seen in the New Testament? Not so you say, well hang on for the shock of you life!

Answer for yourself: Could you, as a Gentile Godfearer, who calls yourself a "Christian," be a literal descendant of Abraham through Isaac and Jacob?

Perhaps the idea strikes you as too incredible to take seriously, too far fetched to be true--much like a dream which is so good that you are sure it could never happen in reality. The possibility of your own physical descent from Abraham (he was a Gentile and not a Jew) is such an overwhelming notion that it is easy for your rational mind to dismiss the thought as literally "too good to be true."

Answer for yourself: Are you aware that a careful reading of the Torah and the Prophets reveals that Abraham's seed, particularly the descendants of the Northern Ten Tribes, who were taken captive into all the Gentile nations of the world, are still in exile among the world's nations, and will soon be brought back to the LORD (YHVH) their God and to the Land of their ancestors?

Answer for yourself: Are you aware that if you are experiencing an inner pull toward the God of Israel, and to His Torah, and the Hebrew Roots of the Christian faith, then the probability is high that in these last days preceding the coming of Messiah, that you, as a Gentile Godfearer, could possibly be a descendant of one of the Ten Northern Tribes which were assimilated into all the Gentile nations of the world? How so? Read on.

While the Divine scenario of the Northern House of Israel being taken captive by Assyria, scattered among the nations, and regathered to the LORD (YHVH) in the latter days is most specifically laid out in the Book of Hosea, chapters 1 and 2; one could argue that it is most passionately enunciated in Jeremiah, chapter 31. However, be cautious in your reading of Jeremiah 31, since this vitally important chapter has often been misunderstood by both Christians and Jews, when they have failed to pay close attention to Jeremiah's carefully chosen language. It is intriguing that the prophet himself tells us, "In the latter days (today) you will understand this" (30:24b).

In hopes that this prophecy will be fulfilled in your life I continue with this article.

Answer for yourself: To whom is the prophet Jeremiah giving the prophecy of this "New Covenant" in Jeremiah 31?

Before you hastily answer "the Christian Church" as it now stands, you better examine what I have to show you.

You will note that the prophecy recorded in Jeremiah 31 is directed to both the House of Israel, which consists of the Northern Ten Tribes of Israel, and the House of Judah. This point is forcefully made in chapter 30 verse 4 where this particular prophetic sequence of events is initiated with the statement, "Now these are the words which the LORD (YHVH) spoke concerning Israel and concerning Judah...."

Answer for yourself: Was the Lord talking through Jeremiah the Prophet to Baptists, Methodists, Catholics today, or was God speaking through Jeremiah to the House of Judah (Jews of the Tribe of Judah and Benjamin) and the House of Israel (consisting of the Ten other Tribes of Jacob)?

If you answer this question incorrectly then there is no hope for you to understand what Jeremiah is really saying in these verses, let alone Yeshua who said he came ONLY "for the lost sheep of the House of Israel." Instead of "reading into the passage" a meaning you desire it to say, I challenge you to let the Bible teach you what it says!

Then follows the now familiar pattern of the need for punishment upon both Houses of Israel by military defeat and scattering in exile, but resulting in the complete accomplishment of the Holy One's purposes by their eventual regathering as being seen today in both Jewish and Christian circles. You will understand fully later about what I just said. Please read on.

Answer for yourself: Can you see the complete futility of trying to make this prophecy refer the Christian Church because in no time in its history was the Christian Church punished by scattering, exile, and captivity as was the Tribes of Israel?

Answer for yourself: Is it possible you have your whole life misunderstood what God, Jeremiah, and Yeshua

meant when speaking of the "New" Covenant? I can assure you that most have.

Both the scattering and the regathering of Judah and Ephraim (Ephraim is a synonym for the Ten Northern Tribes) are in the Wisdom and Providence of God. Jeremiah's language is chilling in 30:24: "The fierce anger of the LORD (YHVH) will not turn back, until He has performed, and until He has accomplished the intent of His heart; in the latter days you will understand this."

Answer for yourself: Are we living in the latter days, and if so, is it time to fully understand this passage?

These words bring to mind a parallel passage in the Book of Isaiah, chapter 27 verses 8 and 9, "By measure, by exile, thou didst contend with them; He removed her by His rough blast in the day of the east wind (both exiles and captivity were by foreign invaders from the East). By this (exile and captivity) therefore shall the iniquity of Jacob be atoned; and this is all the fruit to take away his sin...." It is worth noting that Isaiah here indicates that the exile would serve as an atonement for the sins of the people. Such an idea of atonement for sins might come as a surprise to those used to thinking in Christian terms, but is only because we have failed to understand Yom Kippur and all the facets of Biblical Atonement (if interested please request our articles on Yom Kippur).

Fortunately, the Almighty's plan does not end with punishment and abandonment of His people, Israel. Jeremiah 31 starts out with the hopeful declaration of the LORD (YHVH), Himself, "At that time (that is, "in the latter days," see previous verse)...I will be the God of all the families of Israel, and they shall be My people." God promises the descendants of Israel (who, through captivity, exile, and intermarriage with Gentiles became assimilated and inculturated Gentiles today) that they will find "grace in the wilderness" (verse 2), followed by the most moving promise of all, "I have loved you with an everlasting love" (verse 3). It would be a grave mistake, at this point, to assume that these incredible promises are made only to the House of Judah, the Jewish people; on the contrary, read closely verses 5, 6, and 9b:

Again you shall plant vineyards

On the hills of Samaria;

For there shall be a day when watchmen

On the hills of Ephraim shall call out,

"Arise and let us go up to Zion,

To the LORD (YHVH) our God."

For I am a father to Israel,

And Ephraim is my firstborn.

These clear statements, made by the LORD (YHVH), identify the primary audience. It was the Northern Ten Tribes who occupied Samaria/the hill country of Ephraim anciently, and who are prophesied to do so again.

These Ten Northern Tribes, who are frequently referred to in Scripture collectively as Ephraim, are called the LORD'S (YHVH's) "first-born" (possibly an allusion to Genesis 48:14-20 and I Chronicles 5:1).

The sure word of God to the descendants of Ephraim, the Northern Ten Tribes, is, "Behold, I am bringing them from the north country (Assyria), and I will gather them from the remote parts of the earth...." (verse 8a). And again, stated even more emphatically in verse 10, "Hear the word of the LORD (YHVH) O nations, and declare in the coastlands afar off, and say, 'He who scattered Israel will gather him, and keep him as a shepherd keeps his flock.'" Notice the interesting wording here. This declaration is to be made in the "coastlands afar off,"

and the descendants of Israel are to be gathered from "the remote parts of the earth." These locations certainly lend evidence to current efforts to identify the descendants of the Ten Tribes with the Northwest European peoples and their colonies (America).

Proceeding to the next major section of Jeremiah 31, we encounter the heart-rending passage, "A voice is heard in Ramah, lamentation and bitter weeping. **Rachel is weeping for her children;** she refuses to be comforted for **her children, because they are no more**" (verse 15). This passage was applied in the New Testament to Matthew's report that Herod slaughtered infant Jewish children at the birth of Yeshua. **Most historians would agree that this cannot be its intended original meaning.** Jewish interpreters have most often understood it as a reference to the Holocaust, or to Jewish suffering throughout the ages. Yet even this reading, which is certainly more to the mark, because it is too general and does not do justice to the highly specific language of Jeremiah. Remember, according to the historical books of the Bible, the Jewish people are primarily composed of descendants of the Tribes of Judah and Levi, and to a lesser extent Benjamin. Judah and Levi are the children of Leah, not of Rachel (Gen. 29:32-35). And while Benjamin was Rachel's son, she never got the chance to know him, as she died during his birth (Gen. 35:16-19).

But Rachel did give Jacob a son, whom Jacob loved very dearly, **Joseph** (Gen. 37:3).

Answer for yourself: Is it not this son Joseph and his children **[Joseph remember had two sons....Manessah and Ephraim]** whose descendants were taken in the Assyrian captivity and never returned to their land or their faith that Rachel is weeping over in Jeremiah 31:15? Indeed, it must be!

The Holy One instructs Rachel to stop weeping, promising her that her children will "return from the land of the enemy."

Answer for yourself: And, what children are these?

Look closely at verses 18 and 20, where the LORD (YHVH) says, "I have surely heard Ephraim grieving, 'Thou hast chastised me, and I was chastised like an untrained calf; bring me back that I may be restored, for Thou art the LORD (YHVH) my God.'" The LORD'S (YHVH's) reply is passionate:

"Is Ephraim my dear son?

Is he a delightful child?

Indeed, as often as I have spoken against him,

I remember him;

Therefore My heart years for him;

I will surely have mercy on him," declares the LORD (YHVH).

Again, it is clear that it is **The House of Israel/Ephraim/the Northern Ten Tribes which through intermarriage is melted into the Gentile gene pool of the world which is being referred to here, not the House of Judah/the Jews.** If anyone is tempted to think that the term Ephraim is being employed here in a generic way to address all Israel, just glance down to verses 23, 24, and 27, where Judah is treated as distinct from Ephraim/the House of Israel.

Next follows the passage that is at once the most awesome and the most misinterpreted of all the promises recorded in the prophets--the one concerning the "new covenant."

Answer for yourself: Understanding that although most Christians have applied this amazing prophecy of Jeremiah, which is often quoted in the New Testament to the Gentile new covenant Church and its mission to the Gentile nations; is it possible that this understanding could be in error? It sure is!

Anyone who will carefully read what Jeremiah says, and whom he addresses in this prophecy, if kept in context, will quickly see that such an application does serious injustice to the text. Unfortunately, the unconscious motivation Christians have in trying to claim this passage as to their own is the advancement of a "replacement" religion which began long ago, in which the Jews were no longer the heirs to the promises of God, but rather the Gentile Christian Church. One can only say, in the face of such claims--read the text!

Answer for yourself: What does Jeremiah actually say?

It can be clearly seen from the context (verses 27-28) that at a time when the House of Israel (the Northern Ten Tribes) and the House of Judah (Judah, Levi, and Benjamin) have been restored to the Land promised to their ancestors, and are multiplying and prospering, the LORD (YHVH) will THEN AND ONLY THEN "make a new covenant with the House of Israel and with the House of Judah...." (verse 31).

Answer for yourself: Is this "New Covenant" made with the Christian Gentile Church or with descendants of the Tribes of Jacob of the House of Judah and Ephraim (comprising the Ten Northern Tribes of Jacob)?

Answer for yourself: Is it proper for Christians setting in the churches of this country, or any country for that matter, to call themselves the Tribe of Ephraim or its descendants? How can we be certain?

Answer for yourself: Just because we say that this "new covenant" spoken of by Jeremiah the Prophet refers to us and our church, does that make it so?

Answer for yourself: Let say that you, as the Christian, are Ephraim and this prophecy applies to the Christian Church, then according to the timing of when God will make this "new covenant", can you say that this New Covenant is already made and existing because the Christians have been restored to the land of Israel and their ancestor's faith, or do most of Christianity today lay outside the land of Israel and have a belief system quite opposite to the Jewish Church of Jerusalem?

Answer for yourself: Can you see that this is another example where the Gentile Christian Church has stolen the "blessings intended for the Jews" and erroneously applied them to itself while leaving all the curses for the Jews? Church history is replete with such examples of Replacement Theology, and I bet you didn't think you had or accepted any anti-Semitic doctrines in your belief system! This is just one of many.

Please note that this new covenant is not made with the Gentiles; neither is it made solely with the house of Judah, the Jews. Rather, it is an incredible future promise that is guaranteed to the Jews and to their brothers, the descendants of Joseph/Ephraim (Yeshua called these the "lost sheep of the Hours of Israel [Ephraim]), after they have been reunited and are prospering in the Land of Israel.

You well know the magnitude of the promise:

I will put My law within them (this should sound strange to Gentile Christians today who reject the Law),

and on their hearts I will write it;

and I will be their God, and they shall be My people.

And they shall not teach again, each man his neighbor

and each man his brother, saying,

"Know the LORD (YHVH),"

For they shall all know Me,

from the least of them to the greatest of them,"

declares the LORD (YHVH),

"for I will forgive their iniquity,

and their sin I will remember no more." (verses 33-34).

Answer for yourself: Now, how sure are these promises? Can God lie?

Answer for yourself: Could these promises be taken away from the physical descendants of Jacob/Israel and given instead to a group of Gentiles calling themselves "Christians" who reject the Laws of God let alone His appointed times such as Biblical Festivals and Sabbaths? **I would not count on it if I were you!**

The scriptural text addresses that possibility most plainly, when it says, "Thus says the LORD (YHVH), who gives the sun for light by day, and the fixed order of the moon and the stars for light by night..., 'If this fixed order departs from before me, ...then the offspring of Israel also shall cease from being a nation before me forever'" (verses 35-36). And, as if that wording were not strong enough, the passage continues, "Thus says the LORD (YHVH), 'If the heavens above can be measured, and the foundations of the earth searched out below, then I will also cast off all the offspring of Israel for all that they have done'" (verse 7).

Answer for yourself: What further comment is needed?

Now, dear Christian, let me ask you a very important question:

Answer for yourself: Are you grafted into Israel as Paul stated in Romans, or are you grated into a Gentile organization built upon Replacement Theology given to you by the early Gentile Catholic Church?"

Answer for yourself: Do you observe the Festivals and Sabbaths of the Lord and of Israel, or do you observe pagan holidays that have had "Yeshua's" name affixed to them and have taken the place of what is commanded in Scripture?

Answer for yourself: Have you substituted the "day of the sun" (Sunday) for the Sabbath?

Answer for yourself: Have you replaced one of the most fundamental tenants of the Jewish faith...giving of tzedakah (charity) which comes from your tithe with the financing of buildings, mortar, brick, utilities, fancy lunches, Pastor car rentals, etc., with the tithe instead of what Yahweh commands it be used for?

Answer for yourself: Are you, as Gentile Godfearers grafted into Israel, in fact part of Israel and the people of God or have you apostatized from truth and practice a mixture of truth and error in Christianity as it stands today?

Answer for yourself: Are you the "remnant" among the Gentile nations who will be gathered as the "elect" and be presented at the Marriage Supper along with Judah-Benjamin, thus making up the Bride of Messiah, or will you be delegated to be the "servant-foolish bride" and be cast out of the Wedding Supper because Yeshua, a

Jew, in his own Torah, is commanded by his Father to not marry Gentiles! The only Gentile who will become a bride to Messiah is one, like Ruth, who said "your people will be my people and your God my God."

Answer for yourself: How can you dear Christian continue to believe, practice, observe, and finance neo-paganism masquerading as righteousness after having come to truths as shown in these articles?

Since you have been deprived by so many essential truths God desired you have, much of what you believe and consequently do is out of ignorance and lack of knowledge.

I suppose that there is no greater spiritual darkness than what surround the false teachings today concerning the "New Covenant." It is to this we turn now our attention.

Answer for yourself: Is the "New Covenant" really NEW at all?

Before we go in depth in this matter a little background information is necessary. **Shavuot (Pentecost or the Feast of Weeks) is the festival of the giving of the Torah.** The Torah, which is commonly known as the Pentateuch, consists of the first five books of the Bible: Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, and Deuteronomy. **This may surprise you, but the Torah is an integral part of the "New" (RENEWED) Covenant found in the New Testament. You may find this likewise shocking, but the "New Covenant" you heard spoken of continually will NOT become effective until a Shavuot Festival, some time in the future. Many Christians talk about the "New" Covenant, or Testament constantly without knowing of what they really speak.** You may find it surprising, but the Greek word for "testament" is "diatheke" meaning "mutual undertaking between two parties or more, each binding himself to fulfill obligations." In the New Testament, the use of "diatheke" means:

- 1). a promise or undertaking, human or divine,
- 2). a promise or undertaking on the part of God, and
- 3). **an agreement, a mutual undertaking, between God and Israel (notice it does NOT say the church).**

Answer for yourself: Does the actual words in the Greek Scriptures teach us that a "testament" is made between God and Israel and not the Church? It sure does.

Hebrews 8:10 says: "For **THIS** the covenant," **quoting from Jer. 31:31**, renders "this" in the Greek language as **"SAME."** In other words, **"this---same" covenant**, as was spoken by Jeremiah (that was originally instituted with an earthly Priesthood) has now been **RENEWED NOT REPLACED!**

Answer for yourself: In referencing "New Covenant" in the Greek New Testament, is the reference **ALWAYS** to the covenant spoken of by Jeremiah the Prophet which was made with Judah and Ephraim? It sure is.

Answer for yourself: How do Gentiles, who once were without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of promise, who had no hope, and were without God in the world according to Eph. 2:12 become part of this "New Covenant" of Jeremiah spoken about in the New Testament....by being grafted into Israel and the faith of Israel which practices Sabbaths and Festivals, or by becoming members of various denominations and non-denominations which reject God's Biblical Feasts, Festivals, and Sabbaths?

Hopefully this makes you think if you be in "the faith" or just have "a" faith about something which God never gave mankind.

In other words, the **"New" covenant of the "New Testament" is the "same covenant" (WHICH IS NOW**

RENEWED...NOT REPLACED...THE SAME COVENANT WITH ITS LAWS AND COMMANDMENTS WHICH ARE ITS COVENANT STIPULATIONS... WHICH PAUL TAUGHT THE WHOLE OF THE GENTILE WORLD DOES NOT ANY LONGER APPLY TO THEM!...THINK!

Now pay attention.

Answer for yourself: Jeremiah 31 states that the day will come when this **"RENEWED"** covenant will be made with "whom".....Israel and Judah or with Judah and the church which rejects the faith of Judah?

The answer to that question is "Israel and Judah", Israel being understood as Ephraim who today are dispersed Gentiles worldwide who take the form of Christians to whom can be traced Jewish Roots all the way back to the Assyrian Captivity and whom reject paganism and paganized religious practices (the very reason Ephraim was taken captive in the first place).

Answer for yourself: Where is Israel to be found today?

Answer for yourself: The Tribe and descendants of Judah is in the land of Israel since 1948, but where are the ten tribes of Israel today? More on that later!

Secondarily this "New" testament is often used to refer to a collection of books written by the Apostles. While we all talk "about" this new covenant, most folks do not know the terms that make up this "New" covenant. Since most folks consider the "New" covenant as an important part of their religion and relationship with God , it becomes clear that we "ought" to know the terms of this "New" (renewed) covenant. Since this is a legal document and has an impact on our lives, we certainly should be intimately familiar what the terms of this covenant. First let me tell you what the "New" covenant is not. **It is not the collection of books commonly known as the New Testament which has unfortunately replaced the Bible Yeshua used and which the early church took to the Gentiles for almost 400 years before the Catholic Church created a document to establish their validity for doctrines which they taught that were often contradicted by the Torah and Tanach (the Bible Yeshua used and which was taken to Gentiles in the Great Commission).**

Answer for yourself: How do we know this?

We know this because a covenant, or testament, is a contract between two parties. Webster's unabridged dictionary defines "testament" this way: "In law, a writing, under seal, containing the terms of agreement or contract between parties..." Since the collection of books merely quotes the terms, and since most of the writings of the New Testament do not contain the terms of this covenant, it would be poor scholarship to refer to this collection of Apostolic Writings as the "New Testament."

The ceremony commonly known as "communion," which is mistakenly practiced by most Christian churches as a substitute for the Festival of Passover, is not the new covenant because this ceremony does not mention the words that make up this agreement. While this ceremony mentions the seal of the new covenant (the cup of wine which represents Messiah's blood), it does not mention the actual words that make up this agreement.

Answer for yourself: What exactly are the words, or terms, of this "New" covenant?

The words, curiously, are found in the collection of books sometimes referred to as the "Old" covenant. The prophet Jeremiah wrote down the words of this agreement in Jeremiah 31:31-34: **"The time is coming," declares the LORD (Yahweh), "when I will make a new (renewed) covenant with the house of Israel (we must never forget that Israel had been dispersed, assimilated, and intermarried into Gentile nations for over 200 years when Jeremiah spoke this prophecy) and with the house of Judah.**

In other words, you cannot find the Tribes or descendants of Israel when Jeremiah spoke this prophecy, as these ten tribes were literally becoming "Gentiles-heathen" since their captivity and

were no longer "God's people." Israel as a Torah practicing people was no more! Rather, the descendants of Abraham, once monotheists, were now polytheists like their captives, and began to adopt a new religious belief system of man's invention instead of God's revelation. **They were losing their Biblical Roots, they were losing their Hebrew Roots.**

Answer for yourself: Has this same sickness infected the Body of Christ in the Gentile Churches of today? You better believe it has (just request our articles on Sabbath and Festivals to understand the depth of darkness that exists today in Gentile Christianity).

Let me explain. Since Ephraim's captivity, the people of Israel were becoming inter-married with pagans, being influenced and yielding to paganism, accepting and replacing, or at least mixing pagan religious beliefs with those given to them by God at Sinai, thus no longer following the "faith once given to the saints".

Please read slowly and carefully:

This "same covenant," seen in Hebrew 8, "will not be like the covenant I made with their forefathers when I took them by the hand to lead them out of Egypt, because they broke my covenant, though I was a husband to them," declares the LORD. "This is the covenant I will make with the house of Israel after that time, declares the LORD. **I will put my law (Torah) in their minds and write it on their hearts.** I will be their God, and they will be my people. No longer will a man teach his neighbor, or a man his brother, saying, 'Know the LORD,' because they will all know me, from the least of them to the greatest, declares the LORD. For I will forgive their wickedness and will remember their sins no more."

Answer for yourself: As stated before, **how does God intend His laws to be written on our hearts (let alone a Christian's heart when he denies the Law and believes it has passed away?)**

Let us never forget that faith comes by hearing and hearing by the Word of God. When those former Israelites (now inter-married and assimilated into Gentile nations where they were forgetting the faith of their fathers... Sabbaths and Festivals like Christianity today) **would once again be instructed concerning the covenants and laws of God, then the product of their hearing the Laws of God would indelibilize the words in their "minds" which would then become engrafted into their hearts.** See Nehemiah, chapter 8, for a perfect example of former Jews, who when returned from captivity where they did not hear the Word of God and were influenced by pagan cultures, and had forgotten the Word of God; yet when taught by Ezra for the first time, cried, repented, and returned to God with broken hearts as this "renewed" Word was "written on their hearts" as they heard with their ears and understood with their minds.

Answer for yourself: Is it any wonder why you do not at this time have the same belief system as taught by the Old and New Testament (same covenant remember?), but instead have a belief system which, when exposed to the truths I have shown you, seem foreign to you?

It is so simple. You have not had good teachers to teach you the truths which have for so long remained hidden until these last days. And those you have are blinded by prejudices and anti-Semitic doctrines inherited from both the Catholic and Reformation churches.

I would again like to call your attention to the **names of the parties that "WILL" made this covenant in the future.** The first party is called "the house of Israel" (**currently the House of Israel are dispersed and assimilated Gentiles when this prophecy was spoken by Jeremiah**) and "Judah" (Judah was still in the land of Israel when Jeremiah prophesied, but would shortly be taken into Babylonian captivity). The other party to this "RENEWED" covenant is God. God is referring to Himself as Yahweh.

So, if you (believing Christians) are not of the house of Israel or Judah, then this "new" or RENEWED covenant has no effect on you!

In other words, the Christian Church finds her validity as she is grafted into Israel, not the converse, where Israel is being grafted into the Gentile church.

Answer for yourself: Take a minute and ponder which I just said, then ask yourself this question: **am I grafted into Israel through faith in Yeshua, or is Israel grafted in my corner church?**

On the other hand, if you are convinced that the "New" covenant applies to you, then somehow you must be a part of the House of Israel in order for its benefits to be applied to you. This covenant, between the house of Israel and God, is quoted, verbatim, in Hebrews 8:8-12. This is the only other place where the words, or terms, of the new covenant are spelled out so expressly in the New Testament. If you carefully read this contract, or if you were to take this contract to your lawyer, you will learn that **this contract of the New Covenant has not yet taken effect!**

This contract cannot take effect until the Gentile Christian understands, believes, and practices the faith of Yeshua. This contract cannot take effect until the Gentile Christian comes to the understanding of the truths presented in these articles and truly believes that he is grafted into Israel, thereby rightfully entering into the "renewed covenant" of Jer. 31.

Ye who have ears to hear, hear what the Spirit says to the church! Also, this contract-covenant can only become effective when everyone knows the Lord (that's what it said). "Until everyone knows the Lord" means knowing and understanding His ways which are revealed in the covenant contract, the Torah (the first five books of the Bible which have not passed away in lieu of grace). The tragedy is that most Christian churches teach that the LAW (our covenant contract) has passed away. **Not only do we have to be content with looking forward to the time when this contract is put into effect, but we must unlearn lies taught as truth by well intentioned spiritual leaders who are sincere, but sincerely wrong.**

We must understand that the Law is still in effect, only the Priesthood and the sacrifices which accompany the Priesthood have changed. We must understand and cherish our "marriage certificate with God," His Torah, His Law, and take our rightful place as Gentile believers as "part" of Israel, and no longer allow ourselves to be tossed by every wind of doctrine by ascribing to replacement theology whereby we falsely believe the Christian Church has a covenant of its own to the exclusion of the covenants of Israel.

The actual terms of this renewed covenant, to which the Christian Church finds its identity, appear to be the same terms of the covenant that God made with the house of Israel at Sinai! We can deduce this by noticing that the "Torah" will be written on our hearts instead of stone. This refers to God's command when He gave the Torah. Deuteronomy 32:46 records for us: **Take to heart all the words I have solemnly declared to you this day, so that you may command your children to obey carefully all the words of this law (Torah).** We should also notice what is being written on the hearts. **It is God's Law, His Torah. It is God's instructions or laws.**

The implications of this are staggering!

This means, that when this is done, we will no longer disobey God. We will desire to obey the Law that most Christians are taught today to hate because they have been told that it brings bondage.

This erroneous teaching is due to errors in manuscript transmissions as well as cleverly placed words and additions to your Bibles (Greek New Testament) that are meant to lead you to the pre-formed theological opinions of those who printed your Bible (these redactors are influence by anti-

Semitic and anti-Judaic sentiments inherited from prior erroneous education). It just so happens that this "anti-Law" belief, which has been cleverly written into the pages of our Bibles and the corners of copies of Greek manuscripts which were later incorporated into the very text itself which were not there in the earlier Greek manuscripts from which the English translation is derived, is in total conflict with the words of Yeshua as well as Paul in the Bible (see articles on misunderstanding Paul and the Law and misunderstanding Galatians).

SCRIPTURAL FACTS AND NOT LIES:

Let us take a minutes and look at Ephesians chapter 2. We must understand that as Gentiles, Eph. 2:11-12 applies to us: "Wherefore **REMEMBER**, that you **in times past** Gentiles in the flesh, who are called Uncircumcision (symbol for Gentiles) by that which is called the Circumcision (Jews) in the flesh made by hands; that at that time **you were without Messiah, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope, and WITHOUT GOD in the world.**" Sounds pretty bleak...we were destined to Gehenna (KJV calls it Hell). It goes on to tell us in vv. 13-16 that "now in Messiah Yeshua you who once were far off are made nigh by the blood of Messiah (technically his soul as an offering for sin-see Isaiah). For he (Messiah) is our peace (**for both Jew and Gentile**), **who hath made both one (Jew and Gentile), and hath broken down the middle wall of partition (separation).**" Let me interject that **"between us" is added (italicized)** in the KJV for better understanding, and these words never appear in the Greek manuscripts from which your Bible was translated. Normally, these "minor" additions are quite harmless because they help the text to flow better for purposes or reading and understanding, **BUT SOMETIMES THESE WORDS WERE ADDED TO CREATE THEOLOGIES THAT TAKE US AWAY FROM THE TRUTH OF SCRIPTURE, LET ALONE THE RELIGION OF JESUS.** Let us keep examining the text.

Ephesians 2:15 is possibly **one of the worst translations in the whole Bible**, and is primarily responsible for teaching you the **lies and heresies you have been taught in traditional Christian churches that teach that the "LAW" has passed away.** Let me quote this verse correctly from the KJV, omitting the words added that have brain-washed the majority of Christians I know: "Having **abolished in his flesh** (Yeshua and the cross) the **ENMITY.**" Stop!

If you look this word up in any Greek dictionary, Vines wordbook, etc., you will find the word means **"hatred toward, opposition toward...something."** **So, first of all, the death of Yeshua abolished hatred by "SOMEONE OR SOME GROUP" TOWARD SOMETHING!**

Now, notice carefully, **"EVEN" is in italics** (added and not in the Greek manuscripts) in your Bibles if you have a KJV. My whole life I read my Bible as if these "italicized" words were given by God in my Bible. If we were to read Eph. 2:15 and **include "even" in the verse**, then we find (incorrectly I might add) that the sacrifice of Yeshua on the cross abolished through his flesh, "even" the commandments and ordinances. If "even" is added and read with the verse, it is easy to see that Yeshua destroyed the hatred for the Law by destroying the Law. By doing away with the Law (which violated his saying that we were never to think that he had come to destroy the Law..Matt. 5:17), he destroys the Law. **THERE IS ONLY ONE MAJOR PROBLEM: "EVEN" IS NOT IN THE GREEK MANUSCRIPT!**

Correctly understanding the GREEK from which our English is derived, the verse states emphatically that Yeshua's death **DESTROYED THE HATRED AND OPPOSITION TOWARD (SOMETHING), EVEN THE COMMANDMENTS.** Notice also, that the next word is in italics as well, being added and not in the Greek manuscripts from which we translated our Bibles. It would seem if we read these italicized words in the text, that Yeshua abolished on the cross not only mankind's "hatred and opposition" to the Law, but THE ACTUAL LAW AND ORDINANCES THEMSELVES! But, these words do not exist as given by the Holy Spirit, only as

given by man!

But "even" and "contained" are added, and the Holy Spirit never put these words in the inspired revelation. Now, let us read this beautiful verse as God intended you read it: "having abolished in the flesh (through sacrifice of Yeshua on the cross) the ENMITY (hostility toward, opposition toward).....what? THE LAW! Please notice that Yeshua abolished the hatred and opposition toward the Law of God.

Answer for yourself: Having better understood the original language of the passage, can you see that Yeshua abolished only the hatred and opposition toward the Law of Moses and not the Law itself?

Answer for yourself: Has your church taught you that the Law was done away with by Yeshua or did you know before today that the Law has never passed away?

Answer for yourself: Dear Christian, have you been told to hate the Law?

Answer for yourself: Do you hate the Law?

You see, the Law kills only when you violate it, not when you obey it. When you obey, God rewards you and blesses you, as your obedience to the Law of God is your expression of the will of God for your life.

Now you have to ask yourself a big question and think for yourself.

Answer for yourself: Who was opposed to the Law of God...the Jew or the Gentile?

Acts 21:20 informs us that James, the head of the church of Yeshua (Jesus) in the first century, would state (approximately 60 A.D.-notice it was about thirty years since his brother's death on the cross): "Thou seest, brother (Paul), how many thousands and thousands of Jews there are which believe (in Yeshua the Messiah of Israel); AND THEY ARE ALL ZEALOUS FOR THE LAW."

That's right, the LAW HAD NOT PASSED AWAY FOR THE CHURCH BEARING JESUS' NAME IN THE FIRST CENTURY as it sadly has for most Christians today which are part of Pauline Christianity instead of Jewish Christianity.

Answer for yourself: DID YOU HEAR THAT?

Ephesians, chapter 2, informs us that it was not the Jew who had opposition and hatred for the Law, for Paul would state that the Law was "holy, just, and good," and David states repeatedly in the Old Testament that he "delights in the Law and meditates in it day and night."

Answer for yourself: So, who were those who were opposed and had a hatred for the Law in this verse?

The answer is simple. The Gentiles, as stated before, were "without Messiah (until evangelized and taken the mandate to 'observe those things that I (Yeshua) have commanded..." These Gentiles were aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, strangers from the covenants of promise (notice not covenants of bondage), had no hope, and were without God in the world. Romans 9:2 strengthens the point as it states it was to Israel, and not the Gentiles, to whom God gave the adoption, the giving of the Law, the service (worship) of God, and the promises (covenants). It was the Gentile who had lived his whole life in debauchery, idolatry, sexual immorality, thievery, murder, fornication, etc. When presented with the Torah (Law); and understanding that before Yeshua's sacrifice, the Gentile had few options but to submit to "circumcision" if he wished to convert to the religion of Israel, many obstacles stood in the way of Gentiles accepting God's Law.

Thus, for an adult Gentile, the prospect of circumcision was definitely a commandment of the Law that a (Gentile) would have "hatred toward, opposition toward." Besides circumcision, the Gentile was confronted, for

the first time in his life with a Living Authority (a living God) that required of him "do's" and "don'ts." You can easily see the scope of taking upon oneself the whole of the Law was less than agreeable, thus we have a hindrance in taking faith in the One God of the world to the Gentile nations.

But, now in Messiah, the hatred and opposition toward the Law was removed for the Gentile, because no longer (following the cross) are Gentiles required to convert to Judaism to become children of God. Circumcision is no longer required of Gentiles to be in covenant with God. With the lessening of requirements, the Gentiles found a more attractive Judaism (Monotheism) as he was not to be held responsible for 613 mitzvot, but only the Laws (Mitzvot) Of Noah. Thus, the Jew and Gentile could become one through Messiah, thus making peace between Jew and Gentiles who had not previously accepted the Torah-Law. The failure of the Gentile to adopt and accept the Torah's commandments, had previously separated the Jew and Gentile. Now, as a modified life-style that came because of the sacrifice of Yeshua, the Gentiles began to accept and follow a life-style from which they were previously alien toward.

If you want more confirmation, Eph. 2:16 re-states for the second time that God "might reconcile both (Jew and Gentile) unto God in one body (Body of Messiah) by the cross, having slain the enmity thereby (notice it does NOT SAY the cross slew the Law). Notice, that again reference is made to the ENMITY, the hatred and opposition toward something. This verse is not as specific as before, but nowhere does it refer to a Jew's hatred toward the Law, rather, the hatred that Jew and Gentile had toward each other, mainly because of the erroneous perceptions that the Gentile had toward the Law which caused him to refuse accepting the Law as his absolute authority for life, thus separating the Gentile from the Jew, even in the face of Gentile revelation and faith. This separation of the Gentile from the Jew and Israel was usually manifested in anti-Semitism! God desired that the Gentile become "one" with the Jew, "one" with Israel.

ARE YOU READY TO BE SET FREE OF LIES?

For our final proof text, we turn to Colossians, chapter 2, verse 14: "Blotting out the handwriting of ordinances that was against us, which was contrary to us, and took it out of the way, nailing it to his cross."

Answer for yourself: Forgetting for a moment what I just showed you, let me ask you again...did Yeshua nail the Law to the cross or just those parts of the Law that are against us (the death penalty for sin) and is the Law passed away for Christians today?

For years I heard preachers tell me repeatedly that Yeshua took the Law which was contrary to me and nailed the Law to the cross, thus the Law is passed-away, we are under grace! We are under both!

Let us remember what we have learned up to now, that Paul said in Romans 7:12: "Wherefore, the Law is holy, and the commandment holy, just, and good." Paul would also say in Rom. 2:13: "For not the hearers of the law are just before God, but the doers of the Law shall be justified." With this understanding we will examine Colossians 2:14. As stated before, Yeshua abolished in his body the Gentile's hostility toward the Law of God, by allowing Gentiles entrance into the Kingdom Of God without becoming circumcised and adopting all the Laws of Israel. Our Bibles state that he also "blotted out the handwriting of ordinances which were against us in the Law, and nailed those ordinances "which were against us" to the cross as he had previously done with the "hatred toward the Law." Let us ask ourselves some revealing questions.

Answer for yourself: Which, if any, commandments given by God are contrary to us?

To answer this question in a manner whereby all can understand, let us continue.

If you are parents, your loving intention for your children should be for them to not to be harmed by the hurts so prevalent in this dangerous world. In order to safeguard them, you give them instructions and teachings

(called Torah, law) that you set down to guide their conduct, whereby, if they obey, they will be assured of safety and they will prosper. However, you also find it necessary to limit their conduct at times by training their minds through restrictive teachings, designed to limit the expression of their behavior. **Thus, as parents, we give our children both positive and negative instruction, commandments, mitzvoth, and laws.** One thing is in common with all which we tell our children, that it is in their best interest that they obey their parental authorities as they lovingly set down for them the "law", as it will be best for them if they do.

Likewise, when God commanded us not to commit adultery, I can hear Him say: "Oh, please don't do that, you might get a terrible disease and die for just a moment of fun." Likewise, when God commanded us not to kill, I can hear Him say: "please don't kill another who is created in My likeness, for if you do, then you will have to die also for your transgression." Easily, we can see that God, as did the parents in the example above, desire our best, and gave us commandments, both positive and negative commandments, both "thou shalt do" as well as "thou shalt not do". The goal of such loving protection and caring instruction in the giving of mankind His law was to assure for us standards, which if followed, would not only bless us, but others as well.

Understanding these examples, you can easily see that the commandments of God for His people were not, according to Colossians 2:14, "handwriting of ordinances that was against or contrary to us."

Answer for yourself: Then, what was contrary to us in this handwriting of ordinances (Law) that was taken out of the way, and "nailed to the cross?"

Answer for yourself: If these "holy, just, and good" laws, properly understood, were for our good and not for our harm, then what part of the Law was contrary toward us that was taken out of the way and nailed to the cross? That's easy.

The **only part of the Law that was contrary to us is the "DEATH PENALTY"** which came to us when we broke the Law for the first time, and subsequently reinforced by our further rebellion to God's Law. Yeshua, became our sacrifice, but much more, he paid my debt. Our "death penalties" were carried by him, taken out of the way, and was nailed with him onto that cross. Yeshua took the judgment of the Heavenly Court upon himself for our sin. Yeshua took our penalty (the soul that sinneth, it shall die); nailed the death sentence found within the Law to the cross, and left the blessing (the Laws such as "thou shalt not commit adultery, thou shall not kill, thou shall not steal, etc.). Yeshua, by taking those things contrary to us out of our way in that we shall never have to face spiritual death and eternal alienation from God, nailed the death penalty upon himself for our violations of the Law. **It is easy to see then, that all that remained within the Law was for our blessing then, and not for our cursing ("blessed are you if you"....).**

We must again stop and think...what part of the Law is contrary to us? Today, nothing remains that is contrary to us!

Back to the covenant of Jeremiah, chapter 31. Jeremiah teaches us that in the economy of this **RENEWED COVENANT** mankind will no longer sin! There is one further implication that can not be ignored.

Answer for yourself: Since this is what God created in Eden, and this is what God will do in the kingdom of Heaven, what ought we to be doing now?

Obviously, we ought to be obeying God by writing His Torah on our hearts and thereby obey it!

God's obvious desire is for us to be obedient to His instructions now! Many folks believe that God's Torah was abolished. They believe that it was replaced with something better. The writer to the Hebrews anticipated this when he commented on this new (renewed) covenant. If we look carefully, we will find out that the problem with the old covenant was with the people, not with God's law.

Hebrews 8:1-13 makes the point quite clear: We do have such a high priest, who sat down at the right hand of

the throne of the Majesty in heaven, and who serves in the sanctuary, the true tabernacle set up by the Lord, not by man. Every high priest is appointed to offer both gifts and sacrifices, and so it was necessary for this one also to have something to offer. If he were on earth, he would not be a priest, for there are already men who offer the gifts prescribed by the law. These men serve at a sanctuary that is a copy and shadow of what is in heaven. This is why Moses was warned when he was about to build the tabernacle: "See to it that you make everything according to the pattern shown you on the mountain." **"For if there had been nothing wrong with that first covenant, no place would have been sought for another. But God found fault with the people (NOTICE HE DID NOT FIND FAULT WITH THE COVENANT OR LAW, BUT WITH THE PEOPLE OF THE COVENANT)"** and said: "The time is coming, declares the Lord, when I will make a new (RENEWED) covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah. It will not be like the covenant I made with their forefathers when I took them by the hand to lead them out of Egypt, because they did not remain faithful to my covenant, and I turned away from them, declares the Lord. This is the covenant I will make with the house of Israel after that time (remember they are dispersed, literally now Gentiles due to inter-marriage; many today setting in Christian Churches unaware of their heritage), declares the Lord. I will put my laws in their minds and write them on their hearts. I will be their God, and they will be my people. No longer will a man teach his neighbor, or a man his brother, saying, 'Know the Lord,' because they will all know me, from the least of them to the greatest. For I will forgive their wickedness and will remember their sins no more."

By calling this covenant "New," **he has made the first one obsolete; and what is obsolete and aging will soon disappear.** The Greek of this verse, states that the first covenant, containing a Levitical Priesthood, was "slowly passing away," and it was in the days when Hebrews was written, that the Levitical Priesthood was slowly passing away, because the Temple would be destroyed in only a short time. The only Priesthood remaining would be the Priesthood of the order of Melchizedek, filled by Yeshua.

So, if there is nothing wrong with God's Torah, or law, then there is nothing to fix in His Torah. Therefore, God will fix that which is broken: His people. After He fixes us, **He will again give us His Torah (Law, teaching, instruction) on a new heart.** Shavuot, therefore, is the festival of the giving of the Torah. Thirty-three hundred years ago, God gave us His Torah written on stone, on the Festival of Shavuot. Two thousand years ago, God gave us the Living Torah, Yeshua, who taught us great insights into the written Torah. On a future Shavuot, God will write His Torah on our hearts in a new and dynamic way which will prepare us for eternity. We have the down payment of the Holy Spirit that guarantees it. Let's celebrate this Shavuot (Festival of Pentecost) by renewing our commitment to obey God and His Torah.

WHAT ALL OF THIS SHOULD MEAN TO THE GENTILE CHRISTIAN?

We at Bet Emet would have you understand, for starters, that since the Law has not passed away, and we have demonstrated that repeatedly as seen here as well as before, then as Christians we are under Law, under Grace, under the responsibilities to obey God's Commandments such as: keeping the Sabbath on Saturday, keeping and observing the Festivals of the Lord and not the pagan holiday which have been substituted for the truth, and practicing the Tithe correctly whereby we no longer rob God as you unknowingly do everything you give you 10% to traditional Christian churches. I know of no Christian Church in America that obeys the Tithe correctly as stated in Scripture. If you know of one, please inform us.

Answer for yourself: Where is the place that obedience should play in response to faith?

If we are to obey, as a greater measure of love for God than anything else, then understand the Law (teachings, instructions) is the picture God gave us to know of His will for us and is intended by Him for us to obey.

If you would like to learn more about the Jewish Yeshua, and the Jewish Messianic Church, which was the pattern God gave for Gentiles to follow, contact Bet Emet Ministries and we will be glad to help you be conformed into the image of Yeshua, and not a reflection of him that has been blurred by traditions of men,

deception, and selfishness for more than 1700 years. Shalom

It is our prayer for you at Bet Emet Ministries that Yahweh Bless your UNDERSTANDING of the Apostle Paul's teachings, which are sometimes 'hard to be understood' - but which do NOT 'do away with' any of The Perfect Laws of Yahweh, in any way.

Bet Emet Ministries exists to blow a trumpet and sound an alarm, for the sure judgment of God will fall on the "condemned city" where both the guilty and innocent in thought are both judged and found guilty.

Many of you have already written us here at Bet Emet, so we know that this message of returning to Torah-faith being put out to the descendants of the Lost Tribes of Israel (scattered Gentiles) and to descendants of assimilated portions of the Tribe of Judah is stirring your hearts. Those of you who have not yet shared your feelings with us, please do. We derive great strength and encouragement for the work we are doing through your communication, prayers, and support. Please stay in contact. Shalom.



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GOD'S TRUE SALVATION AS SEEN IN HIS SABBATHS, HOLY DAYS, AND BIBLICAL FESTIVALS

It has always been God's intention to break down the middle wall of partition separating Jew and Gentile, thus uniting both Jew and Gentile as one with Him. It is God who is to be the Savior of the Gentiles (Isaiah 11:10, 42:6; Acts 2:39; Ephesians 2:11-18).

Isa. 11:10 And in that day there shall be a root of Jesse, which shall stand for an ensign of the people; to it shall the **Gentiles seek:** and his rest shall be glorious. {glorious: Heb. glory}

Isa. 42:6 I the LORD have called thee in righteousness, and will hold thine hand, and will keep thee, and give thee for a covenant of the people, for a **light of the Gentiles:**

Acts 2: 39 For the promise is unto you, and to your children, **and to all that are afar off,** [even] as many as the Lord our God shall call.

Eph 2:11 (KJV) Wherefore remember, that ye [being] **in time past Gentiles in the flesh,** who are called Uncircumcision by that which is called the Circumcision in the flesh made by hands; 12 That at that time ye were without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope, and without God in the world: 13 But now in Christ Jesus ye who sometimes were far off are made nigh by the blood of Christ. 14 For he is our peace, who **hath made both one,** and hath broken down the middle wall of partition [between us]; 15 Having abolished in his flesh the enmity, [even] the law of commandments [contained] in ordinances; for to make in himself of twain one new man, [so] making peace; 16 And that he might reconcile both unto God in one body by the cross, having slain the enmity thereby: {thereby: or, in himself} 17 And came and preached peace to you which were afar off, and to them that were nigh. 18 For through him we both have access by one Spirit unto the Father.

In the Old Testament (Hebrew Scriptures) God provided a written record of the Messiah to enable the Jewish people to recognize Him when He appeared. Yeshua of Nazareth is thought by many to be this this Messiah. The answer to that question is not as easy as it seems. We have on another site detailed factual information and presentation of this difficult issue which Jews and non-Jewish believers cannot seem to agree on. I suggest you look into the matter if you desire but this is not the issue of this article. Yet, even though many Jews of the Second Temple ear in the first century C.E. hoped and believed that Yeshua was to be manifested as the Messiah and fulfill the Jewish Scriptures, the powerful Jewish Temple leadership (Sadducees) rejected Yeshua as Israel's Messiah not only for themselves but officially for the people of Israel.

Ironically, the Gentiles of the world, through the ministry of the followers of Yeshua would embraced him as Israel's Messiah. As the apostle John wrote, "He came to his own and his own did not receive him. But as many received him, to them he gave the right to become children of God, to those who believe in his name." (John 1:11-12).

These Gentile followers of Yeshua experienced a spiritual new birth and became part of a company of people called "Israel." The Apostle Paul teaches us that Gentiles, who turn from idols to serve the living God, are grafted into Israel by faith; thereby becoming "fellow-citizens" with the saints.

THE GREAT SEPARATION BETWEEN JEW AND NON-JEW

Following the destruction of the Temple in 70 C.E., the assembly of Gentile Messianic Believers (Church) became more "Gentilized" under the influence of Rome and lost much if not all of the "Jewish Roots". Thus Jews and Christians began to go their separate ways. It wasn't long before Yeshua's Church was flooded with Gentile unbelievers who embraced the "Messianic-Christian faith" but never had a background in the Jewish faith. It is these Gentile "converts" who lacked the foundations of Torah and who would not accept the Jewish customs. These Gentile "converts" would forget one important thing: **Jewish often meant BIBLICAL!** Because of this lack of understanding of the Jewish faith, and distrusting things that are often different, these Gentile "converts" brought their hatred and bigotry against the Jews with them into this new Jewish faith. About the same time, some of the genuine Gentile Christian leaders developed a faulty theology that created an anti-Semitic mentality in the Gentile Church that further divided the Christian world from the Jews. These early anti-Jewish declarations laid the foundation for the tragic future of Jewish Christian relations that would see the Gentile Church lose sight of its Jewish roots and persecute the Jews down through the centuries.

GOD IS DOING A NEW THING IN OUR DAY....SHALL WE NOT SEE IT?

But in these last days, God is doing a marvelous thing. He is breaking down the walls of hate and misunderstanding that have divided the Jews and Gentile believers. He is sovereignty pouring out His Spirit on thousands of Jews to prepare them for the coming of the Messiah. At the same time, God is stirring in the hearts of Christians a holy love for the Jewish people and awakening them to the Jewish roots of their Christian faith.

Many Christians are realizing that the origin of our faith is Jerusalem, not Athens, Rome, Geneva, Wittenberg, Aldersgate, Azusa Street, Springfield, Nashville, Tulsa, etc.

As a result, Christian Churches around the world are reaching out to the Jewish people in their communities, singing songs from the Old Testament, rediscovering their Jewish roots and celebrating the Jewish Feasts. It is clearly God's appointed time to reconcile Jew and Gentile, binding us together by His Spirit.

THE CELEBRATION OF THE BIBLICAL FESTIVALS BY THE NON-JEWISH BELIEVER

Because of the prophetic season in which we are living, many Christian Churches are realizing that it is proper, good and pleasing to the Lord to celebrate the Jewish Feasts of Passover, Pentecost and Tabernacles (Romans 14:5-6). Not only that but when we study the original languages of the Bible, both Greek and Hebrew, we find that these Festivals are not merely suggested for the Gentiles to observe, but expected and commanded! [see Have We Misunderstood Paul and The Law].

THERE A NUMEROUS BENEFITS THAT ARE BEING EXPERIENCE BY CHURCHES WHO KEEP THE FESTIVALS

Some of these are:

- 1. Better understanding of the Bible
- 2. Rediscovery of the Jewish roots of Christianity
- 3. Fuller comprehension of God's plan of redemption
- 4. Deeper revelation of Yeshua
- 5. Greater insights into God's prophetic seasons
- 6. Clearer and more powerful teachings through visual aids
- 7. Discovery of the Biblical Church calendar.

Answer for yourself: What Church that desires more of God would not want these benefits!

You can realize them in your own congregation by celebrating the Feasts.

GETTING STARTED WITH THE PASSOVER

Historically, Passover marks the national liberation of the Hebrews from Egyptian slavery. Pesach, the Hebrew name of the feast literally means "the lamb". God instructed each family to take an unblemished year-old male lamb to their home on the tenth day of the first month, Nisan. This corresponds to the months of March and April. They were to examine the lamb for four days to see that it was perfect. On the fourth day at twilight (the beginning of the fifth day), they were to kill the lamb and take some of the lamb's blood and place it on the two doorposts and the lintel of their house. On the first Passover, the avenging angel of God killed every first born male throughout the land, from Pharaoh, to slave, to camel. The angel would "Passover" those homes that protected themselves by placing the blood of a lamb on their doorposts and lintels.

Today the Feast of Passover is celebrated by Jewish people and many Christian churches around the world with a Passover Seder which commemorates the liberation from Egyptian slavery which is a picture of God's salvation. This is a picture of the salvation provided by God to those who believe His Word and respond to it in faith and works. The Passover Seder is a meal with special foods, practices and Scripture readings. The Passover Seder commemorates the liberation from Egyptian slavery, in accordance with God's instructions (Lev. 23:1,4, Exodus 12:14,24-27).

Lev. 23:1 And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying,

Lev. 23:4 These [are] the feasts of the LORD, [even] holy convocations, which ye shall proclaim in their seasons.

Exod. 12:14 And this day shall be unto you for a memorial; and ye shall keep it a feast to the LORD throughout your generations; ye shall keep it a feast by an ordinance for ever.

Exod. 12:24 (KJV) And ye shall observe this thing for an ordinance to thee and to thy sons for ever. 25 And it shall come to pass, when ye be come to the land which the LORD will give you, according as he hath promised, that ye shall keep this service. 26 And it shall come to pass, when your children shall say unto you, What mean ye by this service? 27 That ye shall say, It [is] the sacrifice of the LORD'S Passover, who passed over the houses of the children of Israel in Egypt, when he smote the Egyptians, and delivered our houses. And the people bowed the head and worshipped.

One needs to understand that the Passover was the demonstration of their "faith" in God. We come to God in Faith and Obedience without which we have no relationship and cannot expect "life" from God. The mixed multitude responded toward God and His Word to them through Moses with "faith" and "works" and "obedience" which ultimately led them to their salvation from estrangement from the true God. So behind all the Passover instruction and story is one of "faith" unto God that exhibited itself in "obedience." This is the core of what the Passover demonstrated and teaches us today.

Heb 11:6 6 But without faith it is impossible to please him: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him. (KJV)

UNLEAVENED BREAD

Hag ha-Matsot, the Festival of Unleavened Bread (Ex. 12: 15). This stems from the commandment to eat unleavened bread (MATSAH) and the prohibition against eating HAMETS or leavened food, in commemoration of the Israelites' hasty exodus from Egypt when they had time to prepare only unleavened bread. While the prohibition against hametz applies to the entire festival, the commandment to eat matsah applies, strictly speaking, to the first night only. One needs to understand that after one receives the gift of salvation from HaShem which is by grace only, then he is obligated to "cast out the leaven" from his life. Leaven is used as a metaphor for "sin" in the Bible and it is understandable that after one comes to God then he needs to clean his life up in response to God's gracious gift of salvation. Thus "unleavened bread" in the next step for the Bible believer after his salvation experience.

THE FEAST OF PENTECOST

The Feast of Pentecost is celebrated on the sixth day of the Hebrew month of Sivan. This corresponds to the months of May and June on the Gentile calendar.

Historically, the main activity on the Feast of Pentecost was the presentation of a wave offering to the Lord, two loaves of baked bread with leaven (Lev. 23:15-21). The wave offering expressed the Hebrews' dependence on God for the harvest and their daily bread. This was a thanksgiving offering. Not only that but it is a picture of the people of God; two loaves representing the Jew and the non-Jew as the peoples of God.

Later when the Jews were dispersed among the nations, the Feast of Pentecost lost its primary significance as a harvest festival and was celebrated as a memorial to the time when God gave the law at Sinai. It is this "Law" which is given to both the Jew and the non-Jew through the various Covenant's of God. This is because the Jews have traditionally believed that God gave the law to Moses on the Day of Pentecost (Ex. 19:1,11).

Exod. 19:1 In the third month, when the children of Israel were gone forth out of the land of Egypt, the same day came they [into] the wilderness of Sinai.

Exod 19:11 And be ready against the third day: for the third day the LORD will come down in the sight of all the people upon mount Sinai.

The Day of Pentecost did not originate with Christianity, but it is the day when the Jews would be in Jerusalem to celebrate the Feast and the giving of the law (understood at their Covenant responsibilities).

From Luke's account in Acts 2 we see the marvelous timing of God. Thousands of Jews had journeyed to Jerusalem to celebrate the Feast of Pentecost. It was then that the followers of Yeshua waiting in the upper room were filled with the Holy Spirit. They then began to worship God in foreign languages that were spoken and understood by the Jewish pilgrims. There was such a loud noise accompanying this experience, that it attracted the attention of the Jewish visitors who went to see what the commotion was all about. Peter then stood up and preached a bold sermon to this Jewish crowd.

This outpouring of the Holy Spirit was taking place on the very day when the Jews were offering the two wave loaves to God and celebrating the law symbolizing their dependence on God. One wave loaf symbolized the Jews and the other the Gentiles who would also receive the Holy Spirit in like manner as recorded in Acts 10.

It is this Spirit of the L-rd which is given to empower the child of God, now saved, and "cleaned up from his sin

through repentance and obedience to the commands of God," to live the victorious life over sin. It is this "anointing" which empowers the child of God to live the mitzvot and the commands of God. Even Yeshua said his yoke was easy. God made it so easy for us if we will lean upon Him and His power in us that enables us to live a Torah obedience and love filled life. The result of such obedience and sanctification in one's life is that he become a vessel in which God can abide. So in these "former rain" Feasts we find faith and obedience, sanctification and repentance from sin which transforms us into holy vessels in which God can abide and use for His glory.

1 Cor 6:19 19 What? know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own? (KJV)

God makes His salvation available through faith as pictured in the physical salvation of Israel from Egypt. Words accompany such belief for if the Israelites had not responded accurately to their faith and failed to apply the blood to their door then they would likewise have died. Once we are saved at Passover one comes to Unleavened Bread as it is time to get the "leaven" (picture of sin in the Bible) or sin out of our lives. This is a sanctification whereby we make ourselves through repentance and obedience to the Word of God acceptable vessels for God's Spirit to inhabit. God's Spirit comes to such a one in the fulfillment of Pentecost.

Now in Israel we encounter the dry season separating the former Feasts and the Latter feasts. We then leave the first harvest season during the year and encounter the dry period as symbolized by the life of mankind. Once we are saved, cleansed, and filled with God's Spirit, we are equipped to live out our lives where we must deal with the good and the bad as we encounter them in life. Sometimes life is hard as seen in the dry season following Pentecost; yet we have the Spirit of HaShem to comfort and sustain us. This is symbolic of the difficult and arduous years of life where we live out our relationship with God. It is through these years of struggle and testing where we reveal before God and man our relationship with Him. This is where the rubber really meets the road so to speak. This is our life time where we live by faith and not by sight in proving to ourselves and God our commitment to Him. At the end of our journey we wait for our death and our ultimate reconciliation with God.

THE FESTIVAL OF ROSH HASHANNAH

Rosh HaShanah is the Jewish New Year, a one-day festival in ancient times, now observed for two days (in Israel as well as in the Diaspora) on the 1st and 2nd of Tishri. It marks the commencement of the annual ten days of penitence, which reach their climax on Yom Kippur, the Day of Atonement.

The Rabbis gave the festival two other names: Yom ha-Din, the Day of Judgement, and Yom ha-Zikkaron, "the Day of Remembrance," when God remembers His creatures. The concept of "Judgment Day" is rabbinic, deriving largely from statements made in tractate Rosh HaShannah. The Mishnah speaks of all mankind passing before God on the New Year like a flock of sheep (RH 1.2). This idea is expanded in the Talmud, which lays emphasis on the New Year as an occasion for self-examination in the light of Judaism's highest ideals. From the awesome picture of each man or woman standing before the throne of God, judgment on his or her fate for the coming year being entered on Rosh ha-Shannah and the verdict sealed on the Day of Atonement (RH 16a), the rabbis went on to visualize "three ledgers opened in heaven: one for the completely righteous, who are immediately inscribed and sealed in the Book of Life; another for the thoroughly wicked, who are recorded in the Book of Death; and a third for the intermediate, ordinary type of person, whose fate hangs in the balance and is suspended until the Day of Atonement" (RH 16b). Hence the designation of Rosh ha-Shannah and Yom Kippur as Yamim Nora'im ("Days of Awe"). These themes dominate both home observance and synagogue liturgy on Rosh ha-Shannah. Festive white marks the appearance of the synagogue and its worshipers. It also symbolizes closeness to God and the ideal of man's cleansing from sin.

Understanding the above then it is proper to look at Rosh HaShannah as a symbol of our death and judgment at the end of our life. It is appointed for man to once die and then the judgment which is also a second part of Rosh HaShannah. After the resurrection at Rosh HaShannah and the judgment and reward for believers as well

as non-believers, then one awaits final atonement at Yom Kippur. The Scriptures teach that at the blowing of the Trumpets on Rosh HaShannah will be the resurrection of the dead. Having lived our lives in faith and obedience we die only to be ushered into God's presence for the judgment.

1 Cor 15:52 52 In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. (KJV)

THE FESTIVAL OF YOM KIPPUR

Following our resurrection unto reward or judgment at Rosh HaShannah we enter the Holy Day of **Yom Kippur** otherwise know as the **Day of Atonement**. The importance of this day and the authority for its mode of observance rest upon specific biblical commandments "to make atonement before the Lord" and "afflict your soul" (Lev. 16: 29-31, 23:27-32; Num. 29:7). Afflicting one's soul was interpreted by the sages to mean abstaining from food and drink; atoning was understood to mean three related acts that would relieve one from the burden of SIN - - acknowledging the transgressions, declaring repentance through a process of confession, and then making atonement before God in order to obtain His forgiveness. It is during our lives that we had the opportunity to repent of our sins, confess them, and make atonement for our sin. Rosh HaShannah had brought us before God for our judgement and our status declared at Yom Kippur. Our final Atonement is accomplished in our lives following our judgment and our status before God settled for all Eternity. We live before God for Eternity in His Presence which the Festival of Tabernacles reveals to us in its symbolic understanding.

THE FEAST OF TABERNACLES (SUKKOT)

The last major feast on the Jewish calendar is Tabernacles. It is celebrated in the Fall in the Jewish month of Tishri, which corresponds to the month of September/October on the Gentile calendar.

The Feast of Tabernacles came at the final ingathering of the harvest season. The fruit of the land had been reaped so the people could rest from their labors. It was a time of great rejoicing and was celebrated from the fifteenth to the twenty-first. Then on the twenty-second (the eighth day), there was a special Sabbath which was a day of rest characterized by further rejoicing (Lev. 23:33-41).

Levi 23:33 (KJV) And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying, 34 Speak unto the children of Israel, saying, The fifteenth day of this seventh month [shall be] the feast of tabernacles [for] seven days unto the LORD. 35 On the first day [shall be] an holy convocation: ye shall do no servile work [therein]. 36 Seven days ye shall offer an offering made by fire unto the LORD: on the eighth day shall be an holy convocation unto you; and ye shall offer an offering made by fire unto the LORD: it [is] a solemn assembly; [and] ye shall do no servile work [therein]. {solemn...: Heb. day of restraint} 37 These [are] the feasts of the LORD, which ye shall proclaim [to be] holy convocations, to offer an offering made by fire unto the LORD, a burnt offering, and a meat offering, a sacrifice, and drink offerings, every thing upon his day: 38 Beside the sabbaths of the LORD, and beside your gifts, and beside all your vows, and beside all your freewill offerings, which ye give unto the LORD. 39 Also in the fifteenth day of the seventh month, when ye have gathered in the fruit of the land, ye shall keep a feast unto the LORD seven days: on the first day [shall be] a Sabbath, and on the eighth day [shall be] a Sabbath. 40 And ye shall take you on the first day the boughs of goodly trees, branches of palm trees, and the boughs of thick trees, and willows of the brook; and ye shall rejoice before the LORD your God seven days. {boughs of goodly trees: Heb. fruit of, etc} 41 And ye shall keep it a feast unto the LORD seven days in the year. [It shall be] a statute for ever in your generations: ye shall celebrate it in the seventh month.

The primary activity during this feast is the building of booths or shelters (Sukkah). God commanded the Hebrews to build shelters to live in during the Feast as a reminder of how He cared for them during their wilderness wanderings and the fact that they were pilgrims passing through this life (Lev. 23:42-44).

Levi 23:42 (KJV) Ye shall dwell in booths seven days; all that are Israelites born shall dwell in booths: 43 That your generations may know that I made the children of Israel to dwell in booths, when I brought them out of the land of Egypt: I [am] the LORD your God. 44 And Moses declared unto the children of Israel the feasts of the LORD.

The shelters were loosely constructed and decorated and the roof covered with branches. This allowed the Hebrews to see through the roof into heaven and be reminded of an even greater rest and rejoicing when Messiah would rule on the earth. Thus, the Feast of Tabernacles symbolizes the Messianic age.

The Feast of Tabernacles has such universal significance in God's redemptive program, that He requires all nations to go to Jerusalem to celebrate this feast in the world to come (Zech. 14:16).

Zech. 14:16 And it shall come to pass, [that] every one that is left of all the nations which came against Jerusalem shall even go up from year to year to worship the King, the LORD of hosts, and to keep the feast of tabernacles.

This agricultural "ingathering of the harvest" is symbolic for the ingathering of souls unto God following our death following our judgment. One of the prophetic readings for the festival is chapter 14 of Zechariah, where it is said that all the nations will someday go up to Jerusalem" to keep the feast of Tabernacles" (verses 16-19). A total of 70 bullocks were sacrificed in the Temple on the seven days of the festival (Num. 29:12ff.) and the rabbis suggest that this number corresponded to the 70 nations of the world. Thus both Jew and non-Jew are reconciled with God. The only thing lacking is the eternal dwelling of the Spirit of God with mankind at the Festival of Tabernacles. This is the eternal Sabbath where God and man are one for Eternity.

This is only a summary to say the least of what the Biblical Festivals reveal...the Plan of Salvation of God.

BUT WHERE IS JESUS?

And if you noticed, this plan is very understandable to the Jew and non-Jew without trying to "force" Yeshua to fulfill passages that yet remain unfulfilled. It is these Biblical Festivals, correctly understood as given above, which will further enable the Jew and the non-Jew to become one in expectation of the coming of the Messiah.

I, as well as the untold multitudes in the various Messianic Ministries of the world, rejoice to see the many thousands of Gentile believers which are returning to the Biblical Roots of their faith in this day and time as a sign of the prophetic season in which we are living.

WHAT SHOULD THE BIBLICAL FESTIVALS MEAN TO THE CHRISTIAN?

I am aware that many teach that the Festivals were fulfilled in the life and ministry of Yeshua. Much of that understanding is taken from the Gospel of John and other passages in the New Testament. It is not my intent here to discuss such a matter, but when one undergoes a serious and intensive study of the New Testament as compared with the Old Testament for accuracy one is saddened by the gross misapplication of Old Testament passages, mistranslation of Old Testament passages, and the hundreds of Old Testament passages taken out of context in the New Testament which are purposefully manipulated such to prove "false proofs" that Yeshua fulfilled the Old Testament prophetic passages and the Biblical Feasts. I used to believe that as well from reading the New Testament, but after years of serious study, where I compared line upon line of Old Testament Masoretic text from the Jewish Scriptures and not the "altered" Christian Old Testaments with New Testament text, I see the error of my previous religious belief system. **I had put my faith in the wrong document.** The bottom line for now is that we cannot be certain that Yeshua was the Messiah or will be the Messiah when

he comes. I have my personal reasons to believe that when Messiah appears he probably will be Yeshua, but to twist the Old Testament and do great injustice to God's Holy Word in order to "force" an interpretation or to make it look as if Yeshua fulfilled the Old Testament when this message was presented to non-Jews of the first century who knew no better, is no longer an option for me. Time will tell if Yeshua will ultimately fulfill the prophecies of Moses and the Prophets and be the legitimate Messiah of Israel. If you find it hard to believe what I just said, then I suggest you purchase only one book and be awakened to the serious flaws in the Christian Bible and the New Testament which has so severely been "added to and taken from" by the Roman Church over the centuries: Antisemitism In The New Testament by Lillian Freudmann. Read it and you will never be sorry and then you will not be able to question what I say or write.

IN SUMMARY....GOD'S TRUE PLAN OF SALVATION

Having said that, then let me explain God's true plan of salvation as seen in the Biblical Festivals as taught in the Bible Yeshua used...the Holy Tanakh:

- God makes His salvation available through faith as pictured in the physical salvation of Israel from Egypt at the Passover where God passed over those who responded to Him in faith and obedience. Works accompany such belief for if the Israelites had not responded accurately to their faith and failed to apply the blood to their door then they would likewise have died.
- Once we are saved at Passover one comes to Unleavened Bread as it is time to get the "leaven" (picture of sin in the Bible) or sin out of our lives. This is a sanctification whereby we make ourselves through repentance and obedience to the Word of God acceptable vessels for God's Spirit to inhabit. God's Spirit comes to such a one in the fulfillment of Pentecost.
- We then leave the first harvest season during the year and encounter the dry period as symbolized by the whole of life of mankind. Once we are saved, cleansed, and filled with God's Spirit, we are equipped to live out our lives where we must deal with the good and the bad as we encounter them in life. Sometimes life is hard as seen in the dry season following Pentecost; yet we have the Spirit of HaShem to comfort and sustain us.
- The next Festival is Rosh HaShannah which symbolizes our death at the end of our life. It is appointed for man to once die and then the judgment which is also a second part of Rosh HaShannah.
- After the resurrection at Rosh HaShannah and the judgment and reward for believers as well as non-believers, then one awaits final atonement at Yom Kippur.
- The only thing lacking is the eternal dwelling of the Spirit of God with mankind at the Festival of Tabernacles. This is the eternal Sabbath where God and man are one.

Answer for yourself: Did you notice that not only did the above plan of YHVH'S salvation make sense, but Yeshua's name was not mentioned once?

This is only a summary to say the least of what the Biblical Festivals reveal...the Plan of Salvation of God. And if you noticed, this plan is very understandable to the Jew and non-Jew without trying to "force" Yeshua to fulfill passages that yet remain unfulfilled. Sadly the Christian Church has not heard this message and yet it is the very core of the whole of the Bible Yeshua used! So sad!

It is these Biblical Festivals, correctly understood as given above, which will further enable the Jew and the non-Jew to become one in expectation of the coming of the Messiah.



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THE BIBLICAL FEAST DAYS WERE ORDAINED AT THE CREATION OF THE WORLD AND INTENDED FOR BOTH JEW AND NON-JEW TO OBSERVE

The very first reference in the Scriptures to the solemn Festivals of Yahweh was made on the fourth day of creation (Gen. 1:14). Here is that verse in several translations.

Good News Bible *"Then God commanded, 'Let lights appear in the sky to separate day from night and to show the time when days, years and religious festivals begin.'"*

Jerusalem Bible *"Let there be lights in the vault of heaven to decide day from night and let them indicate festivals, days and years."*

New English Bible *"Let there be lights in the vault of heaven to separate day from night and let them serve as signs both for festivals and for seasons and years."*

Moffat Bible *"Let there be lights in the vault of heaven to separate day from night, to mark the sacred seasons, the days and the years."*

We can see plainly from these translations that Yahweh's sacred seasons, His solemn festivals were an integral part of His plan at the creation of the world. The Plan of Salvation and the Sabbath Laws which form a part of it was, therefore, not a divine after-thought hurriedly formulated by the Almighty when Adam sinned, but a carefully arranged program in which each major event was scheduled to occur at a divinely appointed time; a rescue program held in readiness in the event of mankind sinning.

Yahweh's solemn festivals, in other words, are part of the Plan of Salvation; for they not only prefigure the seven major events in His plan, but they specifically identify the appointed times when those mighty events are scheduled to take place.

Genesis 1:14 *"Let lights appear in the sky ... to show the time when days, years and religious festivals begin."*

THE FEAST DAY COMMANDMENTS AND THEIR ETERNAL NATURE

Many sincere believers suppose that the Feast Days mentioned in the Bible were a temporary feature instituted by the Eternal only till the time of the Jesus' and since then they were **'done away with,' 'nailed to the cross'** and are therefore of little importance to Christians under their "supposed" new covenant. Nothing is further from the truth; and to prove this we will examine Yahweh's commandments concerning His Feasts to see if they were in fact temporary or eternal.

The commandments concerning the Feasts of Yahweh are found in the following passages: Exodus 12:14-24, Exodus 13:5-16, Leviticus 23 - the whole chapter but note carefully verses 14, 21, 31 and 41. Space does not allow us to quote all these verses, but let us look at one festival verse in six Bible translations in order to appreciate the kind of language Yahweh used when giving His Feast Day commandments. The verse we have selected is Exodus 12:14 but all the others are just as meaningful and use identical terms.

King James Bible *"And this day shall be unto you for a memorial and ye shall keep it a feast to the Lord **throughout your generations**, ye shall keep it a feast by an ordinance **forever**."*

Moffat Bible *"And this day shall be a memorial day for you, to be kept as a festival for the Eternal **age after age**, you must keep this as a **standing festival**."*

Amplified Bible *"And this day shall be to you for a memorial, you shall keep it as a feast to the Lord **throughout your generations**, keep it as an ordinance **forever**."*

Jerusalem Bible *"This day is to be a day of remembrance for you, and you must celebrate it as a feast in Yahweh's honor, for **all generations** you are to declare it a day of festival **for ever**."*

Good News Bible *"You must celebrate this day as a religious festival to remind you of what I, the Lord have done. Celebrate it for **all time to come**."*

Knox Bible *"You are to observe this day as a memorial of the past, a day when you keep holiday in the Lord's honor, **generation after generation, a rite never to be abrogated**."*

Can you see what we mean? Yahweh's festivals were appointed by Him to be celebrated from generation to generation, age after age, for all time. **They were never to be abrogated**. The word "abrogate" means to cancel, to nullify, to repeal, to do away with, to abolish.

According to this Scripture, the Almighty's feasts are "never to be abrogated".

Answer for yourself: Does that sound as if He would a few years later do away with them? Certainly not. The very suggestion is insulting the intelligence of the Almighty and casting doubt on His ability to say what He means and mean what He says. Also remember that there are other Bible verses - every bit as powerful as the one given above - which in exactly the same way define the eternal nature of Yahweh's festivals. Turn to them in

Leviticus 23 verses 14, 21, 31 and 41. There, over and over again, you will see how the Holy One of Israel commands His people in everlasting tones to celebrate His festivals for all time.

So do not let anyone confuse you by saying that the Feast Days of the Almighty God of Israel have been done away with: because they haven't. All who make such wild and totally irresponsible claims - and you will hear them - are insulting Yahweh's ability to even formulate His own laws; and it is unthinkable that He who knows the end from the beginning would have used such language if all along His plan was to do away with the Feasts at Calvary. The very idea borders on blasphemy and is only being given this coverage because of the untold damage that false doctrine is causing in the ranks of the Christian church.

The plain truth is this: That as the supreme Judge and Advocate in the law court of Heaven, Yahweh knew perfectly well what He was saying when He commanded that His solemn festivals were to be celebrated for ever, from age to age, for ALL TIME.

Further confirmation of this fact will be given later where you will see that in the coming millennial age, and in the age after that (on the new earth) the redeemed host of mankind will celebrate the Feast Days of the Almighty with great gladness and respect.

THE CHRISTIAN CHURCH HAS FOLLOWED IN THE SIN OF JEROBOAM

After the death of King Solomon the nation of Israel split into two kingdoms. The tribes of Judah and Benjamin (and some Levites) stayed loyal to Solomon's son Rehoboam and formed the "Kingdom of Judah." The other tribes broke away under a man called Jeroboam the son of Nebat. They retained the title "the Kingdom of Israel." The city of Jerusalem was in Judah and its crowning glory was the Temple which Solomon had built. Three times a year all Israelite males were commanded by God to go up to Jerusalem: at the Passover, at Pentecost and at the Feast of Tabernacles. (Exodus 23:17, Deut. 16:16). **Israel's new king Jeroboam feared that his rebellion against Rehoboam would collapse if his people went up year by year to Judah for the festivals where they would hear the truth as opposed to Jeroboam's "gospel."** He was extremely worried. At all costs he must prevent the men of Israel from going to Jerusalem for the Festivals of Yahweh. And this is the record of what he said.

1 *"If this people go up to do sacrifice in the house of the Lord at Jerusalem, then shall the heart of this
Kings people turn again to their Lord, even unto Rehoboam king of Judah, and they shall kill me, and go again to
12:27- Rehoboam king of Judah. Whereupon the king took counsel, and made two calves of gold, and said unto
33 them, it is too much for you to go up to Jerusalem: behold, thy Gods, O Israel, which brought thee up out of
the Land of Egypt.*

*And he set the one in Bethel, and the other put he in Dan. **And this thing became a sin:** for the people went to worship before the one unto Dan.*

And he made a house of high places, and made priests of the lowest of the people, which were not the sons of Levi.

And Jeroboam ordained a feast in the eighth month, on the fifteenth day of the month, like unto the feast that is in Judah, and he offered upon the altar. So did he in Bethel, sacrificing unto the calves that he had made: and he placed in Bethel the priests of the high places which he has made.

*So he offered upon the altar which he had made in Bethel the fifteenth day of the eighth month, even in the month **which he had devised of his own heart; and ordained a feast unto the children of Israel:** and he offered upon the altar, the burnt incense."*

Believe it or not that seemingly insignificant act of worshipping two metal idols on unsanctified festivals was the most catastrophic blunder ancient Israel made. It is a sin so grievous that over and over again the wickedness of succeeding kings was measured against it. Repeatedly these words appear:

1 Kings 15:34,
16:2&26, 2 Kings
3:3

"And he did evil in the sight of the Lord and walked in the way of Jeroboam the Son of Nebat and in his sin wherewith he made Israel to sin"

Answer for yourself: Why was Jeroboam's sin so grievous?

Because by it with one master-stroke he severed the nation's main spiritual link with Yahweh's appointed Sabbaths as well as with YHWH'S "pattern" and form of worship. The sacred festivals were times for spiritual instruction and revival, when the men - and families - of Israel gathered in Jerusalem to learn of the Almighty and His requirements. (Exodus 34:23) Jeroboam's bogus festival and substitute form of worship at Bethel broke that spiritual link and like a rudderless ship the nation of Israel began to drift away from the Creator.

The results were appalling, for very soon millions of Israelites completely lost their spiritual bearings and adopted the basest forms of paganism as well as the pagan's holy days. Many were the calls to repentance, but the sin of Jeroboam son of Nebat (the sin of using substitute forms of worship on unsanctified festivals) was not given up. As a result the Almighty carried out His predicted threats given through the His servants the prophets and handed Israel over to their enemies. After a series of devastating defeats they were deported from the Promised Land and sold like cattle in the markets of the Middle East.

2 *"And the Lord rejected all the seed of Israel, and afflicted them, and delivered them into the hand of*
Kings *spoilers, until He had cast them out of His sight. For He rent Israel from the house of David; and they*
17:20- *made Jeroboam the son of Nebat king: and **Jeroboam drove Israel from following the Lord, and***
23 ***made them sin in a great sin.** For the children of Israel walked in all the sins of Jeroboam which he*
*did: they departed not from them. **Until** the Lord removed Israel out of His sight, as He had said by all His*
servants the prophets. So was Israel carried away out of their own land to Assyria unto this day."

The action of Jeroboam, apparently trivial as it may seem, was obviously a most grievous sin. It was spiritual adultery at its worst; the act of mixing and diluting truth with error. In fact it was idolatry! In essence it consisted of merging the laws of the Almighty with human tradition and trying to worship Him on bogus festivals which were unauthorized imitations of Yahweh's appointed feasts.

Hundreds of years earlier the prophet Moses had foretold Israel's scattering or deportation if they forsook the commandments of God and here it was happening exactly as foretold.

Deuteronomy *"And Yahweh shall scatter thee among **all** people from one end of the earth unto the other; and*
28:64 *there thou shalt serve other Gods which neither thou nor thy fathers have known."*

Strange as it may seem, that selfsame sin of adulterating truth with error, of introducing bogus religious festivals into true worship has been repeated on a

world scale by the Christian Church.

Yes it is true, the mighty congregations of Christendom have done - and are still doing - what ancient Israel did under King Jeroboam. Over the centuries truth has been diluted with error and the introduction and acceptance of unsanctified festivals as days of worship is now so widespread that comparatively few believers are even aware of the deception. This may sound like a shocking statement, but it is true; and if the reader is not afraid of truth he/she must read on, for proof of this fact will follow shortly.

At this very moment the whole of Christendom is steadily - yet almost imperceptibly - splitting into two distinct camps:

1. **Those who respect the laws of Yahweh and add to their faith OBEDIENCE, especially that form of obedience which manifests in keeping Yahweh's Sabbath commandment.**
2. **And those who look upon obedience almost as though it were a competitor of faith. This persuasion, surprisingly, sees little amiss in clinging to the popular but unsanctified festivals of Christendom and the bogus Sabbath of Sunday. And like Israel of old these believers are in the mass refusing to keep the Almighty's festivals.**

Sooner or later all those who classify themselves as believers in the Creator will move into one or other of these two camps.



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HOW WE AS NON-JEWS LOST "THE FAITH" OF JESUS...THE FAITH ONCE GIVEN TO THE SAINTS

Scholars, historians, and sincere clerics agree that during the first 200 years following the deaths of the Apostles, drastic, un-scriptural changes came about within the early Assembly that would flourish down to our day. It was prophesied in the Bible. But the Bible also speaks of a "remnant" who will be adhering to the original, scriptural truths in these last days. Understand what happened, ...

and the urgent need today to return to the "faith which was once delivered to the saints" (Jude3)

"As the apostolic age comes to a close, the Church seems to pass through a dark tunnel. When it comes out at the other side, the original bond of unity, the clear Standards, and the love of [Yahweh] seem to have been replaced by an unsettling, institutionalized spirit of domination and by beliefs which are more Gnostic than Christian. What happened? We are now confronted with the possibility that the original identity and true definition of Christianity have become lost." --The Apostasy Of The Lost Century.

Answer for yourself: Has Gentile Christianity since the first century twisted much of the Bible's truth, thereby making itself guilty of teaching another gospel, another doctrine?

Answer for yourself: Can you explain why a movement identifying itself so closely with Jesus, a Jew, today teaches often doctrines opposite of what he taught?

Answer for yourself: Are you even aware that Gentile Christianity is guilty of changing the gospel of Yeshua?

THE PREACHING OF ANOTHER GOSPEL

Through much Bible and historical study, I as well as multitudes of others, have drawn conclusions that differed from what is routinely taught in nominal Christianity throughout our land.

Answer for yourself: Should we need a priest or minister to interpret for us what the Bible says?

Surely the Creator of this universe would not leave an instruction Book for man that humble, sincere, truth-seeking people could not properly understand! But one thing is different today. Living in the Western Hemisphere make rendering and interpreting a Hebrew book quite difficult without adequate preparation on our parts.

Answer for yourself: Is truth that leads to salvation so complicated that it can be grasped only by those with

seminary degrees in Bible interpretation, and how do we explain the multitudes of diversity in doctrines that exist in more than 2 thousand different and competing Christian denominations?

THE TRANSLATORS OF OUR CHRISTIAN ENGLISH BIBLES HAVE BEEN LESS THAN TRUTHFUL DUE TO THEIR RELIGIOUS BIASES

With the help of today's concordances, lexicons, dictionaries, and other Bible study helps, we can come to a better understanding of many archaic words and renditions found in the King James Bible.

As we move closer to the end of the age, knowledge of the Bible's true message shall be increased, Daniel 12:4. At the same time there will be a restoring of original truth neglected through the centuries, Acts 3:21. We see this last-days movement to restore Biblical truth spear-headed in the restoration of the Hebraic Roots to the Gentile Christian church today.

Most of us with a little study can easily find a number of incongruities and even serious errors perpetuated by churchianity.

For example, the name "Jesus" appears in Acts 7:45 in the King James, which obviously refers to Joshua the son of Nun, the great Israelite general. Hebrews 4:8 is another place where Joshua-or more correctly Yeshua should appear in the King James Bible. The newer Bible versions recognize this error and have since changed the name to the Latinized "Joshua" in both Acts and Hebrews. These are definitive examples revealing that the name Yeshua (later altered to Joshua) was changed wholesale to "Jesus" by translators!

The average churchgoer has no idea what the word "Christ" means or where it came from. Bible dictionaries show that "Christ" derives from the Greek *christos* (Strong's Concordance Greek Dictionary No. 5547, from "*chrio*" meaning to anoint or rub with oil). It means anointed, as does the Hebrew *meshiach*.

Answer for yourself: Why would a Jewish rabbi, speaking Hebrew, be given the Greek title "Christ?"

Yeshua himself said our salvation is of the Jews (not Greeks, John 4:22). Acts 1:6-7 indicates that the Kingdom will be restored to Israel and not Rome or Athens. Yet English Bibles contain the Greek title "Christ."

Answer for yourself: Why was it not properly translated "Anointed"?

One would be more correct to refer to Yeshua by the Hebrew title "Messiah" rather than identifying him by a title that is "Greek" to most people today.

It does seem rather strange that the Greek title "Christos" is *transliterated* (that is, brought over into English with the same sound), yet the name of Yahweh and Yeshua are both *translated* by the English "Lord" in our New Testament. Too often in the King James Version the word "Lord" leaves us in doubt who is meant), Yahweh the Father or Yeshua (see Acts 2:34, Heb. 10:30 and many others). This contributes to the blurring of such major distinctions and created a "theology" that guarantees such a one who follows and believes these things are idolators!

STRANGE CUSTOMS AND PRACTICES

There is a grass roots religious or spiritual movement afoot around the world to free mankind from the shackles of pagan customs and beliefs. Bet Emet Ministries is one such ministry. This is true not only in the United States, but also in Europe and the Middle East. This spiritual revival seeks the old paths of truth by restoring the Hebrew Roots of Christianity.

The problem with mankind is simply one of human nature and sin. Yahweh clearly defines sin for us:

"Whosoever commits sin transgresses also the law: for sin is the transgression of the law." (1 John 3:4)

We cannot do things as we alone see fit, but are obligated to follow His instructions, living His way. He is the final Judge. When our lives are over and we are in the grave, Almighty Yahweh will be the One who matters. So we must please Him now, while we can.

As we near the end of the age it appears that Yahweh is moving to clear from the minds of sincere truth seekers the accumulated rubbish of pagan influence that has overwhelmed and saturated the faith once delivered unto the saints.

Religious error is evident everywhere, yet the majority attending weekly church services are ignorant of the subtle and pervasive influence of pagan customs. Christianity perpetuates the error instead of rejecting paganism and retracing its steps back to truth

ITS HARD TO TEACH OLD DOGS NEW TRICKS

It is no secret that the first Israelite Bishops and overseers were replaced at death by converts from paganism. Brumback's History Of The Church states on page 53,

"The Roman emperor, by the office of Pontifex Maximus, directed all religious affairs. When Christianity became the state religion, Constantine [ruling 306-337] assumed all of the authority in the church, which he had exercised as supreme director of paganism."

As more pagans were supposedly converted to faith "in" Yeshua the more difficult it was to resist the strong influence of pagan practices and customs they brought along with their new faith. Halley's Bible Handbook includes a section on church history entitled "Paganization of the Church," which aptly details what happened since the time of Constantine who was the first Christian emperor.

While Constantine did not make Christianity the state religion, he favored Christians in official appointments and positions. After his death, other Roman emperors favored Christianity above all else. Note Halley's comments:

"Emperor Theodosius, 378-395 CE, made Christianity the state Religion of the Roman Empire, and made Church Membership Compulsory. This was the Worst Calamity that has ever befallen the Church. The forced conversion filled the Churches with unregenerate people..."

"But now the military spirit of Imperial Rome had entered the Church. The Church had conquered the Roman empire, but in reality the Roman Empire had conquered the Church, by making the Church into the image of the Roman Empire..."

"The Imperial Church of the 4th and 5th centuries had become an entirely different institution from the persecuted Church of the first three centuries. In its ambition to Rule it lost and forgot the spirit of [Messiah].

"Worship, at first very simple, was developed into elaborate, stately, imposing ceremonies having all the outward splendor that had belonged to heathen temples..."

There were mass conversion of the Barbarians. There is only one problem. There was little repentance and instruction, and they amounted to false conversions. The Gothes, Vandals and Huns who

overthrew the Roman Empire accepted Christianity; but to a large extent their conversion was nominal; and this further filled the Church with pagan practices..." p. 867, Halley's Bible Handbook.

THE TRANSFORMATION OF JEWISH CHRISTIANITY INTO A GENTILE ABERRATION OF BIBLICAL TRUTH

Historians attest to the change that came over the early fledgling assemblies following the death of the Apostles, all of whom had been Jews. It is as if a curtain had come down upon their activities, and when it is raised a hundred years or so later, an entirely different situation is seen. **Syncretism-the merging of pagan practices with Bible truth-is obvious everywhere. The heathens continued keeping their former pagan ways, but under a new name and with a slightly different meaning.**

Man's desire to do things his way, rebelling against the commands of Yahweh, started back in the Garden with Adam and Eve. Rebellion continued, forcing Yahweh to intervene through the flood, the tower of Babel, and even while the Israelites were being fed manna and having Moses lead them to the Promised Land. Isaiah's opening chapter is a condemnation of His chosen people. Rebellion against Yahweh's law continues and is becoming even more evident today.

The point of Isaiah's rebuke and that of Yeshua reveals that the syncretism has continued throughout history. Carnal man has continued to inject his own thoughts and concepts in his worship and thus early on contaminated the True Worship of our pure and holy Creator Yahweh.

WE HAVE FAILED TO LEARN THE LESSONS OF HISTORY

Having come out of Egypt, and recalling that pagans worshipped a golden calf, Israel decided they would have a visible object that they could see, handle and touch to represent the invisible Yahweh, Exodus 32:4. **The clear warning in Exodus 20:1-5 was that under no circumstances were they to follow the idolatrous practices of the pagans in the land they were to possess.**

Israel's covenant was to follow the teachings of Moses and so be a light to the Gentile nations around them. The Gentile pagan nations were not to be a light to Israel. Israel's mission was to be a model nation and to lead others in the pure worship of Yahweh. This is clear from Isaiah 27:6: *"He shall cause them that come of Jacob to take root: Israel shall blossom and bud, and fill the face of the world with fruit."*

Psalms 80:8-11 clearly shows that what Yahweh sought from Israel, His vineyard, did not become a fruit of righteousness. His people were soon removed from their favored and unique position among all peoples and sent into exile.

Answer for yourself: What happened?

Israel had become ensnared in the worship practices of the pagans about them. **Instead of holding Yahweh's way of life-with its many blessings and security-as an example to the world, Israel took up pagan ways, turning their backs on pure worship given in the Bible.**

When Israel finally went into the Promised Land, it was a new generation, a people that had seen the miracle of the daily manna being provided for them, and the presence of Yahweh in the pillar of cloud by day and the pillar of fire by night.

This new generation of Israelites should have gotten the paganism of Egypt out of their system. They had among them Moses and the tabernacle with a functioning priesthood to keep them mindful of the goodness and bounty of Yahweh's providence. All of this to no avail.

After the death of Moses, Israel, instead of driving out the inhabitants to a man, tolerated the pagans, married them, absorbing their heathen worship and practices.

The pagan nations were still in the land at the time of David and Solomon and were a snare to them.

Eventually, the false religions of the world so corrupted the Chosen People that Yahweh divorced them spiritually

Answer for yourself: Is God the same yesterday, today, and forever?

Now pay attention to the next question.

Answer for yourself: If God who is the same yesterday, today, and forever, divorced His people and "cut them off" from Himself and commanded His people to divorce their Gentile wives because of the pagan worship practices that they brought into Israel, can God do any less with us who practice and observe pagan holidays in the Church and substitute pagan "sabbaths" for the Sabbaths of God? You better think deeply before you give a quick answer.

One only has to read Matt. 7: 18-21 to find that many will come to Yeshua thinking that they have done many wonderful works in "his name" only to hear "depart from me I never knew you..because you work and practice iniquity." What we fail to understand is that the Greek word for "iniquity" means those who are not submitted to or ignorant of the Laws of Moses, especially Gentiles. If we were not ignorant of such Laws we would see specifically that God has commanded how He is to be worshipped, and no where in these Laws and Commandments can we find the holidays observed in the Christian Church today, instead, we find the opposite....a complete calendar of Jewish Holy Days which by in large is neglected.

IF WE DO NOT LEARN FROM HISTORY IT REPEATS ITSELF

History repeated itself centuries later after Yeshua's death. The first disciples were all Israelites, as were the first bishops. Within the first hundred years, however, the "called-out ones" no longer were of the characteristic Hebrew flavor. Paganism had moved in and taken over.

Yeshua came to call us to repent and return to the pure religion of Yahweh, teaching us to follow His ways instead of carnal, human understanding. Historically we see that Christianity, when it departed from its Jewish Roots rejected the Hebrew religion, which led to a despising of the Mosaic Law given by Yahweh Himself to man (Rev. 22:14). Instead, Gentile Christianity tolerated and absorbed prior pagan customs and teachings in flagrant violation of Scripture.

The Oxford Illustrated History of Christianity, commenting on the widespread infusion of pagan influence, on page 84 states:

"The 'opaque' areas of experience, of institutions and daily living, if they had not disappeared by [Pope] Gregory's time had become absorbed into a Christian universe as translucent parts. In principle, there was nothing that could not be absorbed into the radically Christian world."

The religion of modern churchianity has absorbed many foreign doctrines that have no basis in the Bible, but are rooted in Mystery Pagan Religions.

Answer for yourself: Could many today in the church be likened to the rebellious Israelites who took up whatever new worldly fad or liberal trend came upon the scene? You better believe it! Yahweh is completely out of their thoughts.

And even as they did not like to retain Yahweh in their knowledge, Yahweh gave them up to a reprobate mind [unfit to pass judgment], to do those things which are not convenient: being filled with all unrighteousness...who knowing the judgment of Yahweh, that they which commit such things are worthy of death, not only do the same, but have pleasure in them that do them," Romans 1:28-29,

32

BAPTIZED WITHOUT REPENTANCE

Historians attest to the change that came over the early fledgling assemblies following the death of the Apostles. With the exception of Luke and Paul, all the New Testament apostles were Jews. They had grown up following Israelite customs, keeping the Saturday Sabbath, the annual Feast Days and hearing the Torah (Law) read to them each Sabbath. Yet, there are those who contend that these Jews were dyed-in-the-wool Christians and wrote the books of the New Testament in Greek no less! Current scholarship since the discovery of the Dead Sea Scrolls has proved this 1700 year Catholic tradition totally bogus.

Syncretism (the merging of paganism with Biblical truth) is obvious everywhere within the New Testament to those with such prior knowledge of both Judaism and pagan Gentile religions. The pagans continued keeping their pagan ways, but under a new name and with a slightly different meaning and much of this was written within the pages of our New Testaments and without prior knowledge one falls prey to such deception.

The Oxford History of Christianity, on page 85 states,

"Baptism turned a pagan into a Christian...What constituted a 'pagan' was a matter of definition by clerical authority; in practice it meant what evaded the bishop's control. Gregory the Great's decision that English converts to Christianity might continue to use their traditional places of worship provided they were sprinkled with holy water was a revolutionary extension of clerical tolerance, with momentous implications for later missionary activity."

All of this is to say the pagans were baptized, but returned to their former houses of idolatry and continued to worship as before. Only the name had been changed to gain larger numbers of converts to Christianity.

THE FACTS OF THE MATTER ARE QUITE DISTURBING

The following is taken from the book, The Jewish Christians of the Early Centuries of Christianity According to a New Source, written by Shlomo Pines. The Islamic historian reveals much about growing dissension between Jews and Christians shortly after Yeshua's time and the blending of pagan beliefs brought into Christianity by the growing number of gentile converts.

Pines makes revealing comments from his vantage point of an outside spectator, namely, as an observer of the history of the two distinct groups which emerged from Judaism-Christianity and Islam.

- First, there were Jewish Christians who adhered to the teachings of Moses. Beginning with the Apostles, the first converts to an understanding that Yeshua was the expected Messiah were from Judaism, especially from the synagogues where the Apostles went to preach.
- Later came the torrent of Gentile converts who are referred to simply as "Christians." While the Jewish Christians continued keeping of the law and the ways taught by Yeshua, those converts coming from non-Israelite nations became known as Gentile Christians (whom author Pines refers to only as "Christians"). These retained their many heathen doctrines, blending them into

"Christianity."

Shlomo Pines writes of the early centuries of Christianity and states, "The original Gospel was regarded as written in Hebrew." He goes on to point out what history has verified, that the Gentile converts to the true Biblical Jewish Faith no longer used the Hebrew texts to bring about the conversion of many other nations. Because of the infusion of foreign doctrines by Christianity, the Gentile bishops and teachers avoided the Hebrew Scriptures, relying mostly on the Greek texts. Pines tells us why in this eye-opening statement:

"In their view, this was a deliberate policy on the part of the Christian leaders, who did not want to have their doctrines demolished by the scholars grounded in the Scriptures who were numerous among the Jews."

It is noteworthy that this Islamic writer is acutely aware of the many un-scriptural doctrines of early Gentile Christianity. Gentile Christians had abandoned the Commandments of the Old Testament (Torah) and substituted alien laws and heathen customs and practices.

Rather than evangelize the nations around them through the authentic Hebrew Scriptures, the Christian leaders from Gentile backgrounds avoided the Hebrew texts because so many of their "Christian" doctrines were nowhere found in the Bible.

Thus, they avoided any clash with those knowledgeable of the Hebrew Scriptures which condemned taking on any aspect of worship foreign to the Word of Yahweh. Author Pines contends that Emperor Constantine turned against the pagan philosophers and adds, "The philosophers' books were burnt and monks were lodged in their temples, which were transformed into churches (or monasteries)" p. 30.

UN-SCRIPTURAL TEACHINGS REPLACE GOD'S TRUTH

That pagan temples were turned into churches or monasteries explains the heathen derivation of the word "church" used in the King James and other Bibles. The Greek word "ekklesia" literally means "the called out ones," which carries the same meaning as the Hebrew "kahal." Ekklesia refers to a body of people, not a building. The word "church" is a poor translation of ekklesia. Church refers to the building coming to us through the Anglo-Saxon "circe." Circe was the Greek goddess who turned men into swine. In Scottish the word is "kirk," relating to the Hebrew "kikkar," meaning a circuit or disc-the sun! The ancient link to sun-worship (on Sun-day) is undeniable.

The following excerpts are taken from Pine's work:

- "The Romans and the Greeks had a feast called the Nativity of Time, which celebrated the return of the sun in January. They introduced into it various modifications and called it 'The Nativity of [Messiah]' or the Nativity. This feast was unknown at the time of [Yeshua] and of His companions.
- "The Jewish Christians...are not vegetarians and they do not reject certain portions of the Old Testament. Like the Jewish Christians of our texts, they are, as far as the observance of commandments is concerned, orthodox Jews...They thus carried on the old tradition of the first Christian community of Jerusalem..."

A footnote on page 39 reveals,

"Strecker points out that the Jewish Christian doctrine started out by being the Christian church doctrine and became a heresy only in the wars of historical evolution."

In other words, paganism and worldly doctrines infiltrated the early body of believers and corrupted it. As more pagan converts became "Christians," they flooded the church with their traditional practices that soon were "baptized" by the Christian clergy and absorbed as doctrine. This is how Sunday, New Year's, Xmas, Easter, Lent, Halloween, Valentine's Day, and much more crept into and became "holy-days" (holidays) of churchianity.

THE PARTING OF THE 2 WAYS

The early movement saw one group of Christians as rooted in the teachings of Jesus which still clung to Israelite laws. These converted Jews known as "Jewish-Christians" continued to meet in the synagogues of the Jews as did Paul, Acts 13:14; 15; 42; 14:1.

The other group, composed mostly of Gentile converts, took on Grecian culture and Hellenistic customs and were simply called "Christians." According to Pines, this latter group [Gentile converts] brought about "the abandonment and portrayal of what is regarded as true Christianity and its replacement by Greek notions and ways. It is the relation of a historic failure; victory rests with the agents of corruption," page 14.

In other words, the flood of pagan converts to Christianity soon overwhelmed the pristine truth as taught by Yeshua and the Apostles, and Christianity became tainted.

Christians today, many unknowingly, observe more pagan carry-overs than days plainly commanded in the Bible.

These popular days include Sunday (a day historically set aside in honor of the sun), Easter (the day honoring Astarte, alias Ishtar and Ostra, Chaldean Queen of Heaven) Xmas (midwinter solar-fertility celebration), Lent (40-day fast for Ostra), New Year's (near the midwinter solstice instead of the Biblical spring), Valentine's Day (Roman fertility celebration), Halloween (demonic observance), and many others.

There is no teaching or foundation for any of these "Christian holidays" anywhere in the Bible. They are the concepts and doctrines of men, firmly embedded in Christianity through centuries of tradition and practice.

Pines continues: "After Him [Yeshua] his disciples were with the Jews and the Children of Israel in the latter's synagogues and observed the prayers and the feasts of (the Jews) in the same place as the latter'" (page 41).

The early believers (referred to by Pines as "Jewish-Christians") continued on with the worship of Israel by observing the weekly Sabbath, the annual Holy Days, and heard the preaching of the Old Testament along with the prayers of the Jews. They continued meeting in the Jewish synagogues just as did Jesus and the Apostles.

A decided difference soon arose between the "Jewish Christians" and "Christianity" itself.

The true believers continued with the "Jewish" worship based on Yahweh's immutable law, while Christianity had amalgamated into its doctrines almost every foreign belief and practice necessary to accommodate the new convert. Accepting Christianity for the pagan was made easy. For him his old

ways remained the same, only the name had been changed.

TRUE WORSHIPERS ALARMED BY SUCH CHANGES

The Jewish Christians were deeply concerned about the events that had corrupted many converts to the faith of Jesus through the Roman Caesars and the **"Rominization" of Christianity,"** according to Pines.

"...Jewish Christian authors of our texts and presumably other members of their sect may have been the only people in the world-at the relatively late period (perhaps the fifth or sixth century) at which these texts were composed-who still deplored the split of Judaism and Christianity, two religions which should have remained one. They also deplored the fact that the Christians (or perhaps only most of them) no longer read the Gospels in Hebrew, the language of [Yeshua], and all the prophets. Quite clearly, these Jewish Christians believed that they preserved and continued (perhaps clandestinely) the traditions of the first not yet corrupted Christian community of Jerusalem founded by the immediate disciples of [Yeshua] who professed His religion, i.e...observed the Mosaic Commandments," p. 65.

Author Shlomo Pines summarizes the accounts of other historians who maintained that the early believers in Yeshua as the expected Messiah still observed the Sabbaths and the Annual Holy Days.

Paganism proceeded apace and soon overwhelmed Bible truth, replacing Scriptural customs and celebrations with paganized additions and substitutes.

HISTORY DOES NOT LIE...WELL NOT ALWAYS...UNLESS YOU ARE THE WINNERS OF HISTORY...LIKE ROME

While the comments of historian Pines are revealing, they are by no means unique. Many astute historians who are aware of the vast changes that took place from the time of the Yeshua until now corroborate what we have read.

Luther H. Martin's book Hellenistic Religions reads on pages 118-119,

"One of the first issues to be debated by Christians was whether they were a new religion... These early Jewish Christians understood Christianity in terms of its Jewish past and they continued their observance of Jewish ritual practices exemplified by dietary requirements and circumcision." Tracing the history of paganism, Martin writes, "...and by the second century, Christianity had assumed many of the forms and practices of the mystery cults" p. 162.

Brumback's History of the Church, referring to the beginning of the true Assembly at Pentecost in 31 C.E., reveals,

"In it practices that are common in the religious world today were not found," p. 19.

Author Brumback explains that the early church did not celebrate many of the holidays observed by most of churchianity today, which we have mentioned.

Then follows an explanation of the pagan source of Lent. "The word 'Lent' is derived from the old English word 'Lencten' which means spring. It was connected with a pagan feast that was celebrated in honor of the goddess 'Ostra,' the goddess of the east. The sacrifices to this deity were offered just about the time of the Passover and in this way it became associated with the believed resurrection of

Jesus which followed the Jewish Passover.

"Not until the Council of Nice (325 C.E.) decreed that Easter should be kept on Sunday next after the full moon on or after the vernal equinox, was there a definite day for the observance of Easter. Here is the evidence that it has a human origin, as it was not known until after the fourth century just when Easter would be," p. 20.

Easter is not a Bible celebration. It is found in only one place in the King James, at Acts 12:4, a woeful mistranslation of the Greek *Pascha*, or the Passover.

Author Brumback goes on to explain in fuller detail a bit of Easter's history, adding,

"Certainly no such day is authorized by the teaching of the Apostles."

"What brought these changes about? Why did disciples submit to having these days set apart as special days for the church? The answer is found in the failure of those who were the people of [Yahweh] to know what [Elohim's] Word taught. Lack of this knowledge made it possible to introduce new doctrines and new practices into the teaching of the church. The apostasy of the church and the corruption of the [evangel] resulted from neglect of the church to study [Yahweh's] Word" p. 21.

THE FOUNDATIONS OF BIBLICAL TRUTH WAS LOST BY NEGLECT

Brumback continues on page 31,

"In the beginning the church was pure. The divine plan of the church as revealed in the New Testament was followed. Now the apostasy of which the apostles warned, began to develop."

"Ultimately Christianity overcame paganism and thousands of those who had once opposed the church now became identified with it, without understanding that such a step called for the reformation of life, separation from the world, and devotion to the cause of [Messiah]. Christianity in its purity was thus destroyed by paganism," p. 54.

Widespread neglect of the Old Testament meant that converts were not schooled in the Old Testament and were ignorant of Israelite background and the books of Moses. They simply accepted the Greek Septuagint as their source of Old Testament teaching, nor did they know anything about it's purposeful corruptions to pattern paganism, and knew little and understood even less of the Feasts and the deep meaning of the sacrificial laws. By and large the Gentile Christians detested the Jews and would have none of their teaching or understanding of the Torah.

The New Testament is built upon precepts and teachings of the Old. Paul was inspired to write that salvation is found in the Old Testament:

"And that from a child you have known the holy Scriptures, which are able to make you wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ" (2 Timothy 3:15).

The early Apostles based their teachings on the Old Testament to prove that Yeshua was the promised Messiah of Israel. Yeshua even mentioned that himself in Luke 24:44: "...that all things must be fulfilled, which were written in the Law of Moses, and in the Prophets, and in the Psalms, concerning me"...sadly we yet await the fulfillment of the true Messianic Prophecies so the identity of

the Messiah yet remains unknown...that is until the true Messianic Prophecies are fulfilled!

In Luke 4:4 Yeshua said that man shall live by every word of Yahweh. He constantly referred to the Scriptures, the Old Testament, when answering matters concerning the law, divorce, and personal conduct (the New Testament was not yet in existence at this time! See Luke 24:27).

The last warning of the Bible is that man is not to add to the Bible or to take anything away, on pain of losing salvation, Revelation 22:18. *"Scripture cannot be broken," John 10:35. Yeshua said, "Search the Scriptures," John 5:39.*

Gentiles did not always comprehend the deep meaning of the Sabbaths and knew little of the Feast Days found in Leviticus 23. (The Bible calls them "Yahweh's Feasts," not "Jewish" Feasts. They detested the Jews and would have nothing to do with their practices, nor did they try to understand or study Hebrew. As a consequence of arrogantly ignoring the Old Testament basis of truth, Christianity generally still does not understand the foundation of Scripture.

"Now therefore you are...fellowcitizens with the saints...and are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets [Old Testament], Yeshua Himself the chief cornerstone," Ephesians 2:19-20

IS THE BIBLE GREEK TO YOU

The influence of paganism is easily found in many historical sources. Charlton Larid's book, *The Miracle of Language*, reveals:

"The Church furthered Greek as well as Latin, the early Fathers of the church wrote Greek, and even as early as the seventh century Greek was being studied in England. Thus Greek words entered the English directly; they became Latin words which were borrowed directly; and they became Latin words which became French words which were borrowed directly" p. 90.

This custom of admitting Greek and Latin names wholesale into English Bibles resulted in replacing and disguising Hebrew names. These names supplanted the true, original names, making them surrogate hybrids with a Grecianized flavor.

Today the claim is made that the entire New Testament was written in Greek, which is disputed by reputable scholars who find an unmistakable Hebrew original underlying the Greek text.

Because early Christian translators were woefully ignorant of Hebrew, Greco-Latin names soon replaced the inspired Hebrew names. Even today the King James uses Esaias for Isaiah, Judas for Judah, Elias for Eliyah (Elijah), Urias for Uriah, Ozias for Uzziah, Josias for Josiah, Ezekias for Hezekiah, Idumea for Edom, Paul for Shaul, James for Ya'akov, Peter for Kefa, John for Yochanan, and many others.

The most holy of all words in the Bible, the sacred Name Yahweh, was replaced with *kyrios* and *theos*, which the King James renders *Lord* or *God*-outright substitutes.

Further enlightenment is given on page 118 of *The Miracle of Language*: "The Anglo-Saxon word for a general director was *stigward*, the sty-ward, the man who looked after the pigpen, for an Anglo-Saxon capitalist was likely to have his stocks and bonds mostly in the form of razorbacks. We have reduced the word to *steward*. The boss himself was a *hlafward*, a *loafward*, the man who looked after the bread. We cut that word to *lord*..."

Thus, we can see how the English Bible has reduced the sacred Name of our Creator Yahweh to "keeper of the loaf," or *Lord*! His holy Name Yahweh is now replaced with an inferior title.

In his History of the Church, Brumback answers the question how pagan ways and pagan days infiltrated the early church. He points out:

"The answer is found in the failure of those who were the people of [Yahweh] to know what [His] word taught. Lack of this knowledge made it possible to introduce new doctrines and new practices into the teaching and worship of the church. The apostasy of the church and the corruption of the gospel resulted from neglect of the church to study [Yahweh's] word."

"Pagans were accustomed to observe a feast to Proserpine with the burning of candles. To make the transition from pagan worship to Christian worship easy, the church in apostasy instituted on the same day a feast to the virgin Mary and burned tapers in her honor. Lactatius, a historian of the church, spoke of this practice as superstition, ridiculing those who lighted candles for [Yahweh], as if He lived in the dark.

"Here were changes that appeared in the teaching and worship of the church as it developed into an apostate institution. Holy water, the burning of incense, the observance of Lent and Easter...were connected with paganism. When the church dropped the guidance of [Yahweh's] word pagan ceremonies found their way into the church and they are today a part of that system of worship which grew out of the apostasy," page 21-22.

THE SUPREME SOURCE OF ERROR

The extent to which non-Biblical doctrines and error have become unquestionably accepted as fundamental truths directly from the Bible has alarmed sincere Bible students.

The Bible as originally given is indeed the pure Word of Yahweh. Man has translated the Scriptures into other languages while viewing the Bible through the eyeglass of human error. Such errors are accepted as the true teachings of God without further inquiry. Some are outright substitutions with no basis in the truth of the Scriptures.

The anti-Semitic and anti-Judaic Gentile Christian Church of the early centuries after Yeshua has twisted the minds of some who perhaps unknowingly have accepted error as truth and call truth error. Thus, the masses are led astray (Revelation 12:9). And this began a long time ago. To this sad situation I am glad to say that Yahweh also has His people who are standing fast in His truth and studying the Scriptures to prove whether these things be so.

The purpose of this study is to help us better comprehend the source of error so that we can separate truth from falsity. History shows that all pagan religion has its source in Nimrod's Babylon. The teachings of Babylon have dominated Egyptian as well as Greek and Roman religion.

Teachings right out of Babylon can be found in almost all religions of the world. These abominable doctrines have even undermined the true religion Yahweh gave mankind through Israel. With corrupted doctrines and error, ministers have continued to twist the Bible so that "truth" is no longer Bible truth.

SYNCRETISM: A DEADLY MIXTURE

The Bible when first given to mankind was inspired by Yahweh's Spirit. It was pure, holy and undefiled. Problems began when translations were made from one language to another. Our English Bible, for example, is taken primarily from the Latin. Which was translated from the Greek. Which was translated from the Hebrew, with much being lost along the way. It is like taking change from one pocket to place in another and losing some in the process. This is why it is our goal to return as closely as possible to the original languages.

Through what is known as *syncretism*, pagan doctrines are merged with Bible teachings and blindly accepted as

if from Scripture. Thus, the pristine Truth of the Bible has been adulterated with paganism and unknowingly accepted.

On page 109, The Oxford Illustrated History of Christianity quotes Patrick Wormald on adaptations of Christianity,

"Christianity had been successfully assimilated by a warrior nobility, a nobility which had no intention of abandoning its culture or seriously changing its way of life, but which was willing to throw its traditions, customs, tastes, and loyalties into the articulation of the new faith."

While the expressed purpose of the church was to convert pagans and bring them into the fold of Christianity, in reality it was paganism that triumphed over churchianity. It was the church that absorbed and retained the pagan rituals, symbols, holidays, and precepts, but gave them a new name with a new meaning and a "Christian" understanding.

Meyers' Medieval And Modern History states on page 42, "Many of our religious ideas, festivals and ceremonies, as witness Easter, and Christmas may be traced back to an origin in the practice and belief of our heathen ancestors."

Thus, pagan converts felt right at home as they retained their worship of the sun on Sunday, observed the re-birth of the sun in December, and called it not "Sol Invictus," but "Christmas." It made for a painless conversion to "Christianity." So the unregenerate pagan was baptized and became a "Christian-but was still a pagan at heart.

Had Israel and churchianity not done what they respectively have done in corrupting of Truth and establishment of falsehood, anti-Biblical sentiment would not be what it is. The conflict between light and darkness is no new conflict. It has carried on ever since sin first entered the Garden of Eden.

Churchianity reads the Bible and sees no parallel between Israel's past dismal history and its own deplorable record.

Bible teaching rests upon learning from the examples of others (1Cor. 10). But what if man contends that he needs no examples? With our high-tech society and our sophistication and knowledge, along with our scientific thinking, modern man feels competent to find his way if only given money enough and sufficient time to follow whatever light is given. Man is convinced that he is quite sufficient unto himself, and given time will eventually work things out.

Israel was overwhelmed by the visible power of Yahweh at Sinai (Exodus 19 and 20). The thunderous voice and trumpet, the lightning, the smoking, the rumbling and quaking of the Mount itself was evidence enough. The vaunted ability of man was tested. Israel vowed they would be perfect in everything and be obedient. Yet, when they tried they obeyed in nothing. Israel was pardoned again and again, and each time they continued to transgress.

The Tabernacle (and later the Temple) was right in their midst with the visible priesthood actively carrying out Yahweh's instructions day by day. Instruction, warning, chastisement, and the evident presence of Yahweh in the pillar of cloud by day and pillar of fire by night were of no avail.

THE HOLY SPIRIT GIVEN TO MANKIND TO HELP HIM BECOME OBEDIENT

By himself, man lacks the ability and moral fiber to be holy. This is the primary lesson we are to learn here on earth, namely, that man's way is not Yahweh's way. We are to change our mind, the way we think, by having

Yahweh's Spirit dominate our very being. *"The carnal mind is enmity against Elohim: for it is not subject to the law of Elohim, neither indeed can be,"* Romans 8:7.

It is only through the workings of Yahweh's omnipotent Holy Spirit power, which now is available to us, that we can rise above this mundane world. This means obediently following the way of life given us throughout the Bible, for it is through obedience that we are given the Holy Spirit: *"And we are his witnesses of these things; and [so is] also the Holy Spirit, whom Elohim has given to them that obey Him."* (Acts 5:32)

By professing to be His worshipers, ancient Israel assumed they could obligate Yahweh to tolerate whatever whim their degenerate minds could devise. They mentioned His Name, but their hearts were far from obedience.

***"Yea, you took up the tabernacle of Moloch, and the star of your deity Remphan, figures which you made to worship them: and I will carry you away beyond Babylon. Our fathers had the tabernacle of witness in the wilderness, as he had appointed, speaking unto Moses, that he should make it according to the fashion that he had seen."* (Acts 7:43-44)**

DOCTRINE AND THE COMMANDMENTS OF MEN

Giving only lip-service is not acceptable to a holy, just, and righteous Yahweh. It never was and never will be. Genuine obedience comes from a contrite heart. Yeshua himself said, *"They worship Me (referring to YHVH) in vain; their teachings are but rules made by men,"* Mark 7:7, NIV. This is a direct quotation of Isaiah 29:13, condemning the city of David, Jerusalem, for their idolatry and wickedness.

Yeshua then castigates the Pharisees and teachers of the law with those same words when the Pharisees heap criticism upon His disciples who apparently paid too little attention to the tradition of the Pharisees and Jewish elders.

The point of Isaiah's rebuke and that of Yeshua reveals that the syncretism (mixing pagan concepts and customs with Bible teaching) has continued throughout history. Unconverted man injects his own thoughts and notions into his worship and continues to contaminate the pure worship of a holy Yahweh.

While we hear much of the error that has crept into the worship of our Creator, many have not studied deeply into the truth of the Bible and are oblivious and unschooled in what is actually taught as Bible doctrine. A growing movement of sincere Commandment keepers with faith in the Savior is prophesied to arise at the end of the age as we see in Revelation:

***"Here is the patience of the saints: here are they that keep the commandments of Yahweh, and the faith of Yeshua,"* Revelation 14:12.**

LET US LOOK AT SOME EXAMPLES OF TRADITIONS OF MEN WHICH HAVE REPLACED THE WORD OF GOD

Few are aware of the many teachings abounding in nominal religion that are contrary to the Bible. I choose not to go in-depth in pointing out these errors, however here are a few simple examples, in which one or two verses of correction follow the erroneous teaching which sadly is accepted as if true today by the majority of Christians:

The Father, Son and Holy Spirit are three persons in one, and are equal.

***"My Father is greater than I,"* John 14:28. Yeshua Himself acknowledged that the Father was greater. Paul said, *"The head of Messiah is Yahweh,"* I Corinthians 11:3.**

The Holy Spirit is the power, the force of Yahweh shared by the Son and is not a person--*Ruach ha Kodesh*.

We keep Sunday because that is the day the Son was resurrected, and that changed the Sabbath.

"There remains therefore a rest [Sabbatismos, Sabbath] for the people of Yahweh," Hebrews 4:9 (reference to verse 4). There is no Bible justification for changing the day of worship. Sunday-keeping stems from pagan sun worship. Yeshua did not rise Sunday morning, but at the end of the Sabbath, and said nothing about any change whatsoever in the weekly day of worship. Besides that, if you are aware of Hebraic reckoning of time you can easily see that Yeshua was resurrected on Saturday evening, before the dawning of a new day at 6 PM which would be Sunday. He was raised BEFORE Sunday on the Sabbath, a perfect picture of the eternal Sabbath given to mankind in the world to come.

The Son by His resurrection changed Sabbath to Sunday.

"And it shall come to pass, from one new moon to another, and from one sabbath to another, shall all flesh come to worship before me, says Yahweh," Isaiah 66:23. This speaks of the future kingdom. The Saturday Sabbath has never been changed but is in effect now and will be observed in the Millennium.

The Son was put to death on Friday and arose Sunday morning.

"...in the midst of the week He shall cause the oblation and sacrifice to cease," Daniel 9:27. He was impaled on Wednesday (Wednesday in German is *Mittwoch*, midweek) and was in the grave three days and three nights. He rose from the grave before sunset on Saturday (Mat. 28:1- "end" is the Greek *opse* meaning "late on").

"For as Jonas [Jonah] was three days and three nights in the whale's belly; so shall the Son of man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth," Matthew 12:40. There is no way one can get three nights from Friday until Sunday morning.

The Son came to do away with His Father's law by nailing it to the cross.

"Think not that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfill," Matthew 5:17. He brought the law to its fullest intent and meaning; He did not destroy it, but lived it as an example for us, John 14:31. Besides the only "handwriting and ordinances" that were "against us" are those which we incur when we disobey, not obey; for the Torah (Law) was given to us as a patten for Godly life, that when obeyed brings God's blessings and not his curses. The death penalty for disobedience is the only thing in the Law which is against us is the only part of the Law that was against us and that only when we disobeyed. Repentance restored relationship then as well as now.

The Son cleansed all foods and now all animal flesh like pork and shellfish is good for food.

"They that sanctify themselves, and purify themselves in the gardens behind one tree in the midst, eating swine's flesh, and the abomination, and the mouse, shall be consumed together, says Yahweh," Isaiah 66:17. This is speaking of the end of the age and those eating swine's flesh will be consumed. Clean food laws are still in effect.

Man is born with an immortal soul

"[Yahweh] Who ONLY has immortality, dwelling in the light which no man can approach unto; whom no man has seen, nor can see: to whom be honor and power everlasting," 1Timothy 6:16. We do not yet have immortality but are seeking it, *"To them who by patient continuance in well doing seek for glory and honor and immortality, eternal life,"* Romans 2:7. Why are we to seek for immortality if we already have it? Why a resurrection if we are already immortal and can't die? (1Thes. 4:16)

Not a Dead Soul Alive

The most blatant of all erroneous teachings fostered by churchianity is that man has an immortal soul, a

teaching found in most pagan religions. That the soul upon death leaves the body and immediately goes to heaven or hell is not found in Scripture.

Many such errors are accepted as the true teachings of the Yeshua without any inquiry. Some are outright substitutions to the Bible and have no basis but lead to a corruption of the truth of the Word.

False teachers certainly have twisted the minds of some who perhaps unknowingly have accepted error as truth and call truth error. Thus, the flesh of man, in opposition to God (called Satan in Hebrew as the Yetzer HaRa..the evil inclination in man) "leads the whole world astray," Revelation 12:9.

The purpose of this study is to help us better comprehend the source of erroneous teaching so that we can sift out the truth. Scripture and history show that all pagan religion has its source in Nimrod's Babylon where religious lies have complete sway. The ways of Babylon have dominated Egyptian as well as Greek and Roman religion. Babylonian teaching can be found in almost all religions of the world. These abominable doctrines have even undermined the true religion Yahweh gave mankind through Israel. Yahweh calls Babylon the Mother of Harlots, who has corrupted the earth, Revelation 17-18.

MODERN BLIND GUIDES LEADING THE BLIND

Bible readers today follow the history of Israel and shake their heads in disbelief over the fickleness of the people of Yahweh who are led astray by heathen practices. They read of Israel's falling into pagan idolatry and marvel that Yahweh, full of mercy, always was ready to take Israel back when they repented.

But these same people today (Christians) do not see that they are doing the very same thing and following the same pattern of lawlessness. Today it is not the pagan worship and temples about us that lead people astray. Instead it is those of Gentile churchianity who are supposedly upholding and teaching Yahweh's Word who lead men away from Yahweh, 2 Peter 2.

They preach from the pulpit that Yahweh's law no longer applies to us. Law was only for ancient Israel; we are under grace, and not under the law, say those teaching a modern and up-to-date gospel of love, grace and forgiveness. Being obedient to the law of Yahweh is said to be bondage, and we are not under the bondage of the law, we are told.

According to them supposedly when the Messiah came to die for the sins of the world, he did away with the law. Now all we need is faith. "Faith alone!" was the rallying cry of the Reformation. **But the Bible says that faith alone is meaningless! "Faith without works is dead," James 2:26.** You see dear brother and sister, God is concerned how we worship, what days we set aside and make holy, and how we build His kingdom by giving our tithes and offerings. Any old way won't do. Just as Nadab and Abihu learned when they were smote dead by YHVH. Let us learn from their example lest we follow in the ways and be rejected by God when we die.

By twisting the Scriptures and choosing to emphasize certain portions over others, today's preachers strain hard to do away with the law. They especially despise two of the Ten Commandments.

The first tells them that the Sabbath is on Saturday, the seventh day. The second tells us to handle His Name with respect and reverence. Known as the Third and Fourth Commandments, these two "test" commandments show our complete obedience to Yahweh. They are among the first to be rejected by many people. Some ministers seem willing to move heaven and earth to get these two Commandments buried under faith, love, and grace!

Your Bible says that if you break one commandment you have broken them all. That is, unless you keep all Ten, you have fallen short of perfection. Yahweh expects His people to keep His Commandments, for all His Commandments are righteousness, Psalm 119:172.

We read in 1 John 5:3 that the love of Yahweh is the keeping of His

Commandments.

He loves us in return when we keep His law, John 14:21.

Because many have been told from countless sermons that the Savior came essentially to bring a new religion, many simply repeat what they've heard without thoroughly checking their Bibles.

YAHWEH'S LAW WILL NEVER PASS AWAY

"We are a New Testament Church and emphasize the teachings of the Savior Who nailed the law to the cross," they say. Such a belief is absolute foolishness! Yeshua never said or even intimated that he came to do away with his Father's laws! He said just the opposite.

"My doctrine is not mine but His that sent Me," he said, John 7:16

"Think not I came to destroy the law and the prophets. I came not to destroy but to fulfill," Matthew 5:17

Some attempt to get around this verse by telling us that Yeshua did away with his Father's laws, fulfilling them completely-filled them up-and now has set them aside.

Actually, what he has done is fulfilled them with a greater depth of meaning than before. He shows us the fuller spiritual intent of Yahweh's laws. "Fulfill" is the Greek *plerosai* and means to conform to or accomplish. Notice how the Savior elaborated on one of the Ten Commandments:

"You have heard that it was said by them of old time, Thou shalt not commit adultery: But I say unto you, That whosoever looks on a woman to lust after her has committed adultery with her already in his heart." (Matt. 5:27-28).

Clearly, Yeshua was emphasizing that the keeping of the Commandments begins with proper and right attitudes, thoughts, desires, and goals. To entertain a wrong thought could well lead to committing the act-sin.

Furthermore, we read in the last book of the Bible that true believers will be keeping the Commandments of Yahweh when Yeshua returns to rule.

"And the dragon was wroth with the woman, and went to make war with the remnant of her seed, which keep the Commandments of Yahweh, and have the testimony of Yeshua," Rev. 12:17

Sadly, there is but a "remnant" of the seed of the true Israel. There is no large multitude following the way of the Bible today, but a "little flock," Luke 12:32. They are also known as the "saints." Don't look for a large group of people to make up the "Bride" at the end of the age. Consider the parable of the five wise and five foolish virgins. Only half of them went in to the marriage supper. The other half was locked out.

Answer for yourself: What about you? Where do you stand?

Answer for yourself: Are you on that downhill, broad and easy road to destruction? (Mat. 7:13-14). Or that narrow, more difficult road that leads to life everlasting? We at Bet Emet ask you to let us help you in your quest for truth.



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RESTORING THE FAITH ONCE GIVEN TO THE SAINTS

Being fully aware that often those encountering the worship services of Bet Emet Ministries are confused at the differences they experience when contrasting with their own churches, I felt it was time to express the truths gathered from my many years of study where I discovered the "pattern of service (worship)" given by Yahweh to David as detailed in I Chron. chapter 28. If you were to undertake a comprehensive study of the "pattern" you would be surprised to know that Yahweh's Pattern Of Worship survived until the fourth century A.D. where it was finally crushed by anti-Semitism and anti-Judaism by the emerging "organized" Gentile Christian church headed by the Emperor Constantine. Efforts to destroy the pattern actually began as early as the second century and ultimately succeed.

Let us not forget that it was said of Jesus' church:

Acts 2:42 42 And they continued stedfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers. (KJV)

It is up to us if we desire to be true followers of Jesus to make sure that we know and adhere to the same doctrines taught by Jesus' church and disciples and be aware if possible for the changes to these doctrines which would later be made by Rome due to its anti-semitism in the 4th century. Only in this way can we return to the "faith once given to the saints."

Only by diligent research and scholarship have I been able to "rediscover" the faith once given to the saints. Before we go on let me ask you some important questions if I may:

1. Since the "pattern" for worship was can be shown to be handed down from David to Solomon and finally to the men of the Great Assembly as headed by Ezra the Scribe, and subsequently handed down to the men of the days of Jesus when he walked this earth; then if Jesus is to be our example, why don't we follow Jesus' method of worship since it can be likewise shown that he adhered to this "pattern?"
2. Since this "pattern" of worship can be demonstrated to have been handed down to the Jewish converts of the Jesus Messianic Movement within 2nd Temple Judaism as well as to the Gentile converts that came from the fruit of the Great Commission, then why have we not been taught about its necessary components let alone been taught to practice it in our Christian Churches?
3. Having learned that the New Testament is full of references to this "Jewish pattern of worship" in the early church which is composed of both Jews and Gentile believers in Jesus, then what prevents us from repenting and returning to the worship of God as found in the early church before Roman paganism was mixed with it and such blended worship became in large part

unacceptable to Yahweh?

4. If it can be demonstrated that much of what Paul taught the Gentiles to whom he took the Gospel was adherence to "the" pattern of Jewish worship as found in the Holy Scriptures, then what prevents you from reevaluating your current experience in light of God's revelation concerning His will for you in proper worship?
5. If it can be shown through study of the original languages of Scripture that there is often a different message being conveyed than what is understood in reading the "English," then, understanding that Jesus is a Jew, and his followers that took his message to the nations (Gentiles) were also Jewish, do you not think that what was conveyed in Hebrew or Greek is more correct in understanding when rightly understood in the original language than what we often understand in the "English?"
6. If it can be demonstrated that pagan Gentiles influenced the change and abolition of this "pattern" of worship, should you not want to return to the worship of God that was given "in spirit and in truth" before it was corrupted?

The aim of this study is to present the Jewish liturgy in its "original freshness," so that all, both Jews and Christians, may realize "how greatly Jesus and the original Christian community were indebted" to it. No renewal can come about except through a rediscovery of roots and of the historical, spiritual, and cultural soil in which these roots gave life to the New Testament experience. The church was born of Judaism and lived its life within Judaism for several decades, and only in the light of Judaism can it perceive and recover its vital identity which is so needful in today's world. By "rethinking theology" can man only discover one thing: the rediscovery of the Hebrew and Jewish categories within which Christian experience first appeared and which this experience used in order to communicate its truths to the world originally. We are hearing more and more today such statements as this one of L. Swidler:

"Jesus was a 'Rabbi' and not a 'Father,' a 'teacher,' and not a 'reverend'; he was a Jew and not a Christian; he attended the synagogue and not a church; he celebrated the Sabbath on Saturday and not Sunday; he prayed in Aramaic and Hebrew and not in Greek or Latin; he read the Hebrew Scriptures (Old Testament) and not the New; he recited the psalms and not the rosary; he celebrated pesach (the Jewish Passover), shavu'ot (the Jewish Pentecost), and sukkot (huts) and not Christmas or Lent."

NOW COMES THE HARD PART

Answer for yourself: Do you have the theological courage to draw the proper theological conclusions from such statements of fact?

For me and many others who have studied to know the differences, the assertion of the Jewishness of Jesus must mean an assertion of the inescapable centrality of adherence to Jewish religion in the followers of Jesus and an acceptance of the need of returning to them and measuring ourselves by them in every effort we make to understand the Christian experience.

You may ask yourself: "Why should we return to Jewish religion? Why go back in heart and mind to distant Jewish religious teachings that are so alien to the modern scientific and technological mentality as seen in the Gentile Christian church of today? The answer is simple. Those distant symbolic and literal teachings of Jewish religion contain concealed words and expressions of their meaning that if received, heard, and understood, have the power to enrich and give joy to human life as nothing else can. We need to rediscover Hebrew and Jewish truths so that we may once again hear in its original purity the logos and meaning that took flesh in them for the first time. We must rethink theology with the aid of Hebrew and Jewish perspectives not only because Jesus is Jewish, but to assure ourselves that we practice a faith unaffected by compromises with false worship masquerading itself as "holiness." Love for our origins is in fact a love for the present

which is marked by high standards of quality. The rediscovery of one's origins is not a love for events that took place in a distant time; rather they are as it were the foundations that support the present. The rediscovery of origins does not mean a distancing from the present but a recovery of the roots and truths that must sustain the present.

For the sake of understanding, what are the "origins" from which our Christian churches spring and on which today are built:

The Churches of Christ acknowledge that in God's plan of salvation the beginning of her faith and election is to be found in the patriarch, Moses, and the prophets. She professes that all Christ's faithful, who as men of faith are sons of Abraham (Gal. 3:7), are included in the same patriarch's call and that the salvation of the church is mysteriously prefigured in the exodus of God's chosen people from the land of bondage. On this account the church cannot forget that she received the revelation of the Old Testament by way of that people with whom God in his mercy established the ancient covenant of Abraham in which all nations (Gentiles) were to be blessed with the blessings of temporal as well as eternal blessings. Nor can she forget that she draws nourishment from that good olive tree onto which the wild olive branches of the Gentiles have been grafted (Rom. 11:17-24). The church believes that Christ who is our peace has through his cross reconciled Jews and Gentiles and made them one in himself (Eph. 2:14-16). This is the goal. Sadly today it is yet unachieved.

Without a doubt Christianity is grounded and sustained by the Hebrew and Jewish origins of its faith, election, call, exodus, people, bondage, Old Testament, covenant, root, peace, and reconciliation.

Judaism does not have a theology in the strict sense, that is, a systematically organized reflection on God; for the same reason, it gives priority to practical action. This explains the importance of the liturgy. It is this Jewish Liturgy, patterned after the commandments in the Oral and Written Torah, which provides a place for both symbolic and direct encounters with God. Such a place is where one does not speak about God, but speak to God, where one does not think about God but think in the presence of God, and where God is not an object of thought but a subject who calls and challenges His people. This space is made up of words, gestures, music, movements, listening, story telling, silence, rites and ceremonies that have been taught and handed down by God to man since the beginning of time.

For the Church, then, a return to its origins must mean a return to this space in which Israel experienced itself as the people of God. It must mean entering into these rituals of words and gestures, music and movements, and silence and ceremonies that is also ours as Christians. Let the Christian never forget the spiritual ties that link him through the Re-newed Covenant with the stock of Abraham. Such ties between the Church and Israel unite the two and they become one in fulfillment of Scripture. Such a bond is not accidental but essential in light of the revelation of **Eph. 4 where there is only "one faith" and not two!** The Church's identity is connected with Judaism as it shares the same space and vitality. This co-existent heritage is best expressed by the people of the "Re-newed" Covenant with the stock of Abraham through adherence to the pattern of liturgy "once given to the saints."

For too long the majority of Christian scholars have never taken seriously the fact that Christian experience and, above all, the Christian liturgy are bound up with Jewish religious ceremonies. For them Jesus Christ is presented as the originator of the Christian liturgy; either an absolute originator in regard to both content and form, or content and not form. This second party understands that the forms of worship practiced by Jesus were not new but only borrowed from the Jewish tradition. These parties, once split in their opinion have conceded their opinions to the wealth of Biblical scholarship that exists today. Nowadays no informed scholar thinks of looking outside the Biblical and Jewish tradition for the origin of the Christian sacraments and liturgy. But in reading these scholars one develops the sense that the "place of origin" is looked upon as unimportant and concessions are implicitly made that allows for Christianity's divergence from the "pattern" with its resultant inclusion of many facts of paganism that go unnoticed to the unlearned. Such should not be! Besides this, often negative judgments are made and passed upon Jewish worship. On reflection, this is of course a perfectly logical step, since once Jewish worship has been reduced to a lifeless skeleton, what is left but to decide that it is useless and a thing of the past? **Such is due to the sinister working of anti-Semitism**

and anti-Judaism that has infected many doctrinal positions of the contemporary Christian Church, primarily due to dispensational theology which is replete with replacement theology which does such damage to the truths of God's revelation in Holy Scripture.

JESUS AND JEWISH LITURGY:

I am certainly not denying the originality of Jesus in relation to the Judaism of his time. Something in him sets him apart from his contemporaries and constitutes his moral grandeur. Yet we need not declare Judaism beneath our notice, much less demean it to assert the true stature of Jesus. Such an uncalled for approach does injustice not only to Judaism but to Jesus himself, since we abided within the "pattern" and reinforced it daily throughout his life by his actions and teachings. Upon years of scholarship and intense study, I am supremely confident that our need is to reverse the procedure of the scholars I have been describing and begin to assert the greatness and originality of Jesus not outside of Judaism in being in opposition to Judaism thus creating a new replacement religion, but to envision Jesus along with and within Judaism, brining the finer parts of his faith to life in his own life as he modeled God's truths as demonstrated in his recorded conduct and behavior.

Jesus himself, his mother Mary, the apostles, the early communities, and the first Christians (both Jewish and Gentile) were all nourished by the "pattern" of worship given by God to David which had been faithfully protected and handed down to their generation. Such prayers, psalms, rites, and ceremonies brought them life because they were God breathed.

In the following articles it is not my purpose to compare Jewish liturgy with the Christian, but rather to present you with truthful information so you can better understand how greatly Jesus and the original Christian community were indebted to the Jewish liturgy, and above all, how much a part the liturgy plays in "linking" us today with the stock of Abraham and the Churches of Christ that exist today. Shalom.



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IS PAUL TELLING THE COLOSSIAN GENTILE CHURCH TO KEEP THE JEWISH FEASTS? AND WHAT ABOUT US?

Col 2:16

16 Let no man therefore judge you in meat, or in drink, or in respect of an holyday, or of the new moon, or of the sabbath days:

In order for us to interpret and understand this verse correctly we must examine the original language (Greek) in which these thoughts were written. Below is a representation of the verse showing the Strong's numbers from the Greek language:

16 Let <2919> <0> no <3361> man <5100> therefore <3767> judge <2919> (5720) you <5209> in <1722> meat <1035>, or <2228> in <1722> drink <4213>, or <2228> in <1722> respect <3313> of an holyday <1859>, or <2228> of the new moon <3561>, or <2228> of the sabbath <4521> [days]: 17 Which <3739> are <2076> (5748) a shadow <4639> of things to come <3195> (5723); but <1161> the body <4983> [is] of Christ <5547>.

I have heard repeatedly when I grew up in the Christian Church that this passage was teaching that Gentile believers were not required or expected to keep the Jewish Festival days.

Answer for yourself: Is this the truth of the matter? Let us investigate.

Since the Apostle Paul was instructing these Gentile believers to let no one condemn them in regards to "holy days" and "sabbaths" we need to understand to which he is referring in order to understand this verse correctly, for our worship and obedience to God hinges on correctly understanding and interpreting this verse.

Let us examine the Greek word for "holyday"...Strong's number 1859:1859 heorte- a feast day, a festival

Let us also examine Thayer's Greek Lexicon for added meaning: 1859 heorte (heh-or-tay'); of uncertain affinity; a festival: KJV-- feast, holyday.

Now please notice all the references in the New Testament to "heorte ...Strong's # 1859":1859 (KJV)

The following is **EVERY REFERENCE** in the New Testament referring to "holyday" (Strong's #1859) as used by the Apostle Paul when he admonished the Gentile believers in Colossiae to not let anyone condemn them for observing these "holydays." Notice that is the same word used for the same "holydays" observed by the Jews and Jesus.

Answer for yourself: See if you can determine what they **ALL HAVE IN COMMON?**

- Matt 26:5 5 But they said, Not on the feast day, lest there be an uproar among the people. (KJV)
- Matt 27:15 15 Now at that feast the governor was wont to release unto the people a prisoner, whom they would. (KJV)
 - Mark 14:2 2 But they said, Not on the feast day, lest there be an uproar of the people. (KJV)
 - Mark 15:6 6 Now at that feast he released unto them one prisoner, whomsoever they desired. (KJV)
 - Luke 2:41 41 Now his parents went to Jerusalem every year at the feast of the passover. (KJV)
 - Luke 2:42 42 And when he was twelve years old, they went up to Jerusalem after the custom of the feast. (KJV)
 - Luke 22:1 1 Now the feast of unleavened bread drew nigh, which is called the Passover. (KJV)
 - John 2:23 23 Now when he was in Jerusalem at the passover, in the feast day, many believed in his name, when they saw the miracles which he did. (KJV)
 - John 4:45 45 Then when he was come into Galilee, the Galilaeans received him, having seen all the things that he did at Jerusalem at the feast: for they also went unto the feast. (KJV)
 - John 4:45 45 Then when he was come into Galilee, the Galilaeans received him, having seen all the things that he did at Jerusalem at the feast: for they also went unto the feast. (KJV)
 - John 5:1 1 After this there was a feast of the Jews; and Jesus went up to Jerusalem. (KJV)
 - John 6:4 4 And the passover, a feast of the Jews, was nigh. (KJV)
 - John 7:2 2 Now the Jews' feast of tabernacles was at hand. (KJV)
 - John 7:8 8 Go ye up unto this feast: I go not up yet unto this feast; for my time is not yet full come. (KJV)
 - John 7:8 8 Go ye up unto this feast: I go not up yet unto this feast; for my time is not yet full come. (KJV)
 - John 7:10 10 But when his brethren were gone up, then went he also up unto the feast, not openly, but as it were in secret. (KJV)
 - John 7:11 11 Then the Jews sought him at the feast, and said, Where is he? (KJV)
 - John 7:14 14 Now about the midst of the feast Jesus went up into the temple, and taught. (KJV)
 - John 7:37 37 In the last day, that great day of the feast, Jesus stood and cried, saying, If any man thirst, let him come unto me, and drink. (KJV)
 - John 11:56 56 Then sought they for Jesus, and spake among themselves, as they stood in the temple, What think ye, that he will not come to the feast? (KJV)

Answer for yourself: Did you notice that in **EVERY REFERENCE** for "heorte" (Holyday") in the New Testament is a reference to the **JEWISH FEASTS AND THE FESTIVALS OF THE LORD**?

Answer for yourself: Can you now see that Paul was instructing Gentile believers to not allow others to condemn, or judge them for observing, celebrating, or commemorating the **JEWISH FESTIVALS**?

Answer for yourself: Does your church and Pastor teach the observance of the Festivals of the Lord or are you more acquainted with the paganized Roman holidays that are masqueraded for the truth in your church. More on that later.

Before we continue I must introduce you to the Greek word used by the Apostle Paul for "sabbath" as used in this verse (Strong's number 4521): 4521 **sabbaton (sab'-bat-on)**; of Hebrew origin [7676]; the Sabbath (i.e. Shabbath), or day of weekly repose from secular avocations (also the observance or institution itself); by extension, **the interval between two Sabbaths**; likewise the plural in all the above applications: KJV--sabbath (day), week.

Let us examine what **Thayer's Greek Lexicon** can add to our understanding: 4521 sabbaton-

- 1) the seventh day of each week which was a sacred festival on which the Israelites were required to abstain from all work

- a) the institution of the sabbath, the law for keeping holy every seventh day of the week
- b) a single sabbath, sabbath day
- 2) seven days, a week

Answer for yourself: Does the Apostle Paul teach Gentile believers to not let others condemn them for observing Jewish new moons, Jewish Festivals and holy days, and Jewish sabbaths (understood as Biblical Feasts and Festivals)?

Answer for yourself: Is the Apostle Paul writing to Gentiles to come to Christ after the cross of Christ and all the while observe these Jewish Feast days as well? Yes he is.

Answer for yourself: What has changed then for us today if he instructed Gentile believers after the cross to observe and not desist from observing the Jewish Festivals and Sabbaths? Nothing should have but sadly it has since Rome changed everything in the 4th century!

Answer for yourself: Since the Apostle Paul founded many of the churches which he would later correspond and write to, then as their Pastor we see him instructing Gentile believers to not let others judge or condemn them in their observance of Jewish Feasts and Sabbaths. Then is your Pastor preaching the same Gospel to you or perhaps have you been listening to another Gospel and were not aware?

Answer for yourself: Does your church and your Pastor instruct you in how to observe the Seven Festivals of the LORD? If not, why not? If not, then is it about time you sought out a Pastor who has studied the Bible well enough to teach the truth which is often hidden in the original languages of Greek and Hebrew, and often overlooked when only reading the English?

Bet Emet Ministries is one such ministry who has paid the price to learn these hidden truths and revelations from God for we have devoted ourselves to over 15 years of diligent Bible study comprising the original languages in which the Bible was written in order to fully understand the difficult words of the Bible, the cultures in which the documents were originally written to ensure correct understanding, and the history that surrounds each document which again guarantees we arrive at the correct understanding which God intended for all to comprehend, understand, and implement in their lives. Back to the article at hand.

EXAMINING THE SABBATH AND HOLY DAYS MORE CLOSELY

1. sabbaton ^{^4521^} or sabbata: the latter, the plural form, was transliterated from the Aramaic word, which was mistaken for a plural; hence the singular, sabbaton, was formed from it. The root means "to cease, desist" (Heb., shabath; cf. Arab., sabata, "to intercept, interrupt"); the doubled has an intensive force, implying a complete cessation or a making to cease, probably the former. The idea is not that of relaxation or refreshment, but cessation from activity.

The observation of the seventh day of the week, enjoined upon Israel (both Jews and Gentile believers engrafted by faith into the Olive Tree of Israel), was a sign between God and His earthly people, based upon the fact that after the six days of creative operations He rested, <Exod. 31:16,17>, with <20:8-11>.

In the Epistles the only direct mentions are in <Col. 2:16>, "a sabbath day," RV (which rightly has the singular, where it is listed among things that were "a shadow of the things to come" (i. e., of the age introduced at Pentecost), and in <Heb. 4:4-11>, where the perpetual sabbatismos is appointed for believers; inferential references are in <Rom. 14:5> and <Gal. 4:9-11>. For the first three centuries of the Christian era the first day of the week was never confounded with the "sabbath"; the confusion of the Jewish and Christian institutions was due to apostasy from apostolic teaching.

Answer for yourself: Does the Apostle Paul teach Gentile believers to not let others condemn them for observing

new moons, holy days, and sabbaths (understood as Biblical Feasts and Festivals)?

Now let us first examine the Greek word for "judge" as used in this verse:

As taken from the Strong's Concordance: 2919 krino (kree'-no); properly, to distinguish, i.e. decide (mentally or judicially); by implication, to try, condemn, punish: KJV-- avenge, conclude, condemn, damn, decree, determine, esteem, judge, go to (sue at the) law, ordain, call in question, sentence to, think.

Let us now look at the same Greek word from Thayer's Greek lexicon:

2919 krino-

- 1) to separate, to put asunder, to pick out, to select, to choose
- 2) to approve, to esteem, to prefer
- 3) to be of an opinion, to deem, to think
- 4) to determine, to resolve, to decree
- 5) to judge
 - a) to pronounce an opinion concerning right and wrong to be judged, that is, summoned to trial that one's case may be examined and judgment passed upon it
 - b) to pronounce judgment, to subject to censure, used of those who act the part of judges or arbiters in matters of common life, or pass judgment on the deeds and words of others
- 6) to rule, to govern, to preside over with the power of giving judicial decisions, because it was the prerogative of kings and rulers to pass judgment
- 7) to contend together, of warriors and combatants
 - a) to dispute
 - b) in a forensic sense; to go to law, to have suit at law

Answer for yourself: Does the Apostle Paul instruct Gentile believers like you and me to not allow others to pass judgment on the deeds (celebration of the Feasts) based upon their opinions, or give even their opposing opinions as to whether your keeping and observing the Festivals and Sabbaths of God is right or wrong since they mean well, but are unknowledgeable about the Bible in these instances? He sure does!

Answer for yourself: Do you want someone's opinion on how to please God and worship Him in Spirit and Truth, or do you want "The Truth" as shown in detailed study such as the one you hold in your hand?

Let us now examine the Greek word used in this verse for "respect":

As taken from the Strong's Concordance:

3313 meros-

- 1) a part
- a) a part due or assigned to one
- b) lot, destiny
- 2) one of the constituent parts of a whole
- a) in part, partly, in a measure, to some degree, as respects a part, severally, individually
- b) any particular, in regard to this, in this respect

Answer for yourself: Do you see that the Apostle Paul instructed the Gentile believers that they had a lot and destiny to observe the Biblical Sabbaths and Festivals?

Answer for yourself: Do you see that God assigned to each one of us a part to fulfill in the observance and commemoration of Biblical Feasts and Sabbaths?

Let us now turn our attention to the New Moon Festival as we research the Greek word for "new moon":

As taken from the Strong's Concordance:

5730 neomenia (ne-o-mayn'-ee-ah); from 3501 and 3376; found only in Col. 2:16: first of the month, a new moon festival.

*** This Greek word was not included in the original Strong's Dictionary but is found in other Greek lexicons. Alphabetically it belongs between Strong's number 3500 and 3501.

3376 men-

1) a month

- the time of the new moon, new moon (the first day of each month, when the new moon appeared was a festival among the Hebrews)

Answer for yourself: Do you see that the Apostle Paul was instructing the Gentile believers in Asia Minor to let no one condemn them or keep them from observing the Jewish New Moon festival which is called in Hebrew "the born again" festival? He sure was!

Answer for yourself: Do you notice that the Apostle Paul was instructing Gentile believers to not allow others who mean well, but who offer only opinions instead of rightly interpreting the Word of God, prevent them from observing, or cause them to desist from observing Jewish Feasts, Festivals, as well as the Sabbath day which is the 7th days of the week?

Answer for yourself: Does your church and your Pastor instruct you like the Apostle Paul instructed his disciples to keep the Sabbath of the 7th day or has he led you to keep Sunday, the first day of the week, as your Sabbath, thus breaking the Fourth Commandment?

Answer for yourself: Does your church and your Pastor instruct you like the Apostle Paul instructed his disciples long after the cross of Christ to continue observing Jewish and Biblical Feasts, Festivals, and Sabbaths even in the face of "do-gooders" who mean well but who definitely do not have the mind of Christ on the matter?

Like the Apostle Paul, we at Bet Emet Ministries are jealous over you with godly jealousy, for we desire to see the consummation of your betrothal unto God, that you might be presented one day without spot or blemish as a chaste virgin to Christ. But, because of our diligent efforts over the last 15 years to discover deeper truths long hidden in the Bible, we understand, as did Paul, that you have been beguiled as Eve and your minds have been defiled and corrupted from the truth of God's Word.

2 Cor 11:1-4

- 1 Would to God ye could bear with me a little in my folly: and indeed bear with me.
- 2 For I am jealous over you with godly jealousy: for I have espoused you to one husband, that I may present you as a chaste virgin to Christ.
- 3 But I fear, lest by any means, as the serpent beguiled Eve through his subtilty, so your minds should be corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ.
- 4 For if he that cometh preacheth another Jesus, whom we have not preached, or if ye receive another spirit, which ye have not received, or another gospel, which ye have not accepted, ye might well bear with him.

Answer for yourself: Having seen Colossians 2:17-18 for yourself, maybe for the first time in your lives, can you now see that if you attend churches that do not teach the Biblical Feasts or Festivals, as well as the Saturday

Sabbath that you have been beguiled, deceived, and have accepted another Jesus and another Gospel?

Answer for yourself: Can you also see how this acceptance of another Gospel, in this instance the nullification of the Feasts, Festivals, and Sabbath in the Christian Church will have an effect on the Marriage Supper and your possible presentation to Messiah one day?

The Greek word for "bear" is as follows as seen from the Strong's Concordance:

430 anechomai (an-ekh'-om-ahee); middle voice from 303 and 2192; to hold oneself up against, i.e. (figuratively) put up with: KJV-- bear with, endure, forbear, suffer.

Let us examine Thayer's Greek Concordance for further meaning:

430 anechomai-

- 1) to hold up
- 2) to hold oneself erect and firm
- 3) to sustain, to bear, to endure

Answer for yourself: Are you guilty of enduring the teaching of another gospel in you life and your church by your Pastor by him not instructing you to continue observing Biblical Feasts and Festivals, as well as the Jewish Sabbath?

Paul has a stern warning for Gentile believers in his day as well as for us today!

Gal 1:8-12

- 8 But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed.
- 9 As we said before, so say I now again, If any man preach any other gospel unto you than that ye have received, let him be accursed.
- 10 For do I now persuade men, or God? or do I seek to please men? for if I yet pleased men, I should not be the servant of Christ.
- 11 But I certify you, brethren, that the gospel which was preached of me is not after man.
- 12 For I neither received it of man, neither was I taught it, but by the revelation of Jesus Christ. (KJV)

Bet Emet Ministries has, just in this article alone, shown you ample evidence that you have accepted another Gospel without even being aware you have. The good news is that you are now coming to the truth which, when acted upon in repentance and faith, will ensure your wedding to Messiah one day where you will be presented to him as a chaste virgin. But be not mistaken, if you accept and follow, and die in your sins, then you best not plan on being the Bride in the world to come, but only the guests at the wedding of Messiah (see Matt. 22 and Matt. 25 for details) .

Paul warns and commands that when one is found to be preaching another Gospel, you as a part of the Body of Christ have a moral responsibility, which will seem hard for you to do today since we have an over emphasis of the grace message preached without a balance of the justice of God. Such a one who preaches another Gospel (and remember in this case we have shown him to be one who fails to instruct, or instructs opposite of what the Apostle Paul teaches, that Gentile believers are to observe, keep, commemorate, and celebrate the Biblical Feasts, Festivals, and Sabbaths, no matter who he is (Priest, Pope, Cardinal, Pastor, Minister, Evangelist, Apostle, Prophet, etc.) are to be "accursed."

Let us examine what it truly means for such a one who preaches heresy to be "accursed."

The Strong's # is 331 anathema (an-ath'-em-ah); from 394; a (religious) ban or (concretely) excommunicated (thing or person): KJV-- accused, anathema, curse, X great.

Let us examine Thayer's Greek Lexicon:

331 anathema-

- 1) a thing set up or laid by in order to be kept specifically, an offering resulting from a vow, which after being consecrated to a god was hung upon the walls or columns of the temple, or put in some other conspicuous place
- 2) a thing devoted to God without hope of being redeemed, and if an animal, to be slain; therefore, a person or thing doomed to destruction
- a) a curse
- b) a man accursed, devoted to the direst of woes

Answer for yourself: Please understand that I did not make up the definitions of these inspired words in your Bibles, but understand they often bring us face to face with concepts we have never heard, or find so disturbing that we don't want to even consider them.

Does the Apostle Paul teach that one who preaches another Gospel, and in this instance one who is devoted to God (like a Pastor) who instructs and teaches against, or condemns the Gentile observance of Biblical Feasts, Festivals, and Sabbaths is without hope of being redeemed and is doomed to destruction and only has facing him the direst of woes?

Answer for yourself: Can you now understand the double reward or judgment upon teachers of the Word of God? Their responsibility to not represent God to His people is tremendous!

God made sure we would not miss His message to all mankind by giving all men "rehearsals" [appointed times with Him as Feasts and Festivals] whereby the annual celebration and observance of the Biblical Feasts and Festivals, as well as the weekly Sabbaths, and High Sabbaths, would reinforce His truths throughout our lives. But many of us have been deprived of them, and continue to be so by our churches today who are either unaware of, or who have rejected outright anything Jewish as being "bad." What a shame! Even more, it has eternal consequences!

Col 2:17

17 Which are a shadow of things to come; but the body is of Christ. (KJV)

The Apostle Paul teaches us that the Biblical Feasts and Festivals, Sabbaths, New Moons, and Holy Days are but shadows of things yet to come through the ministry of Jesus the Messiah. In other words some are fulfilled, and the others are prophetic!

The Biblical Feasts, Festivals, and Sabbaths are "shadows" of things to come. Let us examine the Strong's # 4639 skia: shadow:

- a) shade caused by the interception of light
- b) an image cast by an object and representing the form of that object
- c) a sketch, outline, adumbration

Answer for yourself: Does the Apostle Paul teach us that the Feasts, Festivals, and Sabbaths represent Christ?

The Apostle Paul teaches us that the Feasts, Festivals, and Sabbaths provide learning opportunities and give us

images of things yet to come through the ministry of Jesus.

Once again let us examine "to come" from Strong's: 3195 mello (mel'-lo);

a strengthened form of 3199 (through the idea of expectation); to attend, i.e. be about to be, do, or suffer something (of persons or things, especially events; in the sense of purpose, duty, necessity, probability, possibility, or hesitation):

Now let us examine Thayer's Greek Lexicon:

3195 mello- to be about

- a) to be on the point of doing or suffering something
- b) to intend, to have in mind, to think to

Answer for yourself: Do you see that the Feasts, Festivals, and Sabbaths are given to Gentile believers in order for them to have in their mind and thinking events soon to transpire in appearing of Messiah and that these soon coming events are "pictured" in the Spring and Fall Festivals as well as the Sabbaths of God?

CONCLUSION: IT IS A MATTER OF WORSHIP

Now, let us establish some proper motivational factors. The Biblical memorial days were instituted by God as an integral part of the divine worship system in the church (both O.T. and N.T.). They are not a matter of salvation, where our disobedience towards them will rob us of eternal life. Yet, they are a matter of obedience toward God, and let us never forget that our obedience is interpreted by God as our love for Him. Therefore our motive in celebration should be as God originally intended; remembrance and honor for what He has done. God said his feasts were "Forever Feasts" and times of memorial (Ex. 12:14, Lev. 23:21, Lev. 23:41). If God never changes (and we have His word on that) for He does not (Mal. 3:6), it is obvious that He still desires to be honored in this manner as both the Old Testament attests as well as the New Testament once you come to understand it properly. Jesus said that the time has come to worship the Father "In spirit and in truth". Surely He is worthy. Indeed prophecy indicates that the feast days will continue to be celebrated even after the coming of Christ in the Kingdom age (Zech. 14:16). The feast days retain a deep abiding meaning for the Christian, especially since their fullness (not termination) is found in the Messiah. It is safe to say that the Christian has as much reason for celebrating these feasts as does the Jew, perhaps more (1 Cor. 5:8). The feast days contain more divine information of spiritual and prophetic value than perhaps any subject of scripture. And as said before, even the Gospels were written according to the Festival pattern and liturgical scheme of the synagogue. It is through our deliberate recognition and celebration of them that the riches of truth contained in them is released for our understanding. Thus, we come to better understand Yeshua and God in the process. Not only that, they serve as a truthful "timeclock" for the events for which we wait as we inherit the fullness of our salvation.

The spirit of praise and worship simply demands the recognition of the Biblical feast days. No other conclusion can be drawn. The celebration of these memorial days is being restored to the Church as Biblical worship becomes more complete in these "last days".

The question before us is; should Christians celebrate the feasts? Clearly we should. Why? Because they are Biblical, Messiah-centered and God ordained. While feast celebrations may not be essential to salvation, they are certainly essential for a more perfect worship order in the church. Reason simply dictates this conclusion.

Feast days are not Jewish in an ethnic sense. They are divine in a Biblical sense and therefore eternal.

THEREFORE, LET US ALSO KEEP THE FEAST!

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THE ORIGIN OF THE SABBATH

It is truly interesting when we get behind the current Jewish traditions concerning the sabbath. We will, in this article, view the sabbath not as a static institution which came down more or less unchanged throughout the centuries, but rather as a manifestation of a constantly evolving process, and we are going to interpret the sabbath, as well as the other Jewish holy days in the light of that whole process in future articles. In other words we are going to **consider the sabbath as well as the other Jewish holy days as parts of a continuing attempt to articulate certain broad universal truths,** and we shall seek to discover, behind the varying forms of expression, just what those truths are and how they not only related to us today but how we can incorporate them into our lives and be enriched by them today.

We shall do this principally two ways. First, we shall endeavor to trace the actual evolution of each sabbath and festival, going back even beyond the Bible to its more remote and primitive stages. In such a perspective, we shall gain a clearer picture of what it really seeks to convey; we shall be able the better to recognize the **permanent truth behind the changing forms,** and to see more clearly how both the inner ideas and the outward expressions have been progressively crystallized and refined.

Secondarily, we shall use the comparative approach, that is, we shall compare the customs and ceremonies of the festivals with those of other peoples, not for the purpose of diverting the student with entertaining parallels, but in order to recover, behind the conventional traditional explanations, traces of earlier, more universal ideas which are nonetheless precious and pertinent for having been overborne and overswept in the onrushing tide of history.

While we shall lay stress on the uniqueness of many concepts and on the distinctive character of many transformations by the Jews concerning their holy days, we shall also point out frankly and candidly what the Jews have borrowed or adapted from their neighbors. Again we need look to a "first cause" or a "first revelation" of these "appointed times with God" and how mankind accepted and adopted them and later altered them down through history. **If we look hard we can recover these original Divine Truths for ourselves today.**

Firstly, this provides an effective illustration of the forces and influences which have in fact molded the development of the festivals; secondly, it is in any case scarcely credible that a people which has lived for nearly two thousand years in the midst of other peoples should have picked up nothing from them in the way of calendar customs and popular observances. **To be sure in the Jewish festivals and sabbaths I know for certain that heaven and earth meet together.**

THE ORIGIN OF THE SABBATH

The Hebrew word *sabbath* has passed into every European language, and there is no civilized people in the Western hemisphere to whom the institution of the weekly day of rest is altogether unknown. Although, to be sure, the seventh-day sabbath has been replaced, in Christian countries, by Sunday or the Lord's Day; that is, by the day on which the crucified Jesus is believed to have re-risen. This Sunday mode of observance is still a

direct, if attenuated, heritage from the ancient Hebrew practice.

The curious thing is, however, that nobody really knows how the sabbath began; for the Biblical statement that it commemorates the rest taken by God after the six-day labor of creation is simply a fanciful attempt to rationalize and explain an even more ancient traditional institution.

We have our theories however as to the origin of the sabbath. A favorite theory is that the sabbath originated among the Babylonians. The basis of this theory is that in certain Babylonian documents, the equivalent word *shapattu* is used to designate the fifteenth day of a lunar month. From this many scholars have concluded that **the sabbath was originally a full-moon festival**, the name being then explained from the **Semitic root *sh-b-t*, meaning "to stop,"** i.e., the day when the moon comes, so to speak, to a full stop, its waxing thenceforth giving place to waning. Moreover, in further support of this theory, it is pointed out that in several passages of Scripture, "sabbath" and "new moon" are in fact juxtaposed (2 Kings 4:23; Isa. 1:13; Hos. 2:17; Amos 8:4-5) and that in Lev. 23:11,15 the former term is applied to the beginning of Passover, which happens to fall at the full moon.

Answer for yourself: Is this just a coincidence?

For all its popularity, however, this theory is extremely tenuous, for there is no proof whatsoever that the term *shapattu* denoted the fifteenth day of **every** month; **all that the texts imply is that on certain specific occasions that day happened to coincide with a sabbath (in whatever sense the word be understood).** Furthermore, it is difficult to see how, on this hypothesis, the full-moon festival developed into the present **weekly sabbath, for the latter is entirely independent of the phases of the moon. Nor, indeed, can anything really be deduced from the fact that the words *sabbath* and *new moon* are sometimes juxtaposed in Scripture to convey the comprehensive sense of "sacred occasions."** As you see this most likely is now how the sabbath started. For this may be no more than an example of the figure of speech known as *merism*, whereby two contrasted elements of a thing are mentioned together to indicate the whole, e.g., "officers and men" for "army." The essence of a merism is that the two parts belong to different categories; hence, the very fact that "sabbath" is juxtaposed with "new moon" might itself be an indication that the former, as distinct from the latter, did *not* form part of the lunar calendar.

An alternative theory sees the origin of the sabbath in the ancient system of reckoning time by pentacontads, or stretches of fifty days. According to this view, the term *sabbath* applied originally to the days which were added to two of these stretches in order to accommodate the system to the luni-solar year. **These days were regarded as outside of the regular calendar-a kind of vacant space in time-and were therefore marked by a suspension of normal activity, the word *sabbath* meaning "stoppage" in this sense.** In the time of Ezra, it is supposed, when the Jews returned from the Babylonian Exile, rebuilt the Temple and re-established its services, a new system was introduced: all the days in each pentacontad which happened to be divisible by seven were deemed "vacant days" and excluded from the regular count; and thus arose the weekly sabbath. As we stated before these are but "theories".

DID THE SABBATH PREDATE THE JEWISH PEOPLE?

Fascinating as this theory is, we are perhaps on more solid ground if we start from **the fact that the sabbath is by no means an exclusively Semitic institution. Regular days of abstention from work are a common phenomenon among primitive peoples. Records of this can be found among the ancients that lived long before the Jews and Moses and the Ten Commandments.** Among several West African tribes, for example, each god has a special day of the week reserved for his worship, and on that day his own particular devotees are required to desist from all manual labor. Similarly, among the Lobs of Southwest China, a sabbath is observed every sixth day, women being forbidden to sew or launder clothes; while in Ceylon, the lunar quarters are regarded as solemn "*poya-days*," and all stores remain closed. The Tshi-speaking peoples of the Gold Coast keep every first and every seventh day as a sabbath; and the same usage prevails also

among the Ga, who call that day *dsu*, or "purification." So, too, it is customary among the Loango of West Africa and among the Ibo of southern Nigeria to divide the month into seven four-day weeks and to begin each with a sabbath (*nsona*); while the Ewe of Dahomey (North Africa) abstain from work every fourth day. In most of these cases, the institution appears to have arisen out of purely practical considerations, for the sabbaths are, in fact, market days, when the normal routine has perforce to be suspended in the individual villages while everyone is away plying his wares at the central depot.

Sometimes, however, days of rest are determined directly by the phases of the moon. The Bapiri of Bechuanaland, for example, make a point of staying indoors at new moon; while some of the native tribes of Uganda take a week's rest on that occasion. The Kanarese of India will not plow on either new moon or full moon; and in Nepal, both of these dates rank as special holy days, when no work is permitted and no one may cook food or indulge in litigation. Among the Bahima of Southwest Uganda, the king goes into retreat at new moon; while in Thailand, new moon and full moon are considered "major sabbaths," and the first and last quarters "minor sabbaths."

From these examples, a selection out of many, it is apparent that the sabbath, or periodic day of rest, does not belong to any one particular calendarical system, nor is it everywhere inspired by a single uniform cause. It may be occasioned, in one case, by the practical necessities of market day, and in another, by superstitions about the phases of the moon. When, however, formal calendarical systems are established, they tend to incorporate and exploit the time-honored traditional institution. This, it may be suggested, is what happened in the case of the Hebrew sabbath, many of the earlier ideas and practices being taken over and absorbed when it was later accommodated to the seven-day week. The abstention from work, for example, may well have derived from the purely utilitarian consideration of a market-day sabbath, whereas the prohibition against kindling fire (Exod. 35:3) links up immediately with a practice observed elsewhere (e.g., in parts of Egypt and in Hawaii) at crucial phases of the moon and therefore stems, in all likelihood, from a "lunar" prototype. Similarly, the injunction (Exod. 31:14) that anyone who profanes the sabbath is to be put to death obviously stems from a type of observance in which it was more a day of taboos than a purely utilitarian institution; indeed, the same law actually obtains in respect to the weekly "sabbaths" observed by the Yoruba on the Slave Coast, and these are of an entirely "superstitious" character, having nothing whatever to do with such functional occasions as market days.

However it may have begun, the sabbath was developed by Judaism along entirely original lines. It became, as the Biblical law expresses it, *"a token of the fact that in six days the Lord made the heavens and the earth, and on the seventh day He stopped (shabat) and was refreshed"* (Exod. 31:17). There is more to this phrase than appears from the English translation. In the Hebrew original, the term rendered *"was refreshed"* is connected with the word for *"breath, spirit, vital essence."* What is meant, however, is not that God "breathed freely" or heaved a sigh of relief, but that in the very act of ceasing from His labors He also, as it were, *"became inspirited"*, and took on a new vitality; and it is this combination of physical rest and spiritual replenishment that characterizes the Jewish conception of the sabbath. The day possesses a positive as well as a negative aspect: it is not merely a memorial; it is an active imitation by man of that which was done by God; and it is observed from week to week because man's life on earth is, in fact, a continuous process of creation.

The Jewish sages brought out the twofold character of the day by carefully codifying its restrictions on the one hand and by continually stressing, on the other, the necessity of utilizing the weekly pause for purposes of mental and spiritual recreation (in the literal sense of the word).

Insofar as the restrictions are concerned, the Mishnah (the codification of the Jewish Oral Law) specifies thirty-nine actions or classifications of "work" which may not be performed on the sabbath:

sowing, plowing, reaping, sheaving; threshing, winnowing, cleansing crops; grinding, sifting, kneading, baking; shearing, blanching, carding, dyeing; spinning, weaving, making a minimum of two loops, weaving two threads, separating two threads; tying, untying; sewing a minimum of two stitches, ripping out in order to sew them; hunting a gazelle, slaughtering it, flaying it, salting it, curing, scraping, or slicing its hide; writing a minimum of two characters; erasing in order to write them; building, wrecking; extinguishing, kindling; hammering; transporting.

This list in turn underwent further refinement; and, as a matter of fact, a large part of medieval and later Jewish literature consists in the replies issued by rabbinical authorities to questions concerning the minutiae of the law.

An excellent picture of the strictness with which the sabbath was observed by Jews of more rigid cast is afforded by a document discovered, in 1896, among discarded manuscripts and damaged copies of the Law, in the old synagogue at Fostat, near Cairo. This document is the manual of discipline of an ascetic Essene brotherhood which existed in Damascus at some time between the first and third centuries of the current era. The regulations concerning the sabbath (many of which are paralleled in the Mishnah) run as follows:

On the sabbath day, no one is to speak of profane or vain matters. No one is to make loans to another. No one is to engage in litigation about property or profit. No one is to talk business. . . . No one is to go about in his field for the purpose of carrying on his normal work. On the sabbath day, no one is to go out of the city beyond a distance of a thousand cubits. No one is to eat anything that has not been prepared beforehand. . . . When on a journey, no one is to partake of any food other than that which he previously had with him in his place of encampment. . . . No one is to draw water. . . . No one is to commission a non-Jew to do his own work. No one is to wear soiled garments or garments which have been worn while working in the garden except he wash them in water and scrub them with lye. No one is to observe a voluntary fast. No one is to follow his cattle to pasture beyond a distance of a thousand cubits. . . . No one is to bring anything into or out of his house. . . .

Nurses are not to take their charges out on the sabbath day. No one is to issue orders to his manservant or his maidservant or his hireling on the sabbath day. No one is to assist an animal to give birth. If an animal fall into a pit or snare on the sabbath day, no one is to lift it out; and if a human being fall into a well whence he cannot be extricated by a ladder or a rope or any other instrument, no one is to lift him out...

At the present day, the strictly "orthodox" Jew will not transact business, touch money, write, tear paper, smoke, switch on lights, use the telephone, travel or carry anything on the sabbath. Indeed, in some cases, even handkerchiefs are pinned to the garments and thereby regarded, by a legalistic subtlety, as integral parts of the clothing rather than as things *carried*!

Especially strict is the ban on travel and transportation. According to the Biblical law (Exod. 16:29), no man is to leave his "place" on the sabbath day. The sages, however, attempted by various legalistic devices to modify the rigors of this restriction. A number of houses, they declared, could be temporarily combined in to a single common "place" or domain, if the householders formed a kind of *ad hoc* "holiday club" by each contributing something to a common stock of food placed in a room accessible to all. Similarly, they eased the regulation which confined travel on the sabbath to distances within a radius of two thousand cubits by permitting people temporarily to transfer their residence from the center to the circumference of the imaginary circle. This dispensation, however, was granted only in cases where a man might wish to travel in order to fulfill a religious duty (e.g., to attend a circumcision), and to qualify for it he had, before the advent of the sabbath, to transfer a token quantity of food to the new dwelling.

In contrast to this more liberal attitude is the practice of the Samaritan community at Nablus. The Samaritans claim to be the descendants of the ancient Kingdom of Israel. Their religion is based on the Law of Moses and

they reject the authority of the Jewish sages. To the Samaritans, the law means just what it says; accordingly they do not stir from their houses on the seventh day, except to attend services in the synagogue. It is said, indeed, that the Samaritan teacher Dositheus, who lived (probably) in the first century C.E., actually commanded his followers to remain in one position throughout the sabbath!

For all their legalistic precision, however, the sages were conscious always that the sabbath was made for man, not man for the sabbath, and they insisted that any of the regulations might be, nay should be, broken immediately in case of life-and-death emergency, or of real danger to health. In support of such relaxation, they were fond of quoting the Scriptural verse: "Ye shall therefore keep My statutes and Mine ordinances, which if a man do, he shall live by them" (Lev. 18:5).

THE SABBATH...A TIME OF SPIRITUAL REFRESHING

The other aspect of the sabbath, that of mental and spiritual recreation, was brought out in the injunction that the leisure hours of the day should be devoted to study and to discourse about the Torah. The rabbinic classic *Pesikta Rabbathi*, compiled in the ninth century, has a fine passage exemplifying this doctrine:

Said Rabbi Hiyya, the son of Abba: *The Sabbath was given for enjoyment*. Said Rabbi Samuel, the son of Nahmani: *It was given for studying the Torah*. There is no discrepancy between the two statements. Rabbi Hiyya was alluding to the scholars who study the Torah all the week and enjoy themselves on the sabbath, whereas Rabbi Samuel was thinking of laborers who toil throughout the week, and on the Sabbath come to study the Torah.

Answer for yourself: Can you see the beauty in the above understanding of the sabbath? The secret is that there must be a balance of spiritual refreshing and nourishment along with a physical refreshing and renewing that occurs simultaneously in mankind. Such is the love of God for us that we be "whole"!

Enjoyment of the sabbath in this positive sense is, in Jewish tradition, an integral part of its observance. "Those who both observe the sabbath and call it an enjoyment," says the prayer book, "will rejoice in the kingdom of God and enjoy the riches of His bounty." The expression does not refer to ultimate rewards in Kingdom Come, nor is it a mere pious promise of "pie in the sky when you die." It means simply that those who on sabbath retreat from mundane things and consecrate the day to study of the Torah will be automatically refreshed and replenished by a growing awareness that behind the passing show of men lie the abiding verity and sovereignty of God.

There are several ways in which this more positive aspect of the sabbath finds, or has found, practical expression. One of them is the custom of meeting together in the synagogue during the afternoon in order to study the Bible (usually the weekly lesson from the Law) and various rabbinic writings, or to hear an exposition of them from the rabbi or from some visiting scholar. We as non-Jews can adapt this to our own needs and Bible study groups fit the bill nicely or just some quiet time with God alone in prayer and study. I don't mean to be a "monk" and study all day but balance your day; time to devote to God and then time for yourself. I always told my students and congregators that God desires you give Him your tithe; namely, give God your "first fruits". Start the Sabbath off by giving God your first times. Start early and prepare your Spirit and Soul by giving God your first parts of the day if possible in Spiritual pursuits. Maybe you want to pray, read the Bible and the Hebrew Scriptures, or read a good book on the Bible or other spiritual helps that feed your soul. These activities are to be first and then after you sense fulfillment then arise from your place of prayer or study and then do what brings your soul joy. Maybe you wish to recreate or exercise or just whatever that brings you joy and brings positive reinforcement to your life. I will leave that up to you.

3 Jn 1:2 2 Beloved, I wish above all things that thou mayest prosper and be in health, even as thy soul prospereth. (KJV)

Another thing that must be mentioned is the practice of concluding the introductory meal on Friday night with the singing of religious table songs (zemiroth), the central theme of which is the delight of the sabbath day. Many places provide cassettes and cds with selections of appropriate songs for the sabbath that you and your family can learn and memorize and sing on the sabbath. These songs, all of comparatively recent date, are a characteristically Jewish counterpart of the medieval monks' and students' songs. Some of them stem from the group of cabbalists who gathered around the illustrious Isaac Luria in Safed during the early part of the sixteenth century; while others are the product of the Hasidim, or Pietist movement which grew up in eastern Europe some hundred and fifty years later. In many of them, the sabbath becomes, as it were, the "toast of the evening," being adored in the manner of a queen. The sabbath is often allegorized as "the Sabbath queen" in literature and in song. In others, as in the following famous poem by Luria himself, the imagery is even bolder and God Himself is the guest, come to regale the company, in the manner of a presiding rabbi, with subtle and profound expositions of the Law and with the tales of miracles and wonders.

THE DEVELOPMENT OF SABBATH RITUALS

Both the beginning and the end of the sabbath are marked by special ceremonies. These are determined very largely by the fact that the Jewish day commences at sunset, the moment when, in ancient times, the candles or oil lamps were lit. At the beginning and end of the sabbath, this purely utilitarian act came naturally to acquire a special significance, and it thus attained the status of a religious rite.

The lighting of the candles, at least two, on the eve of the sabbath is assigned to the mistress of the house; and popular fancy supposes that neglect of this duty will be punished by death in childbirth. Shortly before sunset the housewife spreads a clean white cloth on the table and usually places the sabbath loaves (covered with an embroidered napkin) upon it. She then lights the candles and pronounces the blessing: *"Blessed art Thou, O Lord our God, King of the Universe, Who hast hallowed us by Thy commandments and commanded us to kindle the lamp."*

Answer for yourself: Is such sabbath ritual a commandment of God is this an example of the authority of the Rabbis to "bind an loose" given in the Hebrew Scriptures? Yes it is. Let me explain.

Such a commandment, to be sure, is nowhere mentioned in the Scriptures, but Judaism regards the institutions established by the rabbis and by the consensus of tradition as equally inspired by God, that is, as equal expressions of man's contact with, or apprehension of, the divine and transcendental, and it therefore gives them the status of commandments.

After pronouncing the blessing, it is customary for the housewife to spread her hands over the flame and then to place them for a moment over her eyes. The reason for this practice is disputed, but the most probable explanation is that it symbolizes an actual *use* of the light and thus validates the blessing; for in Jewish tradition, a blessing is not pronounced in general and vague terms but as an act of thanksgiving and appreciation for some actual and present benefit.

At the expiration of the sabbath, the ceremony is more elaborate. Known as Havdalah, or "Separating," it is performed by the master of the house after the evening prayers. The officiant takes a special candle made of two intertwining pieces of wax and yielding a double flame, a box of spices, and a glass filled to overflowing with wine or any other beverage. He then recites a formula which begins with a threefold invocation to the prophet Elijah bidding him come speedily "with the Messiah, the seed of David," continuing with a formula in which God is blessed for "separating the holy from the profane, Israel from the heathen, and sabbath from weekdays," and concluding with a separate benediction over each of the three ritual objects. When he blesses the candle, he makes a point of curving his hand and looking intently at his fingernails, and when he blesses the wine or beverage, he cups his hands over it and gazes into it in the light of the twin flame. At the conclusion of the ceremony, the candle is extinguished

in that portion of the liquid which has spilled over into the saucer or silver tray, while the cup is passed in turn to all the males and children in the company. It is the Jewish tradition that women may not partake of it; indeed, a popular superstition asserts that if they do so, they will grow mustaches! I will leave that up to you to decide.

The ceremony looks both backward and forward; if it marks the end of the sabbath rest, it also marks the beginning of a new week of labor. But what that week holds in store is, of course, as yet unknown, and the ceremony therefore includes various devices designed both to divine the future and to protect from evil. To the former category belongs the practice of gazing at the fingernails and of peering into the cup. Gazing at the fingernails and interpreting shadows which light might shed upon them was, in ancient times, a common method of reading the future; and Jewish literature contains a number of references to the spirits who were then believed to appear and who are known as "the prince of the palm" or "the prince of the thumb." Similarly, the habit of seeking omens by gazing intently into water or into the contents of a cup is abundantly attested both in antiquity and in modern folklore. In Scandinavia, for example, people who had been robbed during the week used to repair to a diviner on a Thursday evening to see the face of the thief revealed in a bucket of water, and a similar method is adopted among the natives of Tahiti. Nor, indeed, should it be overlooked that in the Bible itself (Gen. 44:5), the silver goblet which Joseph orders to be hidden in the sack of his youngest brother, Benjamin, is described expressly as a vessel from which he both drank *and divined*.

On the other hand, the use of the spices is a measure of protection against the perils of the ensuing week. They are a kind of symbolic "smelling salts," and are intended to revive and fortify the spirit after the departure of that "extra soul" with which, so it is said, every Jew is endowed during the sabbath day.

Of the same order, too, is the invocation of Elijah; for not only is the threefold repetition strongly suggestive of a magical formula, but the fact is also that, in Jewish belief, Elijah, besides being the forerunner of the Messiah, who, it is supposed, will arrive at the close of the sabbath, is at the same time the protector par excellence against demons and "princes of darkness." He is credited, for instance, with the power of protecting expectant mothers from the assaults of the child-stealing demon, Lilith. It is therefore very natural that appeal should be made to him at the critical beginning of a new week, when, according to Jewish superstition, the devils and demons which have remained confined in hell (Gehenna) over the sabbath, are again released to work their mischief upon men.

The lighting of the candles, however, is not the only ceremony connected with the incoming and outgoing of the sabbath. Equally important, on Friday evening, is the rite known as Kiddush, or Sanctification. Properly speaking, this is simply a formal hallowing of the sabbath, in accordance with the Scriptural commandment to "remember [or, observe] the sabbath day to keep it holy" (Exod. 20:8; Deut. 5:72); and it originally consisted only in the pronouncement of a benediction praising God for granting this institution to Israel as a perpetual heritage. Later, however, perhaps as a counterblast to the Roman practice of beginning a meal with a libation to the gods, it became customary to accompany the benediction with the drinking of wine (itself duly blessed), and it is in this form that the ceremony is today observed.

The Sanctification is prefaced by the chanting of the Scriptural passage, Gen. 2:1-3, describing how God "finished His work on the seventh day . . . and rested." Thereby, says the Talmud, the officiant spiritually retrojects himself to the moment of creation and becomes, as it were, the partner of God in that process.

Kiddush is followed immediately by the blessing over bread which precedes every meal in a traditional Jewish home. This, however, lends itself, on the sabbath, to a special embellishment. Not one, but two loaves are used, in commemoration of the double portion of manna which the Israelites received in the wilderness on the eve of the sabbath (Exod. 16:22,29). Moreover, the loaves are covered with a napkin (often ornately embroidered), symbolizing the "fine layer of dew" which covered the manna (Exod.

16:13-15).

Sabbath bread is called hallah (often spelled chollah), the term used in the Bible (Num. 15:17-21) for the cake of new dough which every Israelite was required to present as a "gift unto the Lord." Before it is baked, a portion of the dough has to be removed, in accordance with that commandment. The loaves are commonly fashioned in the shape of "twists" popularly known as *berches*. It has been suggested that this name derives from the old German *Berchisbrod*; that is, bread shaped like intertwined braids of hair which women and girls allegedly used to set out for Berchta, the demonic hag of Teutonic folklore who was believed to make the rounds on Twelfth Night. More probably, however, the name is connected with quite a different German word, viz., *Berchit*, which in turn goes back to the Low Latin *bracelins*, "arm," and denotes a type of loaf shaped like folded arms. Another form of this word (though the meaning is now somewhat different) is the familiar *pretzel*.

It is customary also on Friday night, at the conclusion of the service in the synagogue, for Jewish fathers to place their hands upon the heads of their children and pronounce a blessing over them. In the case of boys, the blessing runs: *"May God make thee like Ephraim and Manasseh,"* and in that of girls: *"May God make thee like Sarah, Rebekah, Rachel and Leah."* Moreover, as a graceful compliment to his wife, he chants the concluding chapter of the Biblical Book of Proverbs:

A woman of worth who can find? Her price is far above rubies. She looketh well to the ways of her household, and eateth not the bread of idleness. Her children rise up and call her blessed; her husband also, and he praiseth her: "Many daughters have done worthily, but thou excellest them all."

At the **conclusion of the Sabbath**, the most interesting feature of the service is, perhaps, **the recital of the Ninety-first Psalm**. That psalm is known traditionally as the "plague psalm," the name being derived from vs. 5-6.

Thou shalt not be afraid of the terror by night, Of the arrow that flieth by day, Of the pestilence that stalketh in darkness, Of the destruction that ravageth at noon.

At first sight, these verses look like a mere blanket formula, as in the familiar Cornish prayer: *"From ghoulies and ghosties and long-legitty beasties, and things that go bump in the night, good Lord deliver us!"* In point of fact, however, the reference is to specific demons of ancient Semitic folklore. The "terror by night" is the hobgoblin, and he is mentioned again in Song of Songs 3:8, where the attendants of the bridegroom (facetiously identified with Solomon) are said to be armed, as indeed they are in Oriental weddings, "each man with his sword upon his thigh," in order to ward off that demon's assaults. The "arrow that flieth by day" is the familiar "faery arrow" which, in the belief of many peoples, is the cause both of stitch in the side and of all diseases. The "pestilence that stalketh in darkness" is the demon known to the magical literature of Babylon as "he that stalks abroad at night" (*mutallik mushi*); while "the destruction that ravageth at noon" is a personification of the scorching midday heat which may cause sunstroke or even death. It is apparent, therefore, that this psalm originally found place in the service because it was regarded as a kind of charm against the malevolent spirits released from hell at the beginning of the week. It was, in fact, a complement to the ceremony of Havdalah; and it is significant that it also forms part of the burial service, where it serves to protect both the deceased and his survivors from the ravages of the evil spirits thought to be especially rampant at a time of death.

Answer for yourself: What are we to make today of all of this superstition?

It is easy to smile at these beliefs and to adopt a superior attitude toward them. They are, however, simply a primitive way of expressing normal and rational apprehension of the hazards and perils of an uncertain future. **The belief in the extra "sabbath soul," for instance, is simply a fanciful way of saying that retreat from mundane preoccupations on the sabbath gives a man a special spiritual serenity which tends to**

depart the moment he immerses himself again in the humdrum routine of the workaday world. By smelling the fragrant spices he reminds himself, in symbolic fashion, that he can become immune from the contagion of that world, if, so to speak, he but absorb by osmosis the constant fragrance of holiness. Significantly enough, the word *osmosis* really means "smelling," and thus provides an exact counterpart in language to the symbolism of the ritual. Similarly, the demons and evil spirits which are believed to rise from hell at the moment the sabbath ends are no more than picturesque personifications of the hazards and uncertainties which attend the beginning of each new week.

In taking over these traditional notions, however, Judaism gave them a new and deeper significance.

Lev 17:5 5 To the end that the children of Israel may bring their sacrifices, which they offer in the open field, even that they may bring them unto the LORD, unto the door of the tabernacle of the congregation, unto the priest, and offer them for peace offerings unto the LORD. (KJV)

Answer for yourself: What is so important in the above verse that few if any ever learn? It is here, in this verse, as the Rabbis teach, that we see that Israel was commanded by God to take the existing "rituals" modeled after their pagan neighbors and now "reinterpret" them and give new meanings to these rituals and holy days from which they had done before. This explains why the Jewish holy days has both much in common with the similar calendar times of other nations holy days as well yet also explains the unique understanding of the Jews of these "appointed times with God." What we find here is that God revealed to Israel a deeper revelation and knowledge of Himself and His message as connected to these "appointed times" and holy days given to the Jewish people.

Now it is important that you pay close attention to what is said next concerning the above passage of Lev. 17:5. The religious observance of the new moon with festal rejoicings and sacrifices belongs originally to a lunar cult as mentioned above but, as in many other cases, this festival and its rites were taken up into the religion of Yahweh-the national religion of Israel which also absorbed nature religion. At first this fact can be alarming to most people when they encounter it; especially Jews and Christians. Yet when we come to understand the progressive Revelation of the Bible we see that God will reveal to His people that they are no longer to make sacrifices to the false gods of the field like the pagans who lived around them but in keeping the "same pattern of nature worship" to which His people were exposed the sacrifices at harvest times as well as these days of "rest" were to continue as before but unlike before they are NOW to be times sanctified unto YHWH and offerings brought to Him and Him only as we see in Lev. 17:5

God understood how difficult it is to get long held primitive traditions out of people so by keeping these same harvest festivals connected with nature and the sun and the moon god would allow His chosen people to continue the "pattern" BUT the meanings of the elements and rites would be changed and then only YHWH will be the recipient of the people's worship although similar things would still be done by the people. That is why the Jewish holy days revolve around the same solstices and equinoxes as does the holy days of the ancients and other world religions today. The basic understanding of each of these pagan harvest festivals would be changed by God and redefined for the Jewish people to which we find today when we study Biblical Judaism. No longer were these pagan festivals were to be continued by YHWH'S people; instead the "form" might be familiar in that they remained in certain times of the year as before however "NEW MEANINGS" were given to replace the prior pagan understanding of these derived from primitive consciousness as associated with events in the Heaven, in Nature, and in his their own bodies as well as related concepts dealing with the matter of sex. Simply said these prior events and rituals were made "holy" and given unique and "Divine" meanings between God and His people and we turn to the Jewish people today for such understandings...and not pagan Rome which kept the same sun-worship and nature-worship that these Jews repented of and turned from. It would be Rome which would later record many such prior pagan beliefs in the New Testament and attach them to the depiction of Jesus in the New Testament.

This is what I find so fascinating when studying comparative religions; that the Jewish people refined

the universal understanding of these special times with God for all the world to better come to a knowledge of the Creator and His purposes for mankind.

It was now not only the individual but also the whole House of Israel that stood in need of protection from the hovering demons of disaster. If, on the one hand, the Havdalah service includes such intimate, personal appeals as the touching Yiddish prayer of the Jewish mother that "God, Who in the seventh heav'n dwells, May pity me, my husband, and my babes," on the other, it now called upon Elijah not for personal deliverance but for national salvation; as a long acrostic poem has it, he is to lead Israel *"from darkness to light."*

This development comes out especially in the preceding evening service. A feature of those devotions is the recital of sundry Scriptural prophecies relating to material prosperity. Each, however, is followed immediately by another which foretells national salvation. Thus, the promise of Deuteronomy (7:13-15) that God *"will bless the fruit of thy body and the fruit of thy land, thy corn, thy must and thine oil"* is capped, so to speak, by Isaiah's assurance 45:17) that *"Israel is saved by the Lord with everlasting salvation"*; and the prediction of Joel (2:26) that *"ye shall eat in plenty and be satisfied"* by Isaiah's confident declaration (35:10, 51:11) that *"the ransomed of the Lord shall return and come with singing to Zion"*; until, in an inspired climax, the immergence of individual in collective deliverance is brought home by the skillful juxtaposition of the two verses, *"Blessed is the man that trusteth in the Lord"* (Jer. 17:7) and *"The Lord will give strength unto His people; the Lord will bless His people with peace"* (Ps. 29:11).

BRIDAL SYMBOLISM

The sabbath is personified in Jewish tradition as a bride whose bridegroom is Israel. Rabbinic fancy plays eloquently on this conception. Observing that the Hebrew term for the marriage ceremony really means "hallowing," the sages interpret the Biblical statement that *"God blessed the sabbath day and hallowed it"* (Gen. 2:3) as meaning that **He wedded it to His people.**

In the East, weddings usually take place on a Friday evening, and this served as an added incentive for representing the advent of the **sabbath as a symbolic wedding festivity.** The Talmud tells us that, on the eve of the sabbath, the famous teacher, Rabbi Hanina used to put on his best clothes and say, *"Come, let us and welcome Queen Sabbath,"* while Rabbi Yannai used to rise and declare, *"Come, O bride; come, O bride."*

The custom of going out to "meet the bride" was especially common among the cabbalists of Safed in the earlier part of the sixteenth century, and some of the more poetically talented of them actually composed symbolic imitations of the conventional marriage songs. The most famous of these is the ***Lechah Dodi***, written by Solomon Alkabetz, teacher and brother-in-law of the mystic philosopher, Moses Cordovero. This poem, which is now an integral part of the Friday night service, plays on one of the most prominent features of Arab weddings, namely, the procession of the bridegroom from the local mosque to his own home, where the bride awaits him. He is usually accompanied on this occasion by torchbearers, musicians and singers. The latter, however, do not confine themselves to the chanting of wedding songs; they also intone lyric odes of a religious character in praise of Mohammed. All of these elements find place, if only by hint and implication, in the celebrated Hebrew poem. The bridegroom-i.e., Israel, is first bidden to come and meet the bride:

Bridegroom, come to meet the bride; Let us greet the sabbath-tide!

Immediately, however, in the manner of the Arab singers, the poet breaks off to offer praise to God; and the familiar expression *"the Lord is one, and His name one"* looks to all the world like a characteristically Jewish imitation of the familiar Arabic cry, *"There is no God but One"*-a cry which punctuates all public ceremonies. Then, playing on sundry Biblical verses, he predicts the future prosperity of Zion, evidently a parody of the blessings customarily invoked upon the bride. Finally he dresses the maiden herself:

Come in peace, and come in joy, Thou who art thy bridegroom's pride; Come, O bride, and shed thy grace O'er the faithful chosen race; Come, O bride! Come, O bride!...an invitation doubtless modeled on that addressed to brides at human weddings.

Lechah Dodi, which has been translated into German by both Herder and Heine, is probably the best known of all Hebrew poems, and it enjoys the reputation of having been set to more tunes than any other poem in the world. It is of interest to note, however, that a very similar though now long forgotten poem, employing the same tropes and many of the same phrases, was composed at the same time by the Italian-Jewish poet Mordecai Dato (1527-85), another follower of Moses Cordovero.

Other fancies also are associated with the sabbath in Jewish traditional lore.

Not only the Jewish people but all the God-fearing elements of creation (the Gentiles) are believed to observe the sabbath day. It is told, for example, that on a certain occasion a cow which had belonged to a pious man, when sold to a stranger, refused to work on the sabbath. It is told also that there exists in the far reaches of the world a river called Sambatyon (variously located) which ceases flowing on the sabbath. Such an intermittent stream is mentioned, indeed, by several non-Jewish writers throughout the ages, and many are the tall tales of more recent travelers who claim to have seen it. An ingenious explanation of this legend has been proposed. The river, it is suggested, possessed no such miraculous properties as were later attributed to it. It was simply a river of sand. But the Hebrew word for "sand," viz., *hol*, is indistinguishable from another which means "weekday," and hence arose the notion that "the river of *hol*" was one which flowed only on weekdays and rested on the sabbath!

Finally, it is maintained in Jewish legend that even the angels keep the sabbath, an idea which receives its finest expression, curiously enough, not in Jewish literature, but in Peter Abelard's great hymn for Saturday evening.

Oh what shall be, oh when shall be, that holy Sabbath day, Which heavenly care shall ever keep and celebrate always; When rest is found for weary limbs, when labor hath reward, When everything, for evermore, is joyful in the Lord? The true Jerusalem above, the holy town is there, Whose duties are so full of joy, whose joy so free from care; Where disappointment cometh not to check the longing heart, And where the soul in ecstasy hath gained her better part. There Sabbath day to Sabbath day sheds on a ceaseless light, Eternal pleasure of the saints who keep that Sabbath bright; Nor shall the chant ineffable decline, nor ever cease, Which we with all the angels sing in that sweet realm of peace.

Let us continue our study in the Biblical Sabbath



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EGYPT OBSERVED THE SABBATH BEFORE THE JEWS

The pious authoress of "Mazzaroth" wrote: *"The Babylonians, Egyptians, Chinese, and the natives of India were acquainted with the seven daysu division of time, as were the Druids."* Dion Cassius derives the Egyptian days from the seven planets: Sun, Moon, Mercury, Venus, Mars, Jupiter, Saturn. Montucla thought the week began on Saturday. Bailly says: *"It is to the Egyptians that is attributed the idea of dedicating each day of the week to one of the planets."* Sonnerat considered Saturday the Indian Sani or Saturn. Jahn says: *"The Egyptians consecrated to Saturn the seventh day of the week."*

With the Egyptians, however, the seventh day was consecrated to Amen or Amoun, the Father, or Sun-god. Pauw was of opinion that *"the Egyptians seem to have observed it very regularly."* Bunsen, speaking of Set, adds, *"He is the ass god of the Semitic tribes, who rested on the seventh day."*

Hesiod, Herodotus, Philostratus, etc., mention that day. Homer, Callimachus, and other ancient writers call the seventh day the holy one. Eusebius confesses its observance by *"almost all the philosophers and poets."* Lucian notes that it was given to schoolboys for a holiday. Dr. Schmitz observes: *"The manner in which all public feriae (holidays) were kept, bears great analogy to our Sunday. The people generally visited the temples of the gods, and offered up their prayers and supplications. All kinds of business except lawsuits were suspended."*

As in other cases, we may get illustrative light from the Assyrian neighbours of the Egyptians.

The Rev. Mr. Sayce finds the day of rest an Assyrian word. Saturday in Central Asia is still Shambé, from the Persian Shabat. The Accadians, thousands of years ago, says Sayce, kept holy the 7th, 14th, 21st, and 28th of each month as Salum, rest, "on which certain works were forbidden." Mr. George Smith wrote thus in 1876: *"In the year 1869 I discovered among other things a curious religious calendar of the Assyrians in which every month is divided into four weeks, and the seventh days or Sabbaths are marked out as days in which no work shall be undertaken."* Mr. H. F. Talbot quotes the Divine command from the Assyrian "Creation" tablet : *"On the seventh day he appointed a holy day, And to cease from all business he commanded."*

The above taken from James Bonwick's Egyptian Belief and Modern Thought.



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THE SABBATH IN THE FIRST CENTURY: OBSERVED BY JEWS AND NON-JEWS

"Thus the heavens and the earth were finished, and all the host of them. And on the seventh day God ended his work which he made; and he rested on the seventh day from all his work which he had made. And God blessed the seventh day, and sanctified it: because that in it he had rested from all his work which God created and made." Genesis 2:1-3

We find that in the New Testament the "Pattern of Worship" regarding both the Jew and the Non-Jew is for all to see..if they look.

The testimony of Jesus as to the observance of the Sabbath in the First Century:

Jesus "And he came to Nazareth, where he had been brought up: and, as his custom was, he went into the synagogue on the Sabbath day, and stood up to read." Luke 4:16

"And, behold, one came and said unto him, Good Master, what good thing shall I do that I may have eternal life? And he said unto him, if thou wilt enter into life, keep the commandments." Matthew 19:16,17

"But pray ye that your flight be not in winter, neither on the Sabbath day." Matthew 24, 20.

Jesus asked his disciples to pray that in the flight from the doomed city of Jerusalem they would not have to flee on the Sabbath day. This flight took place in 70 A.D. (40 years after the Cross).

Now let us look at the Sabbath in relation to the followers of "the Christ" and this Jesus of the New Testament:

"And they returned, and prepared spices and ointments and rested the Sabbath day according to the commandment." Luke 23:56.

"And Paul, as his manner was went in unto them, and three Sabbath days reasoned with them out of the Scriptures" Acts 17:2

Let us now look at Paul and his ministry to the Gentiles:

"And when the Jews were gone out of the synagogue, the Gentiles besought that these words might be preached to them the next Sabbath. And the next Sabbath came almost the whole city together to hear the Word of God." Acts 13:42, 44.

Here we find Gentiles in a Gentile city gathering on the Sabbath. It was not a synagogue meeting in verse 44, for it says almost the whole city came together, verse 42 says they asked to hear the message the "next Sabbath."

And note this point: The Bible does not say it is the "old Jewish Sabbath that was passed away," but the Spirit of God, writing the Book of Acts some 30 years after the Crucifixion, calls it "the next Sabbath."

Now let us examine the testimony of Philo:

Declares the seventh day to be a festival, not of this or of that city, but of the universe. M'Clatchie, "Notes and Queries," Vol. 4, 99.

Now let us examine the testimony of Josephus:

"There is not any city of the Grecians, nor any of the Barbarians, nor any nation whatsoever, whither our custom of resting on the seventh day hath not come!" M'Clatchie, "Notes and Queries on China and Japan" (edited by Dennys), Vol 4, Nos 7, 8, p.100.



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THE SABBATH: WHAT THE NON-JEWISH BELIEVER NEEDS TO KNOW

THE SABBATH, PHARAOH AKHENATON, MOSES, AND THE "MIXED MULTITUDE"...WHAT SHOULD THIS MEAN TO ME?

Exod 12:38 38 And a mixed multitude went up also with them; and flocks, and herds, even very much cattle. (KJV)

The context of the above verse from the Hebrew Scriptures teaches us that in the Exodus we find a blending of peoples who will make the trip to Mt. Sinai to receive the Ten Commandments; one of which the the Commandment to keep and observe the sabbath. Traditional interpretation of the text has always pictured for us that the Jews left Egypt and a few straggling Egyptians accompanied them. Archeology today has revealed to us the truth behinds these texts so cleverly woven by Ezra when rewriting these accounts which hide the truth of the matter; the truth being that a religious revolution in Egypt headed by Akhenaton, the Biblical Moses, was the 2nd of 4 Exoduses and that contrary to our prior understanding huge numbers of non-Jewish Egyptians as well as half-breed "Hebrews" followed Akhenaton, the Biblical Moses, to Mt. Sinai where both they as Egyptian non-Jews and these Hebrew followers of Moses would accept this Covenant with God which included the Sabbath Commandment. **So this is not just a "Jewish" Commandment as once thought.**

A little history is needed before we go on and get in-depth with the study of the Sabbath.

Egyptian history records for us, as does the Bible, that there was a tribe from either the west of Egypt or from just above the red sea, who during a period of famine moved to Egypt at the invitation of one of their own who was kidnapped and taken to Egypt. In the old Testament we have Joseph, and in another Arabic legend we have Ran, who through his interpretation of dreams gained power and may have imported the notion of a single god (his local god) into Egyptian consciousness. It is important to note that from the 13th Dynasty, Semitic races invaded Egypt and by 1663 BC they are the Hyksos or Desert Princes of which the most familiar would be the Abraham of the Bible. **Some hundreds of years later Akhenaton, whom many scholars believe to be the Biblical Moses, on his ascension to the throne of Egypt developed his beliefs in a one god and enforced worship of the single deity as revealed in the Sun disk Aton.** He did not worship the sun but the life giving force that emanated from and gave power to it. Let is be said that scientifically we now accept that the sun is what gives life to everything on our planet so Akhenaton was correct in this matter way back then. He modelled the god on his own pacifist ideals. This led to disinterest in power and stability and undermined the power of the Priests of Amon and the other gods and this brought Akhenaton into severe conflict with the Egyptian priesthood. After closing all the Temple in Egypt and mandating the worship of this "One God" only the nation was in disarray, Akhenaton was eventually replaced with his son or more probably step son or son-in-law, the manageable ten year old Tutankhamun. The young king, possibly under pressure from those older and more powerful, restored the old temples, persecuted the followers of his father and this single deity, and was himself dead or murdered by eighteen.

At the time of Ramses II, Akhenaton, if he still lived, or another powerful follower of the Aton, would have been in his Eighties or younger, similar to the reported great age of Moses. In the Acts of the Apostles, Moses was 40 when he left Egypt and after another 40 years he returned to Egypt at eighty to free 'his' people and spent a further 40 years wandering in the desert. It is also said that Akhenaton or Moses and his followers soon left Amarna or were driven from Egypt and this is the 2nd of 4 Exoduses which embarked to Mt. Sinai to receive the Commandments of this "One God". **Moses was reputedly connected to the house of the Pharaohs and he and his household gathered a large group of followers (local Semites) and led his new people to a promised land or even back to where the tribe had once lived, and where they could practice their religion of the one god.** The various names of god are similar to various local tribal gods of the Middle East and also this god's name often could not be spoken and had no image.

Answer for yourself: Does this not sound similar to YHWH of the Jews today?

Similarly the Aton had no image other than the disk of the Sun and such gods as Amun or Amun-Ra were the unknowable and even though some images exist of him as a man he had no real image as the one creator of all. This would also fit into a desire for secrecy to prevent word spreading the short distance to Egypt and thus again bring on the persecution of the followers of Aton. The area was an Egyptian province at the time. Also it is said that later the connection with Egypt and the Aton was severed so a new name for the same concept was adopted.

Answer for yourself: Is it coincidental or possible that the greatest upheaval in Egyptian theology occurred within the same period as did the Exodus and not be related? Was the Exodus from Egypt over conflict in religious theology among the Egyptians and not because of the cruelty of these Hebrews as we have been taught? If you want to get to the bottom of all of this mystery and deception of the true events behind the Biblical story given us by Ezra I recommend: <http://egyptcx.netfirms.com>. After all, in the Old Testament there are over 600 references to Egypt and we need to know why the Bible speaks so negatively about Egypt when Moses loved Egypt and its God. We have to look at Ezra, a Persian who represented a nation which was at war with Egypt when these former followers of Aton, were released and sent home to be a "fort" and line of defense between Persia and Egypt who were anything but friends at the time. Ezra knew quite well that these "captives" surely did not need to know that "the enemy" was their fathers so he spun a redaction of history and renamed these primary Egyptian players in this historical drama as "Jews" when in reality archeology today has shown us that this Royal Bloodline of King David and Solomon, as far back as Isaac and Jacob, were not Jews at all but Pharaohs of Egypt. That means the Blood Line that brings the hoped for Messiah is "Jewish" only because of intermarriage with Egyptian non-Jews and Semites.

Answer for yourself: What should this mean to us as non-Jews today? Simply that the Sabbath Commandment, which is the longest of all of these Ten Commandments, was originally given to both non-Jews as well as semites at Mt. Sinai. This puts a whole new spin on it when considering the identity of this "mixed multitude" that receives this Sabbath Commandment. Factoring in what archeology has shown us in these last 100 or so years; namely that the sons of Pharaoh Jacoba (the Jacob of the Bible) are Egyptian non-Jews and not Jews as we once believed. It is important for us to know that over time these Egyptians intermarried with Semites and created a half-breed race of sorts and it is these who also become the followers of Akhenaton and who follow him into the wilderness of Sinai. These "followers" of Akhenaton who leave Egypt and travel to Mt. Sinai are both Gentiles and "Hebrews" and it is they who accept the Sabbath Commandment. So this is not just a "Jewish thing" as once supposed and as taught by Judaism today. In closing remember due to the extreme persecution upon the Jews by the Gentile antisemitic Church the Sabbath as well as other Commandments were used a "fences" to keep apart and separate the Jews from non-Jews. No greater example of this could be found than this Sabbath Commandment which you now clearly see what given to both non-Jews and Jews; in fact the irony of it is that it was most likely given to more non-Jews present that day than Jews. Now let us move on.

THE SABBATH

The Sabbath (or Shabbat, as it is called in Hebrew) is one of the best known and least understood of all Jewish

observances. As a Christian for most of my life I did not observe Shabbat and thought of it as it was taught to me by my Christian teachers to be a day filled with stifling restrictions, or as a day of prayer like the Christian Sabbath. But once having gone to Seminary and awaking to the need for a recovery of "the Jewish Roots to my Christian Faith" I came to see upon serious study that to those who observe Shabbat, it is a precious gift from God, a day of great joy eagerly awaited throughout the week, a time when all of God's children can set aside all of their weekday anxieties and devote themselves to the higher pursuits of the soul. **In Jewish literature, poetry and music, Shabbat is described as a bride or queen**, as in the popular Shabbat hymn Lecha Dodi Likrat Kallah (come, my beloved, to meet the [Sabbath] bride). It is said ***"more than Israel has kept Shabbat, Shabbat has kept Israel."***

It has been well said that ***"the Shabbat is the most important ritual observance in Judaism" because it is the only ritual observance instituted in the Ten Commandments.*** It is also the most important special day, even more important than Yom Kippur. This is clear from the fact that more aliyoth (opportunities for congregants to be called up to the Torah) are given on Shabbat than on any other day.

Most people know that the Shabbat is primarily a day of rest and spiritual enrichment. The word "Shabbat" comes from the root Shin-Bet-Tav, meaning to cease, to end, or to rest.

One thing connected to the Shabbat is "spiritual renewal" and this involves prayer. I loved the use of the Siddur on the Sabbath and I found myself praying deeper than ever as a Christian. The Siddur opened to me prayer as never before and I highly recommend it to you for your Sabbath worship. Although the Jews pray on Shabbat, and spend a substantial amount of time in synagogue praying. Prayer, believe it or not is not what distinguishes Shabbat from the rest of the week because observant Jews pray every day of the week. In fact observant Jews pray three times a day. Therefor to think or say that the Shabbat is a day of prayer is no more accurate than to say that Shabbat is a day of feasting because we eat every day. What separates the Sabbath for other days of the week and spiritual endeavors is that on the Sabbath one reserves the best for the sabbath as not only the culmination of the week but as a picture of the world to come when shalom is the rule of Eternity. Therefore one eats their best meals of the week on the Sabbath and prays in a more leisurely fashion.

In modern America we often hear of the five-day work-week and so much so that we have grown numb concerning the uniqueness of the radical concept of a day of rest and how unique it was in ancient times. **The weekly day of rest has no parallel in any other ancient civilization.** In ancient times, leisure was for the wealthy and the ruling classes only and never for the serving or laboring classes. Such is the way of man but not the way of God who even commanded the Sabbath for animals as well. **The Sabbath is God's time for the soul to rest and restore whether human or animal.** Historically we find mention that the Greeks thought Jews were lazy because they insisted on having a "holy day" and a day of rest every seventh day.

WE ARE COMMANDED TO "REMEMBER" AND "OBSERVE" THE SHABBATH

ZACHOR: TO REMEMBER CREATION AND OUR FREEDOM AS GOD'S FAMILY

We are commanded to remember Shabbat; but remembering means much more than merely not forgetting to observe Shabbat. It also means to **remember the significance of Shabbat, both as a commemoration of creation and as a commemoration of one's freedom (the Jews remember their freedom from slavery in Egypt).** Having now understood the persecutions that came to the followers of Akhenaton following his departure from Egypt it is easy to understand the need for freedom by those who remained and were "religious outsiders".

In Exodus 20:11, after Fourth Commandment is first instituted, God explains, ***"because for six days, the Lord made the heavens and the earth, the sea and all that is in them, and on the seventh day, he***

rested; therefore, the Lord blessed the Sabbath day and sanctified it." By resting on the seventh day and sanctifying it, all of God's children are to remember and acknowledge that God is the creator of heaven and earth and all living things. We are given the opportunity to "choose" to emulate the divine example, by refraining from work on the seventh day, as God did.

Answer for yourself: If God's work can be set aside for a day of rest, how can we believe that our own work is too important to set aside temporarily?

Moses reiterates the Ten Commandments in Deut. 5:15. Here he makes note of the second thing that we must remember on Shabbat: ***"remember that you were a slave in the land of Egypt, and the Lord, your God brought you forth from there with a mighty hand and with an outstretched arm; therefore the Lord your God commanded you to observe the Sabbath day."***

Answer for yourself: What does the Exodus have to do with resting on the seventh day? Freedom! As I mentioned above, in ancient times, leisure was confined to certain classes; slaves did not get days off. Thus, by resting on Shabbat, we are reminded that we are free. But in a more general sense, Shabbat frees us from our weekday anxieties and concerns, from the pressures of our jobs, our deadlines, responsibilities, schedules and commitments. During the week, we are slaves to our jobs, to our creditors, to our need to provide for ourselves; on Shabbat, we are freed from these concerns, much as our ancestors were freed from slavery in Egypt. We can find peace and shalom on the Sabbath.

Answer for yourself: How can this be accomplished? How can I experience this freedom on the sabbath? Well the Sabbath begins on Friday evenings at sundown. It is then that we remember these two meanings of Shabbat when we [recite kiddush \(the prayer over wine sanctifying Shabbat or a holiday\)](#). Friday night kiddush refers to Shabbat as both zikaron l'ma'aseh bereishit (a memorial of the work in the beginning) and zeicher litzit'at mitzrayim (a remembrance of the exodus from Egypt). It is when we light the sabbath candles and recite the kiddush that we make a point to recognize before God that we take personal note of this special "appointed time with God" and refocus of sorts on that truly is important about our lives. We choose to take the time out to focus upon God and His Creation that gave us our life while at the same time we choose to "slow down" from the hectic pace we run all week long and choose to taste God's peace and shalom at this time which will quickly become a longed for memory once the Monday rush traffic begins again.

SHAMOR: TO OBSERVE

Along with the theme of "Remember the Sabbath" comes the second theme of the Sabbath; namely "Observe". We must look now at types of action and "work" that is forbidden by Jewish tradition regarding how to correctly "observe" the Sabbath. As a young Christian growing up in church I often heard the word "work" or "works" and often misused but I would not understand that at the time. Let it suffice to say that seldom as anything been more grossly misunderstood by people than the concept of refraining from "work on the Sabbath".

Before I studied Judaism in detail I was like most Americans who would see the word "work" and think of it in the English sense of the word: physical labor and effort, or employment. Under this definition, turning on a light would be permitted, because it does not require effort, but a rabbi would not be permitted to lead Shabbat services, because leading services is his employment.

Answer for yourself: Are you aware that Jewish law prohibits the former and permits the latter? That means we are missing something here that is very important.

Many Americans therefore conclude that Jewish law doesn't make any sense and that is a tragic mistake of our ignorance as Gentiles and Christians today.

The problem lies not in Jewish law, but in the definition that Americans are using.

Answer for yourself: Are you aware that the Torah does not prohibit "work" in the 20th century English sense of the word?

The Torah prohibits "melachah", which is usually translated as "work," but does not mean precisely the same thing as the English word. Before you can begin to understand the Shabbat restrictions, you must understand the word "melachah" as used in the Hebrew.

Melachah generally refers to the kind of work that is creative, or that exercises control or dominion over your environment. The word may be related to "melekh" (king). The classic example of melachah is the work of creating the universe, which God ceased from on the seventh day. Note that God's work did not require a great physical effort: he spoke, and it was done.

Surprisingly the word melachah is rarely used in scripture outside of the context of Shabbat and holiday restrictions. The only other repeated use of the word is in the discussion of the building of the sanctuary and its vessels in the wilderness (Exodus 31:14-15).

Exod 31:13-15 13 Speak thou also unto the children of Israel, saying, Verily my sabbaths ye shall keep: for it is a sign between me and you throughout your generations; that ye may know that I am the LORD that doth sanctify you. Ye shall keep the sabbath therefore; for it is holy unto you: every one that defileth it shall surely be put to death: for whosoever doeth any work therein, that soul shall be cut off from among his people. 15 Six days may work be done; but in the seventh is the sabbath of rest, holy to the LORD: whosoever doeth any work in the sabbath day, he shall surely be put to death.
(KJV)

Notably, the Shabbat restrictions are reiterated during this discussion, thus we can infer that the work of creating the sanctuary had to be stopped for Shabbat. **From this, the rabbis concluded that the work prohibited on Shabbat is the same as the work of creating the sanctuary.** They found 39 categories of forbidden acts, all of which are types of work that were needed to build the sanctuary:

- Sowing
- Plowing
- Reaping
- Binding sheaves
- Threshing
- Winnowing
- Selecting
- Grinding
- Sifting
- Kneading
- Baking
- Shearing wool
- Washing wool
- Beating wool
- Dyeing wool
- Spinning
- Weaving
- Making two loops
- Weaving two threads
- Separating two threads
- Tying
- Untying
- Sewing two stitches
- Tearing

- Trapping
- Slaughtering
- Flaying
- Salting meat
- Curing hide
- Scraping hide
- Cutting hide up
- Writing two letters
- Erasing two letters
- Building
- Tearing a building down
- Extinguishing a fire
- Kindling a fire
- Hitting with a hammer
- Taking an object from the private domain to the public, or transporting an object in the public domain.

(Mishnah Shabbat, 7:2)

All of these tasks are prohibited, as well as any task that operates by the same principle or has the same purpose. In addition, the rabbis have prohibited handling any implement that is intended to perform one of the above purposes (for example, a hammer, a pencil or a match) unless the tool is needed for a permitted purpose (using a hammer to crack nuts when nothing else is available) or needs to be moved to do something permitted (moving a pencil that is sitting on a prayer book), or in certain other limited circumstances. Objects that may not be handled on Shabbat are referred to as "muktzeh," which means, "that which is set aside," because you set it aside (and don't use it unnecessarily) on Shabbat.

The rabbis have also prohibited travel, buying and selling, and other weekday tasks that would interfere with the spirit of Shabbat. The use of electricity is prohibited because it serves the same function as fire or some of the other prohibitions, or because it is technically considered to be "fire."

The issue of the use of an automobile on Shabbat, so often argued by non-observant Jews, is not really an issue at all for observant Jews. The automobile is powered by an internal combustion engine, which operates by burning **gasoline and oil, a clear violation of the Torah prohibition against kindling a fire.** In addition, the **movement of the car would constitute transporting an object in the public domain, another violation of a Torah prohibition, and in all likelihood the car would be used to travel a distance greater than that permitted by rabbinical prohibitions.** For all these reasons, and many more, the use of an automobile on Shabbat is clearly not permitted.

As with almost all of the commandments, all of these Shabbat restrictions can be violated if necessary to save a life.

HOW SHOULD I START TO OBSERVE THE SABBATH?

Let me say up front that I believe in "progressive obedience". To me that means that as we grow in the Spirit and grace of our Lord we often are not able to be fully obedient to a Commandment as we like but that does not mean that we cannot begin to be "partially obedient" to the best of our ability. The Sabbath is a perfect example. Over time I found myself able to be more completely observant as I matured and grew in the knowledge of these Commandments. What I found difficult at time with my work schedule would through time and prayer remedy itself whereby I could become more fully observant of this Commandment. But it took time for God to help align all the things in my life where I could be more Torah obedient.

So in the Spirit of progressive obedience in light of what we just read about travel and money let me say that a small beginning at attempted obedience is better than no obedience at all. So one might want to begin to observe

and remember the Sabbath by beginning early on Friday afternoons to begin Shabbat preparations. The mood is much like preparing for the arrival of a special, beloved guest. For such an arrival of a much beloved guest or Sabbath queen the house is cleaned whereupon the family bathes and dresses up for the joyous occasion that lays before them. Mom used her best dishes and the best tableware are set. A festive meal is prepared. In addition, everything that cannot be done during Shabbat must be set up in advance. Here are some examples: lights and appliances must be set (or timers placed on them, if the household does so), the light bulb in the refrigerator must be removed or unscrewed, so it does not turn on when you open it (don't lite a fire), and preparations for the remaining Shabbat meals must be made (preserving leftovers since you cannot cook or light a fire on the sabbath proper or until sundown Saturday). These might sound difficult but I assure you with a little planning this can be done quite easily. **This is a matter of the "heart" and not "the head".**

SABBATH EVENING...FRIDAY NIGHTS

Shabbat, like all Jewish days, begins at sunset, because in the story of creation in Genesis Ch. 1, you will notice that it says, *"And there was evening, and there was morning, one day."* From this, we deduce that **a day begins with evening, that is, sunset.** For the precise time when Shabbat begins in your area, consult the list of candle lighting times provided by the Orthodox Union or any Jewish calendar. These are equally available on the Internet.

Shabbat candles are lit and a blessing is recited no later than eighteen minutes before sunset. This ritual, performed by the woman of the house, officially marks the beginning of Shabbat. **Two candles are lit, representing the two commandments: zachor (remember) and shamor (observe), as discussed above.**

Some celebrate, keep, and observe the Sabbath by attending a Synagogue service that evening if possible. Others adapt and deep the Sabbath entirely at home.

Before dinner, the man of the house recites Kiddush, a prayer over wine sanctifying Shabbat. Lifting the wine to God one recites:

"Blessed are You, HaShem our God, Ruler of the Universe, Who has created the fruit of the vine."

The usual prayer for eating bread is recited over two loaves of challah, a sweet, eggy bread shaped in a braid. The family then eats dinner. Lifting the bread to God in thanks one recites:

"Blessed are You, HaShem our God, Ruler of the Universe, Who brings forth bread from the earth."

Although there are no specific requirements or customs regarding what to eat, meals are generally stewed or slow cooked items, because of the prohibition against cooking during Shabbat. It is important to remember that things that are mostly cooked before Shabbat and then reheated or kept warm on a hotplate are permissible.

After dinner, the birkat ha-mazon (grace after meals) is recited. Although this is done every day, on Shabbat, it is done in a leisurely manner with many upbeat tunes.

"And you shall eat and you shall be satisfied. And you shall bless YHWH, your God, for the good land he has given you." (Deuteronomy 8:10)

By the time all of this is completed, it may be late evening. The family has an hour or two to talk or study the Torah, and then go to sleep. Many of our students at Bet Emet used the times to do associated studies on other areas of recovering the Jewish Roots of the Christian faith.

SABBATH MORNING...SATURDAY MORNING

The next morning Shabbat services begin at nearby synagogues and many of our students at Bet Emet would attend the morning services and later congregate with Bet Emet in the late afternoon and evening. Quite often Bible studies are held in homes on the Sabbath where friends attend and hold informal Sabbath services themselves. We at Bet Emet often did this and it is from a year of informal meetings that we grew into a full-fledged congregation with an adapted "Pattern of Worship" as found in the Synagogues. The only difference is that we had limited use of Hebrew in the service so we as non-Jews could have better understanding. Recollecting that we are to "remember" and "observe" we must understand that much of this is left up to you as to just how you do this. Understand as well that we at Bet Emet modified yet followed the Synagogue Pattern of Worship in our Sabbath Home Services.

To those who went to Synagogue on Sabbath mornings upon returning home after the service the family says kiddush again and has another leisurely, festive meal. A typical afternoon meal is usually some form of a slow cooked stew or soup that was kept warm on a heating plate ever night. By the time birkat ha-mazon (grace after meals) is done, it is about mid-afternoons. Many use this time to refocus on the Torah while others find leisurely activities to do. Many study the Torah for a while, others talk or take afternoon walks. Others find it relaxing to play games or engage in other leisure activities. A short afternoon nap is not uncommon. It is traditional to have a third meal before Shabbat is over. This is usually a light meal in the late afternoon or early evening before sundown for again remember it is at sundown that the Sabbath leaves and the first day of the week returns. **It is interesting to note that in Judaism these 3 meals on the Sabbath is called "The Lord's Supper".**

SABBATH AFTERNOON...SATURDAY EVENING

Shabbat ends at nightfall, when three stars are visible, approximately 40 minutes after sunset. It was at this time that Congregation Bet Emet chose to hold its services in order to not only share in the joy of the Sabbath but to partake of the Havdalah service as well. It was during this time that we all partook of a "modified" Synagogue service that consisted of Scripture readings, prayer, worship songs, teaching, and fellowship and even dancing before the Lord.

At the conclusion of Shabbat, it is customary for the family to perform a concluding ritual called [Havdalah](#) ([separation, division](#)) and we at Bet Emet ended our services with the Havdalah. In the Havdalah blessings are recited over wine, spices and candles. Then a blessing is recited regarding the division between the sacred and the secular, between Shabbat and the working days, etc. We would end with a song of hope remembering Elijah the Prophet whose coming is to announce the days of Messiah.

As you can see, Shabbat is a very full day when it is properly observed, and very relaxing and a joy to share with others.



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THE TEN COMMANDMENTS AND THE SABBATH...COMMANDED TWICE?

The "Aseret HaDibrot," the "Ten Commandments," are documented twice in the Five Books of Moses, once in Shemot (Exodus 20, 2-17) and once in Devarim (Deuteronomy 5, 6-18), when Moshe is reviewing the Jewish experience in the Desert. In general, the two texts are nearly identical. However, with respect to the Commandment relating to Shabbat, there are crucial differences, as follows:

"Remember the day of Shabbat, to keep it holy. Pursue all your labor for six days, and do all your "Melachah" (the term "Melachah" to be defined in Item 3, below). But the seventh day is Shabbat to the Lord your God; On it you may do no "Melachah," neither you, nor your son, nor your daughter, nor your male servant, nor your female servant, nor your cattle, nor the stranger who is within your gates. For in six days God made the heavens and the earth, the sea and everything that is within it; And he rested on the seventh day; Therefore, God did bless the day of Shabbat and He made it holy." (Shemot 19: 8-11; the Shabbat Command as recorded in the Shemot version of the Ten Commandments)

"Guard the Day of Shabbat to keep it holy, as the Lord your God has commanded. Pursue all your labor for six days, and do all your "Melachah." But the seventh day is Shabbat for the Lord your God; Do no "Melachah" - not you, nor your son or daughter, nor your male or female servant, nor your ox or donkey or any of your cattle, nor the stranger who resides within your gates, in order that your male and female servants shall rest, as you rest. And you shall remember that you were a slave in the Land of Egypt, and the Lord your God took you out from there with a strong hand and an outstretched arm; Therefore, did the Lord your God command you to observe the Day of Shabbat." (Devarim 5: 12-15; the Shabbat Command as recorded in the Devarim version of the Ten Commandments.

Of course, it is extremely unusual, at first glance, that there should be any variation here. But the Midrash explains that, somehow, God uttered both versions at once, something that a creature of flesh and blood could not do, to teach both of the themes of Shabbat, namely, the Creation and the Exodus. Another aspect of the dual utterance of "Remember the Day of Shabbat" and "Guard the Day of Shabbat" is that Shabbat has a dual nature - positive and negative, affirmation and withdrawal, as discussed below:

- The special quality of the Day of Shabbat is based on the concept of the holiness of time. The Shabbat is that one day out of seven that was charged with holiness, by the holy Creator of time.
- Shabbat has a double theme, the significance of each of which is developed in the paragraphs below. One is to commemorate the Creation of the universe by God in six "days," and his "rest" from his "Melachah" (work), and that it was for that reason that He blessed the seventh day and made it holy - Exodus-Shemot version. The other is to commemorate the Exodus, that awesome

event in which the Lord took the Jewish People out of Egypt; that we should remember that we ourselves were slaves in Egypt, and that God Himself redeemed us with a "strong hand and an outstretched arm."

- On Shabbat, the Jew withdraws from the performance of "Melachah" (work). All categories of "Melachah" represent purposeful, creative interactions with nature. In the case of Man, this refers to his interaction with his environment, whereby he exerts mastery and control over nature, as in fact he was commanded to do by God. Our purpose in this is to express our belief and to testify that God is the Creator of the Universe, and is the source, on an ongoing basis, of all creative forces within it.
- Shabbat testifies to the dignity of labor and the basic equality of all human beings. The Torah commands "Six days shall you labor;" - all of you! No exceptions! Yet, all members of the household, all classes of society, from the king to the servant; **even the Gentile and animals, are to be provided with a "Day of Rest."**
- One of the central themes of Shabbat, as seen in the Devarim version of the "Aseret HaDibros," the Ten Commandments, is to remember the Exodus. This unique event in history demonstrated the **continuing involvement of God with His Creation**, His fierce opposition to slavery and all abuse of power, and His concern for justice.
- Throughout the centuries and millenia of Jewish History, oppressors of the Jews realized that a major key to Jewish survival was observance of the Shabbat; therefore, it was outlawed; sometimes punishable by death. Conversely, the Shabbat raised the Jews far above their enemies; for the Jews, in acting to carry out God's command, were acting in accord with their human potential, while their enemies, in attempting to suppress this observance and in their desire to strip the Jews of their human dignity, descended to the level of the beasts.
- **The Shabbat Table is compared with the Altar in the Temple.** Shabbat is the Day of "Quality Time," the Day of Delight, of "Menuchah" or Tranquility, to be spent with one's family, with one's self, with one's Maker, and with the Torah.



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THE NON-JEW AND HIS RETURN TO GOD'S SABBATHS WHICH CONSTANTINE OUTLAWED

Answer for yourself: Why don't we as Christians and followers of Jesus and "the Christ" keep and observe the Biblical Holy Days in the Christian Church today?

We can begin to look at Constantine to find the loss of the Biblical Holy Days and the Sabbath for the non-Jew.

Let us learn an important truth from 2 Thess. 2:3

"Let no man deceive you by any means, for that day will not come unless the falling away comes first, and the man of sin is revealed, the son of perdition who apposes and exalts himself above all that is called God or that is worshiped so that he sits as God in the temple of God."

Let us look no further than Constantine to be one of many who fulfills this passage. As far as the history of christianity is concerned, Constantine was one of the most influential men that ever lived. From the Writings of the Apostles (Gospel's), until Martin Luther nailed his theses to the church door in 1517, there was no single person that so changed the course of church history as Constantine did. Indeed, his influence was so vast that it continues to tower over Christendom in this, our own time. Both in church customs, doctrines and in church government, christianity owes sunday and a lot more to Constantine's intervention.

It may be news to you but Constantine began to change the Biblical Holy Days, forsaking the Shabbot and assigning Sunday as God's day. He outlawed the 7 Biblical Festivals and Feasts of God as well. He replaced them with pagan holidays derived from Sun Worship which find their origins with men. If we look at the Shabbot this should not be surprising to us for after all, the Gentiles (pagans) were already used to Sunday worship due to their background in "Sunday" - "Sun" worship. The logic of Constantine was very simple: "As more and more Gentiles came into the faith, why make them learn of God's Holy Sabbath and His Laws?" The root for all these changes comes from his intense antisemitism and hatred of the Jews as we find in his [Easter Letter](#).

At the beginning of the 4th century, a monumental event occurred for the Church. In AD 306, Constantine became the first Christian Roman Emperor. At first, he had a rather pluralistic view and accorded Jews the same religious rights as Christians. However, in AD 321, he made Christianity the official religion of the Empire. This signaled the end of the persecution of Christians, but the beginning of discrimination and persecution of the Jewish people.

Already at a council in Elvira (Spain) in AD 305, declarations were made to keep Jews and Christians apart, including ordering Christians not to share meals with Jews, not to marry Jews, not to use Jews to bless their fields, and **not to observe the Jewish Sabbath.**

Imperial Rome, in AD 313, issued the Edict of Milan, which granted favor to Christianity, while outlawing synagogues.

Then, in AD 315, another edict allowed the burning of Jews if they were convicted of breaking the laws. As Christianity was becoming the religion of the state, further laws were passed against the Jews:

- The ancient privileges granted to the Jews were withdrawn.
- Rabbinical jurisdiction was abolished or severely curtailed.
- Proselytism was prohibited and made punishable by death.
- Jews were excluded from holding high office or a military career.

These and other restrictions were confirmed over and over again by various Church councils for the next 1,000 years.

In AD 321, Constantine decreed all business should cease on "the honored day of the sun." By substituting Sunday for Saturday as the day for Christian worship, he further advanced the split. This Jewish Shabbat / Christian Sunday controversy also came up at the first real ecumenical Council of Nicea (AD 325), which concluded Sunday to be the Christian day of rest, although it was debated for long after that.

Answer for yourself: What should this tell us? Simply that up until the early 4th century non-Jewish believers in God were taught to keep and observe the Sabbath along with the Jews!

Overnight, Christianity was given the power of the Imperial State, and the emperors began to translate the concepts and claims of the Christian theologians against the Jews and Judaism into practice. Instead of the Church taking this opportunity to spread its Gospel message in love, it truly became the Church Triumphant, ready to vanquish its foes (first it was the Jews and later it would be Gnosticism and any who would dare to disbelieve the imperial religious doctrine).

After 321, the writings of the Church fathers changed in character. No longer was it on the defensive and apologetic, but aggressive, directing its venom at everyone "outside of the flock," in particular the Jewish people who could be found in almost every community and nation.

1Thes 1:9 9 For they themselves shew of us what manner of entering in we had unto you, and how ye turned to God from idols to serve the living and true God; (KJV)

The above passage refers to Non-Jews who turned from idols to serve the living God of the Jews. They had just come out of idolatry. And that was fine when gentiles first entered the faith. They didn't know the Law, that they had a Covenant with God or that God expected of them to observe and keep His "appointed times" and Holy Days" like the Sabbath. But they could learn. They attended the synagogues, on Shabbot and observed "ALL" of the Jewish Biblical Holy Days. But Constantine and others made sure they did not continue to learn the Ways of God. He made sure that everything Jewish was removed from the then "existing" church.

You might want to look up the word "gentile". It means pagan. It means anyone outside Judeo Christian faith. Webster's dictionary states: "Gentile....anyone belonging to a non Jewish nation; anyone who is not a JEW OR A CHRISTIAN." Yet Christians today claim the title of Gentile. This is part of the Lie that Constantine started and it obviously continues today. If you are a believer in the God of Israel through Yeshua then you are no longer a Gentile. You are grafted in to the Olive tree, which is Israel. And that being so then you should resemble Israel in your worship!

Rom 11:24 24 For if thou wert cut out of the olive tree which is wild by nature, and wert grafted contrary to nature into a good olive tree: how much

more shall these, which be the natural branches, be grafted into their own olive tree? (KJV)

Answer for yourself: Have you ever noticed that any reference to Yeshua and the early church being a part of Judaism brings accusations of "Pharisee" "Legalist" and after that comes "one who would stone Christ" and finally "Christ Killers". This kind of talk brought us the Inquisition, the Crusades and the Holocaust.

CONSTANTINE'S COUNTERFEIT JESUS

A terrible deception has occurred and the vast majority of 2.5 billion Christians haven't a clue. Today in Gentile Christianity we have accepted a Constantine Jesus instead of the Jewish Messiah. Through Constantine's clever ruse of "replacement religion" we have centered in Christianity today not a Jewish Messiah but a Gentile Messiah. This person will look for all the world like the Messiah pictured in Christian paintings. He will look extremely "Gentile". This false messiah has and will continue to infiltrate the church. He will speak of Easter and Christmas and Sunday as if they were God's Holy Days. He will not allow Sabbath worship. He will declare Sunday as the Sabbath Day. As long as you worship the "Gentile Jesus" you won't have to worry about persecution. Nobody is going to bother you. You will be safe in your church and deceived the false comfort provided by errant theology. All this because you believed The Lie. The lie that you are separate from Israel. The lie that says the Olive tree is dead. The lie that says the Law is dead. The lie that says you are somehow better than Israel because you will be 'taken out' of the world in the day of Jacob's trouble. And the lie that says the Commandments of Almighty God are passed away. The lie says that you, as a Gentile Christian believer, have replaced Israel and that you are "the New Israel".

TIME TO STUDY FOR YOURSELF AND EXPOSE THIS LIE

Rom 11:17-18 17 And if some of the branches be broken off, and thou, being a wild olive tree, wert grafted in among them, and with them partakest of the root and fatness of the olive tree (Israel); 18 Boast not against the branches. But if thou boast, thou bearest not the root, but the root thee. (KJV)

We must begin at the beginning; namely with the Biblical Calendar. We can call this for all practical purposes the Jewish Calendar for I have found, as you will if you do the study, that "Jewish" is a synonym for "Biblical". I wish that could be said for the Christian Church but it simply is not so; in fact the opposite is more often the rule. The Lord's Calendar is a diary of His Appointments of His "appointed times" with mankind. These are specific times on which He wants to meet with us. The word 'set time' in Hebrew is "moed". It means an 'appointment' and a 'rehearsal'. These are appointments set in eternity as rehearsals for what is to come. We find time and time again when consulting the Hebrew words for the non-Jewish believer in God in the Hebrew Scriptures example after example of the non-Jew keeping and observing the Sabbath and the these Biblical "appointed times" and Biblical Festivals and Feasts with the Jew in the Hebrew Scriptures and the Old Testament. Many never see this for they know not where or how to look or study at this level. Words like "alien", "foreigner" and "stranger" go unnoticed in the Old Testament in contexts regarding these Holy Days of the Lord yet everyone of them is a beautiful picture of the overall "Pattern of Worship" given by God to all His children; to all mankind. Again and again God emphasizes to both the Jew as well as the non-Jew that we are to keep the Feasts at their appointed time as "rehearsals" for Eternity.

Numbers 9:2 says: *"Make the Israelites celebrate the Passover at the appointed time."*

In verse 14 we read, *"A foreigner living among you who wants to celebrate the LORD's Passover must do so in accordance with its rules and regulations. You must have the same regulations for the foreigner and the native-born."*

Isa 56:1-2 1 Thus saith the LORD, Keep ye judgment, and do justice: for my salvation is near to come, and my righteousness to be revealed. 2 Blessed is the man that doeth this, and the son of man that layeth hold on it; that keepeth the sabbath from polluting it, and keepeth his hand from doing any evil. (KJV)

But you read the above verse thinking this was a commandment for the Jew only most likely. But let us keep reading.

Isa 56:6-7 6 Also the sons of the stranger, that join themselves to the LORD, to serve him, and to love the name of the LORD, to be his servants, every one that keepeth the sabbath from polluting it, and taketh hold of my covenant; 7 Even them will I bring to my holy mountain, and make them joyful in my house of prayer: their burnt offerings and their sacrifices shall be accepted upon mine altar; for mine house shall be called an house of prayer for all people (nations). (KJV)

Wow. Here we have the example of non-Jews keeping the Sabbath of God let alone participating in Temple worship and the Sacrificial System. It would appear to me and hopefully you that these non-Jews are definitely "grafted" into the Israel of God more so than Christians today regardless of what they want to believe about themselves.

Isa 56:8 8 The Lord GOD which gathereth the outcasts of Israel saith, Yet will I gather others to him, beside those that are gathered unto him. (KJV)

Take a look at this chapter and you will see the church as it was/is supposed to be. We were supposed to learn about and keep the Lord's Sabbaths (the weekly sabbath as well as God's "High Sabbath" which are more commonly known as the Biblical Festivals and Feasts. We are plainly Commanded here to keep the Sabbaths of the Lord. We are now getting the chance to learn and do as many are returning to the Hebrew roots of the church. Let us do so in thanksgiving and delight.



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A PERSONAL GUIDE TO THE SABBATH: GETTING STARTED WITH SHABBAT

When most people think of holidays, they think of *annual* celebrations, but in the Bible and in Biblical Judaism there is one holiday that occurs every week-the Sabbath. Known in Hebrew as ***Shabbat*** and in Yiddish as ***Shabbos***, this holiday is central to Jewish life. As the great Jewish writer Ahad Ha-Am has observed: "More than the Jewish people has kept the Sabbath, the Sabbath has kept the Jewish people." The Sabbath truly has been a unifying force for Jews the world over. **But as we saw in prior studies the recognition of this "7th day" can be found among the non-Jews long before Jews as well so we must investigate this closer.**

Shabbat is observed on the seventh day of the week in fulfillment of the biblical commandment: ***"Six days you shall labor and do all your work, but the seventh day is a sabbath of the Lord your God." (Exodus 20:9-10)*** **In accordance with the Jewish calendar, the Sabbath begins on Friday evening at sunset and ends on Saturday night with the appearance of three stars. All Jewish days begin at sunset.** This reckoning is based on the wording of the Creation story in Genesis 1. At the end of the description of each day, we find the phrase: ***"And there was evening, and there was morning. . ."*** Since evening is mentioned first, the ancient rabbis deduced that evening is first.

THE SABBATH IS GOD'S AND MAN'S SANCTIFICATION OF TIME

While *Shabbat* occurs on Friday evening and Saturday, it is more than simply another day in the week. It is a special day, and we are commanded to invest it with specialness. Friday and Saturday come automatically, **but *Shabbat* takes place only when we make it happen. We must make the decision to establish *Shabbat* in our own lives if we want to have it and observe it in our lives.** In order to allow *Shabbat* to enter our lives, it is necessary to prepare ourselves and our environment. We prepare for *Shabbat* by the clothes we wear, by the meals we eat, by the lighting of Sabbath candles which sanctifies the time we recognize and set apart and make "holy", and by chanting the *Kiddush* over wine to set apart this special time. The Sabbath "begins" with the most common custom which is to light two candles for the two important Biblical references to Shabbat: ***"Remember the Sabbath" (Exodus 20:8)*** and ***"Observe the Sabbath" (Deuteronomy 5:12)***. However, many people light an additional candle for each child in the family, and others light seven candles for each day of the week or for the Temple's seven-branched menorah. This is really up to you. After lighting the candles, the woman covers her eyes with her hands and recites the following blessing: ***"Blessed are You, Lord our God, King of the universe, Who has made us holy through His commandments and commanded us to kindle the Sabbath light"***. After the blessing, some women add a silent prayer for the family. Only after the blessing is recited, the woman uncovers her eyes and looks at the light. By covering her eyes, the woman can focus more fully on the blessing and can postpone the enjoyment of the fruits of the blessing (seeing the light) until after the blessing is recited.

The "*Kiddush*" Prayer is recited at the beginning of a festive meal on the Shabbat or the Holidays. The prayer describes the specific symbolism of the holiday - e.g. Pesach is the "Time of our Freedom," Shavuot

is the "Time of the Giving of the Torah," Shabbat is the "Day which was first to be called 'Holy,' commemorating both the Creation of the Universe and the Exodus from Egypt. The Kiddush contains, as well, information as to who is responsible for the conferring of the quality of "holiness" upon the day. In the case of Shabbat, on one hand, it was God Himself, Who made the Day holy, whereas it is the Jewish People that has been charged with the responsibility by the Torah and by its Author, to confer the holiness upon them, by means of establishing the calendar.

Shabbat is such a special time that it has been likened to the Messianic Age. A well-known *midrash* expresses this thought:

When God was about to give the Torah to the Jewish people, God summoned the people and said to them: "My children, I have something precious that I would like to give you for all time, if you will accept My Torah and observe My commandments." The people then asked: "Ruler of the universe, what is that precious gift You have for us?" The Holy One, blessed be God, replied: "It is the world-to-come (the Messianic Age)!" The people of Israel answered: "Show us a sample of the world-to-come." The Holy One, blessed be God, said: "The Shabbat is a sample of the world-to-come, for that world will be one long Shabbat."

THE SABBATH AND THE CONCEPT OF THE MESSIAH

The Sabbath is an appropriate time to talk about the Jewish view of the Messiah. The word "messiah" is derived from the Hebrew word *mashiach*, which literally means "anointed one." In the days of the Bible, anointing a person with oil was a way of declaring him king. **Thus, messiah means king-a flesh-and-blood king, NOT a divine being.**

Messianic expectations developed over time. In the fully developed form of this idea, the Messiah would

- establish himself as the king,
- gain independence for the Jewish people in their own land,
- be an ideal king, and
- with God's help, establish peace, justice, and brotherhood-not only for the Jews, but for all the world.

Throughout Jewish history, there were a number of individuals who claimed to be the Messiah. **While each of these people gained some following at first, none of them-including Jesus fulfilled the messianic expectations. Thus, in Judaism, no one has been accepted as the Messiah (not yet that is).**

The early Church realized that Jesus did not do all that was expected of the Messiah. It insisted that he would return to earth someday to complete the task. This doctrine is known as the "Second Coming of Christ." **Judaism, to whom the Messiah was promised and to whom the Prophets wrote promising the future redeemer, has maintained that, as long as the "true" messianic expectations as written in the Hebrew Scriptures and not those forged in the Christian Old and New Testaments remain unfulfilled, the Messianic Age is still a hope for the future.**

Incidentally, knowledgeable Jews don't refer to Jesus as "Christ" since "Christ" is a title meaning "anointed one," and Jews do not believe that Jesus was the Anointed One. Though Jesus has no role whatsoever in Judaism, most Jews would say that he was a fine teacher whose teachings have had a considerable influence on the world. **A good deal of what he taught was basic Judaism and a good deal portrayed about his life and teachings put into his mouth by the Gentile Church are reflective of Sun Worship and are idolatrous. It takes a comprehensive knowledge of Sun Worship and its variations as well as great deal of knowledge of Judaism to discern the difference when reading the New Testament texts. This**

takes time and hard study.

In rabbinic literature, there was some speculation about personal characteristics of the Messiah. However, great importance was placed on what would be the results of the coming of the Messiah-the Messianic Age. Reform and Conservative Jews generally emphasize the Messianic Age rather than a personal Messiah. The Messianic Age can be compared to a jigsaw puzzle. **Each individual has a piece of the Messiah within.** We have to put all our pieces together if we want to build a better world. In other words "the Christ" dwells within us all and when we surrender to the rule and reign of God within then through our influence and our efforts a better world has the hope to come.

THE SABBATH AND CREATION AND RE-CREATION

Shabbat is a day of rest. However, it's not just a day to sleep late. The paradigm for Sabbath rest can be found in Genesis 2:1-3: *"The heaven and the earth were finished, and all their array. On the seventh day God finished the work which He had been doing, and He ceased [rested] on the seventh day from all the work which He had done. And God blessed the seventh day and declared it holy, because on it God ceased [rested] from all the work of creation which He had done."* Thus the pattern of work and rest is woven into the very fabric of the universe. Rest means more than physical cessation of work. It implies taking oneself out of the ordinary, out of the routine, out of the rat race. This kind of rest gives us the opportunity to re-create our spirit and restore our soul. *Shabbat* is a time that is set aside to take notice of the wonders around us.

This thought is echoed in a Sabbath eve reading in *Gates of Prayer*, the prayer book of the Reform movement:

There are days when we seek things for ourselves and measure failure by what we do not gain. On the Sabbath we seek not to acquire but to share. There are days when we exploit nature as if it were a horn of plenty that can never be exhausted. On the Sabbath we stand in wonder before the mystery of creation. There are days when we act as if we cared nothing for the rights of others. On the Sabbath we are reminded that justice is our duty and a better world our goal. (Gates of Prayer, pp. 177-178)

"THE SABBATH" ...COMMANDED IN THE TEN COMMANDMENTS

Not only is the Sabbath an integral part of the Creation story, it is the only holiday mentioned in the Ten Commandments. The Ten Commandments actually appear twice in the Bible. The Sabbath commandment is formulated somewhat differently in each instance.

Remember the sabbath day and keep it holy. Six days you shall labor and do all your work, but the seventh day is a sabbath of the Lord your God: you shall not do any work- you, your son or daughter, your male or female slave, or your cattle, or the stranger who is within your settlements. For in six days the Lord made heaven and earth and sea, and all that is in them, and He rested on the seventh day; therefore the Lord blessed the sabbath day and hallowed it. (Exodus 20:8-11)

Observe the sabbath day and keep it holy, as the Lord your God has commanded you. Six days you shall labor and do all your work, but the seventh day is a sabbath of the Lord your God: you shall not do any work-you, your son or your daughter, your male or female slave, your ox or your ass, or any of your cattle, or the stranger in your settlements, so that your male and female slave may rest as you do. Remember that you were a slave in the land of Egypt and the Lord your God freed you from there with a mighty hand and an outstretched arm; therefore the Lord your God has commanded you to observe the sabbath day. (Deuteronomy 5:12-15)

These passages, while essentially the same, point out two different aspects of Shabbat. Exodus tells us to remember the Sabbath while Deuteronomy stresses the observance of the day. Furthermore, each passage gives a different rationale for Shabbat. Exodus reminds us that on Shabbat we rejoice in the creation of the physical universe. Deuteronomy points out that we must remember the Exodus from Egypt. In so doing, we are cognizant of the freedom we enjoy.

THE SABBATH, THE COVENANT, AND CHOSENNESS

Shabbat is also seen as a sign of a covenant between God and the Jewish people.

Answer for yourself: You might be, as a non-Jew asking "What has that to do with me"?

Everything when you consider that the Hebrew Scriptures are full of examples of non-Jews observing and keeping the Sabbath. If you were diligent to study the other articles on this website regarding the Sabbath and its connection with non-Jews long before the Jewish nation existed then you saw that Divine Revelation was given to the non-Jew long before Moses and the Jewish Bible whereby in obedience the non-Jew observed and kept the Sabbath. This as well as Isa. 56 which invites all non-Jews to *"choose those things that please God"* are many of the examples whereby God's Sabbath was one of the things a Gentile can voluntarily observe and keep in his life as we see in the following verses:

Isa 56:1-6 1 Thus saith the LORD, Keep ye judgment, and do justice: for my salvation is near to come, and my righteousness to be revealed. 2 Blessed is the man that doeth this, and the son of man that layeth hold on it; that keepeth the sabbath from polluting it, and keepeth his hand from doing any evil. 3 Neither let the son of the stranger, that hath joined himself to the LORD, speak, saying, The LORD hath utterly separated me from his people: neither let the eunuch say, Behold, I am a dry tree. 4 For thus saith the LORD unto the eunuchs (non-Jews) that keep my sabbaths, and choose the things that please me, and take hold of my covenant; 5 Even unto them will I give in mine house and within my walls a place and a name better than of sons and of daughters: I will give them an everlasting name, that shall not be cut off. 6 Also the sons of the stranger, that join themselves to the LORD, to serve him, and to love the name of the LORD, to be his servants, every one that keepeth the sabbath from polluting it, and taketh hold of my covenant; (KJV)

The Hebrew words of Exodus 31:16-17, sung at *Shabbat* services, emphasize the convenantal relationship: *"The Israelite people shall keep the sabbath, observing the sabbath throughout the ages as a covenant for all time: it shall be a sign for all time between Me and the people of Israel. For in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, and on the seventh day He ceased from work and was refreshed."*

Classic Jewish theology from the Bible onward has maintained that a special relationship exists between God and the Jewish people. This idea, referred to as the Chosen People concept, is one of the most misunderstood concepts within Judaism. Chosenness does *not* mean that Judaism teaches that Jews are better than everybody else in the world; it does *not* mean that Jews are elected for salvation. Judaism does not deny that God's love extends to all humanity. In fact, it affirms God's universal love in these words from the Midrash: *"I call heaven and earth to witness: Gentile or Jew, man or woman, manservant or maidservant-all according to our deeds does the spirit of God rest upon us."*

Answer for yourself: What, then, does chosenness imply? The traditional understanding is that God chose to establish a particular relationship with a certain individual, Abraham, and his descendants. The covenant, or agreement, between God and the Jewish people was that they, God and the Jewish people-would be loyal to one another.

The Torah says that, when God gave the commandments to the people of Israel, the people responded: ***"All that the Lord has spoken we will do and we will hear."*** (*Exodus 24:7*) Jews have never been satisfied to take the biblical text at face value but have always delved deeply into all of its ramifications.

The result of this process of delving is called *midrash*. For instance, when reading about the Israelites accepting the commandments so readily, our ancient rabbis wondered: "How might this have happened?" Two of the answers they came up with shed light on the concept of chosenness.

According to one interpretation, the Israelites were not God's first choice to receive the Torah. In fact, God had offered it to many other nations, but each of them had refused it. Only the Israelites were willing to say: ***"All that the Lord has spoken we will do and we will hear"***; only they would accept the obligations of the covenant. In other words, the Jews were chosen, but they were not the first choice.

The second interpretation presents a much different view. In this *midrash*, the Israelites weren't all that willing to accept the Torah. Only when God threatened to drop Mount Sinai on them if they refused the Torah did they respond: ***"All that the Lord has spoken we will do and we will hear."*** In this version, the **people at Sinai, who were a mixed multitude of Israelites and Egyptian non-Jews by the way**, may have felt that they were not adequate to the task, but they were compelled to rise to the challenge. **So they "chose" to be "chosen" (see Isa. 56 again).**

Very frankly, even after considering these interpretations of chosenness, some Jews are still not completely comfortable with the notion. So they interpret the concept more broadly. Rather than speaking in terms of God choosing the Jews, they understand chosenness to mean that the Jews chose God and the way of Torah.

For some Jews, even this interpretation is not acceptable. The Reconstructionist movement, for instance, rejects the notion of chosenness entirely and has changed those prayers that refer to chosenness.

CREATING SHABBATH IN THE HOME

Much of our discussion up to this point has focused on concepts relating to *Shabbat*, **but *Shabbat* truly becomes what it was meant to be as we bring it into our lives. We begin to create a *Shabbat* atmosphere by doing things in our home. The Rabbis teach that in the wake of the destruction of the Temple and the Altar then one's table in one's home becomes literally your "altar" with God.**

One prepares the house for *Shabbat* by cleaning it and putting it in order. This may seem like a monumental task sometimes, but there are ways to get it done. For instance, this task can be shared or accomplished over several evenings. Playing Jewish music while you clean can help create the *Shabbat* mood, and you can learn a lot of Jewish songs in the process. There are some great cassettes and CDs which deal with the Sabbath and can be found on the Internet or through your Synagogue bookstores. Bringing in some fresh flowers makes the house seem to have a more Sabbath atmosphere which just speaks "life".

Friday night is a time for a special meal. This does not mean that the meal has to be expensive and elaborate. It should be special because of the love and care taken in its preparation and presentation. There are some foods that are traditional for *Shabbat*. Jews of Eastern European (Ashkenazic) background generally eat gefilte fish or chopped liver, chicken soup with *matzah* balls or noodles, roast chicken or brisket of beef, noodle or potato *kugel*, and *chalah*. Jews of Mediterranean (Sephardic) background eat foods that differ markedly. Some *Shabbat* favorites include fish with egg and lemon sauce, eggplant salad, lamb roast, stuffed grape leaves, and white rice.

While these are traditional foods, you should not feel restricted to these. You can experiment or use your own favorites.

The table should be set as befits a visit by a queen since *Shabbat* is metaphorically seen as a queen. Place on the table an attractive cloth or place mats and your finest dishes and flatware. Also, on the table (or on a nearby table) should be placed candlesticks and candles, a *Kiddush* cup and wine, one or two *chalot* covered with a *chalah* cover or napkin, and salt. If you don't make your own *chalah* (egg bread) you can go to various grocery stores in your city and purchase these special breaks before Sabbath observances.



Shabbat is welcomed by a ceremony at the table prior to the meal. **While the ceremony formally begins with the lighting of *Shabbat* candles, many people follow the custom of dropping some coins into a *pushke* (*tsedakah* box) first. While *tsedakah* is often translated as "charity," it doesn't really mean charity. The word is based on a Hebrew root meaning "righteousness" or "justice."** The *mitzvah* (a religious obligation, which flows from the covenantal relationship between the Jewish people and God) of *tsedakah* places on every Jew the obligation to right the injustices of society. One of the ways we do this is by contributing money to help individuals or groups who are in need themselves or who are engaged in helping others. While this may sound just like charity, it differs radically. There is no Hebrew word corresponding to what is expressed by the English word "charity." The crucial difference is in the attitude with which *tsedakah* is given. It is not seen as an act by which one who is superior gives to one who is inferior. Nor is it something done out of love, as charity is. Rather, in order for us to be fully human, it is *incumbent* upon us to give and to give in such a way as to preserve the dignity of the recipient. Moses Maimonides, a great medieval philosopher, likened the giving of *tsedakah* to the rungs of a ladder. The lowest rung is giving grudgingly. A higher rung is to give anonymously. The very highest rung is to give in such a way as to enable the recipient to become independent.

There is a system of Hebrew numerology called *gematria* in which every Hebrew letter has a numerical equivalent. The Hebrew word for life, *chai*, consists of letters equaling 18 (*chet* = 8 and *yod* = 10). Therefore, *tsedakah* is often given in multiples of eighteen (\$18, \$36, \$180, \$360, etc.). By giving *tsedakah*, our goal is to enhance the lives of others.

It is customary to light at least two candles to welcome the Sabbath. One explanation for this is that **each candle reminds us of one of the ways we are enjoined to celebrate the Sabbath ("Remember" and "Observe").** Some people light additional candles to represent the children in their family; others light one additional candle for each child in the family. The majority, however, simply light two candles. **It is traditional for the woman of the house to light these candles and recite the blessing over them. If there is no woman, then the man lights the candles. In some families, the candle blessing is recited by the entire family.**



There are various customs associated with the actual lighting of the candles. **Some women, after kindling the candles, encircle the flames with their hands as a way of spreading the *Shabbat* light and drawing it close to themselves. You will also see some women cover their eyes with their hands after they have encircled the flames, while they say the blessing.** The reason for this is actually a legal fiction. Normally, we recite a blessing before performing the act (such as reciting the blessing for bread before eating the bread). However, the procedure must be reversed when lighting the *Shabbat* candles. **The candles must be lit first since, once the blessing has been said, *Shabbat* has begun and traditionally no fire can be created on *Shabbat*. By covering her eyes and not looking at the candles, it is as if the woman has not yet lit them. After completing the blessing, she removes her hands and looks at the candles as if for the first time. Everyone present then wishes each other "*Shabbat Shalom*" or "*Gut Shabbos*."**

If you are not comfortable lighting the candles in either of these ways, it is perfectly acceptable to light them without placing your hands in front of your eyes. Some women choose to cover their eyes simply because it is a custom even though the rationale behind it is not particularly compelling for them. **In many homes, a special set of candlesticks is set aside for Sabbath use. These may be silver, brass, wood, or ceramic. However, in the absence of specially designated candlesticks, you may use any candlesticks.**

Scripture teaches that wine gladdens the human heart. We use wine for every special occasion. **Each Sabbath and festival is welcomed and sanctified with a blessing over wine.** Traditionally, kosher grape wine is used, but in some homes non-kosher wine is used. **The wine for Kiddush is usually poured into a special Kiddush cup, which can be ceramic, glass, pewter, silver, etc. In the absence of a special Kiddush cup, any glass or goblet may be used.**

The blessing over wine is called Kiddush. It is traditionally recited or chanted by the man of the house or by a guest. If there is no man present, a woman should say the *Kiddush*. In some homes, the entire family chants the *Kiddush* together. In addition to blessing God as the Creator of the fruit of the vine, the *Kiddush* also thanks God for the holiness of *Shabbat*. It states that *Shabbat* is a reminder of both Creation and the Exodus. As we say the *Kiddush* we think of the Creation story and the Garden of Eden, a paradigm of the perfect time that was. We think, too, of the Exodus, the time that signaled the Jew's redemption from servitude. Even as we look back to these events, we look forward to a time that will combine redemption and paradise-the Messianic Age. Before we drink the wine, we wish each other "*Lechayim*" (to life).

THE KIDDUSH OVER THE WINE

The following is recited over the wine:

On the sixth day, heaven and the earth were finished, and all their host. And on the seventh day the Lord perfected the work which He had made; and on the seventh day, He ceased from the work which He had made. And the Lord blessed the seventh day and He sanctified it, because thereon He ceased from the work of creation which He had made.

Praised be Thou, O Lord our God, King of the universe, Creator of the fruit of the vine.

Praised be Thou, Lord our God, who has hallowed us with Thy commandments, and hast favored us with the gracious gift of the Sabbath as our loving inheritance, in remembrance of the work of creation. The Sabbath is also first among the days of holy assembly, which recall our freedom from the bondage of Egypt. From among the nations Thou hast selected us for a service of holiness, and in love Thou hast given us Thy holy Sabbath as our heritage. Praised be Thou, O Lord, who hallowest the Sabbath.

During the Kiddush, the chalah is covered with a decorated chalah cover or, in its absence, with a white napkin. There is a reason often cited for this custom: At meals during the week, the blessing before eating is recited over bread. On *Shabbat*, before the blessing over bread, a much longer blessing-the *Kiddush*-is recited over wine. Unwilling to hurt the feelings of the bread by focusing all this attention on the wine, we cover the bread to avoid embarrassing it.

At first, this explanation may seem fanciful or even fatuous, but in fact it teaches a lesson in human relations. **If we are called upon to concern ourselves with the feelings of a loaf of bread, how much more must we care about the feelings of our fellow human beings and be cognizant of how our words and actions affect them.**

The blessing of God for the "bread" follows the blessing of God for the "wine".

Praised be Thou, O Lord our God, King of the universe, who brings forth the bread from the earth

As an associated thought, the *Chalah*, a twisted egg bread, sometimes covered with sesame or poppy seeds, is the bread that is used for *Shabbat*. In Eastern Europe, weekday bread was very coarse while *chalah*-the *Shabbat* bread-was light and fine, made from more expensive flour. Some people set two *chalot* on the table as a

reminder of the double portion of manna gathered by the Israelites on the day before the Sabbath. The Bible tells us that, during the wandering in the wilderness after the Exodus, God provided for all the physical needs of the Israelites. God provided a food called manna, which the people gathered daily. Since work was prohibited on Shabbat, and gathering manna would be considered work, God provided a double portion of manna on the day before the Sabbath to last them through Shabbat.

The blessing over bread, called the *Motzi*, thanks God "who brings forth (*hamotzi*) bread from the earth." Some people sprinkle the *chalah* with salt after making the blessing and before eating the bread. One explanation for this is that in Roman times salt was a very valuable commodity, available only to free people. By eating salt on Shabbat, we emphasize that we are free people serving God. Another explanation is that, since the destruction of the Temple in the year 70, the home has become "a small sanctuary" and the table an altar. After the destruction of the Temple the Rabbis adopted the principle of bringing the Temple home and transferring much of the Temple ritual around the altar to our table in order to maintain the bond and unity of the Jewish people. Since the sacrifices were offered with salt, having salt on the table links us to our past. The home as sanctuary and the table as altar are underscored further by the tradition of speaking words of Torah at the table. In a Jewish home, mealtime should be more than a time for simply meeting one's physical needs; it should be a time for spiritual nourishment as well. A well-known talmudic statement teaches that, if three people sit at a meal and exchange words of Torah, it is as if the Divine Presence dwelt among them.

The Jewish blessing before a meal is a very brief one. A lengthier blessing is reserved for after the meal. This follows the biblical statement:

"When you have eaten your fill, give thanks to the Lord your God. . . ." (Deuteronomy 8:10)

There are several passages inserted into the blessing after the meal (*Birkat Hamazon*) that are only said on *Shabbat*. One of these prays for the coming of the time that will be entirely like *Shabbat-the Messianic Age*. Once again on this day of peace our thoughts are turned to the hoped-for redemption of the future.

Shabbat has another important element. It is a time of togetherness and joining-a time to be with friends and with family, taking time to appreciate each other. It is a nice custom to invite guests for *Shabbat*. Many people offer a word of appreciation to members of the family and friends at the Sabbath table and again blessings are recited for the children and the husband and wife.

This might take the form of a husband reading Proverbs 31 to his wife and a parental blessing to the children. Some wives read Psalm 112 to their husbands. Shabbat is a time of union and harmony. Some Jews read verses from Song of Songs (a collection of beautiful love poems found in the Bible) on Shabbat. It is considered a mitzvah to make love on Shabbat, and it is said that God is present when husband and wife make love.

CELEBRATING SHABBAT IN THE SYNAGOGUE

Another very important aspect of *Shabbat* is community. The community gathers for worship each *Shabbat*, reaffirming our covenantal tie to God and to one another. Some synagogues have their major Sabbath service on Friday evening while others have it on Saturday morning. It is not uncommon for non-Jews, wishing to enter into the worship of God as a Jew like Jesus in the first century would have worshiped, to attend regularly the Synagogue. It is in the synagogue that you see first hand this "Pattern of Worship" as you learn that the Sabbath service consists of prayers and readings in Hebrew and English (the amount of Hebrew and English varies from synagogue to synagogue), songs, a Torah reading, and a talk. In many temples, after *Shabbat* evening services there is an *Oneg Shabbat* (joy of the Sabbath) at which refreshments are served and there is an opportunity to socialize. It is in these times that I found that my learning of the Jewish people and the worship of God would grow by leaps and bounds. Sometimes Israeli dancing or a discussion takes

place during the *Oneg*. Following Shabbat morning services, there is a *Kiddush* in the synagogue. After the blessings over the wine and the bread, people exchange *Shabbat* greetings.

One of the things that makes this day so special is that we eat so well. Many people have a large meal following the morning service and another smaller meal (*seudah shelishit*) before sunset.

Answer for yourself: What is the term reserved for the 3 meals; the one on Friday evening, Shabbath morning and Shabbat afternoons? This is the original "**Lord's Supper**" which has been wrenched from its historical context setting and renamed to describe Christian communion practices of "eating the god" with "wafers" or "crackers" and "grape juice". **We have strayed so far from the truth due to the antisemitism of Rome it is not funny.**

THE CLOSING OF THE SABBATH AND THE HAVDALAH SERVICE

Just as there is a ceremony welcoming *Shabbat*, so there is one to mark its conclusion. It is called **Havdalah, which means "separation."** **The ceremony takes place on Saturday night after sunset.** It consists of blessings over wine, spices, and a braided candle. While it resembles the Friday night ceremony in many ways, there are some differences as well. Wine is used at both ceremonies. Two candles and a braided *chalah* are used on Friday night while, on Saturday night, one braided candle with many wicks is used. The new element in the ceremony is the blessing of **sweet-smelling spices**. There is an explanation offered for this ceremony. Because *Shabbat* is such a special day, each Jew receives an extra soul at the beginning of the Sabbath, which departs at the end of *Shabbat*. To revive one, because we've lost this extra soul, one smells spices at *Havdalah*, bringing some of the sweetness of the Sabbath with oneself into the week. The climax of the ritual is when the candle is doused in the wine, and one stands in the darkness of the new week. But the darkness is not one of hopelessness; it is a time when we confront the new week with a vision of what we must do to bring about a better world. We sing the song of the prophet Elijah, symbol of the messianic future.

STUDY AS A FORM OF WORSHIP

Rest and worship are two essential elements of Shabbat. There is a third one that is of equal importance-study. *Shabbat* affords us time in which to direct our energies toward spiritual matters. Study is an appropriate way to observe *Shabbat*. In fact, **in Judaism study is considered a form of worship; in fact it is considered the highest form of worship!** Study is done publicly at services by means of the Torah reading and its explanation, and privately by reading and discussing materials from Jewish books, magazines, and newspapers with family and friends.

Upon being exposed to the concepts and ideals of *Shabbat* for the first time, a student in one of our Introduction to Judaism classes wrote:

"Shabbat, like Judaism, is a cornucopia of delight and joy for those who are willing to make the effort to find them; individual paths are different but they lead eventually, for those who pursue them, to an eminently worthwhile end: a foretaste of the Messianic Age."

The principle of Shabbat is to sanctify time. The whole of *Shabbat* is greater than the sum of its parts. It is more than lighting candles, drinking wine, or attending a service. We sanctify *Shabbat* by setting it apart, making it distinctive, and differentiating it from the rest of the days in our week. As Abraham Joshua Heschel has written: ***"Six days a week we live under the tyranny of things of space; on the Sabbath we try to become attuned to holiness in time."*** (Abraham J. Heschel, *The Sabbath*, p. 8).

Now having been as a non-Jew introduced to the facts that non-Jews long before the Jewish nation existed recognized, observed, and sanctified this special times, the Sabbath, with God then let us move past the

information into a form that can be adapted for your own homes Sabbath service.

[Now let us examine the Bet Emet Home Sabbath Service.](#) Shalom.



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THE SABBATH OBSERVANCE FOR THE NON-JEW

We all have experienced moments and special times when the perfection of the world is revealed to us. You might remember a certain walk on the beautiful white sand beach, the breathtaking smell of the surf, a spectacular "fiery" sunset, or the cool mist of a summer thunderstorm that cools the heat of summer. You might remember the first time you meet the one who would be your spouse and the look of their eyes as you first met. So often these moments take us by surprise, like rainbows and we are not prepared for them and they come and go before we often have time to "take them in". Sometimes, however, we are masters of our lives and can engineer these special times like birthdays and anniversaries and vacations or reunions.

We are given the opportunity to create these special times and of them all special times with God should come first and there is no better example than I can think of then "Creating Shabbath". Shabbat is the way a child of God, especially the Jewish people, arrange their lives to stay in touch with what is perfect in the world on a regular basis.

Shabbat, the Hebrew word for **Sabbath**, has been described a thousand ways and it is the only day of the week with a Hebrew name at all; the others are merely numbered in relation to *Shabbat*: the first day, the second day, the third day. In Yiddish, it is pronounced *Shabbes*.

The apparently simple idea that one day out of seven should be devoted to rest and reflection has always been a radical concept. [Its earliest practice challenged the ancient world](#), where labor was the lot of beasts and slaves, and leisure was the privilege of the rich and powerful. **Today, when the hum of the machines and computers never stop, when everyone has too much to do and not enough time in which to finish, Shabbat continues to pose fundamental questions about values and the value of life.** For all of mankind today who look toward the 21st century, the challenge of *Shabbat* is literally radical, recalling our imaginative roots-the biblical story of creation. Please try to understand the depth of what was just said as this is not just a "Jewish thing" but a human-kind issue that affects us all.

Gen. 2:1-3 1 ¶ And the heaven and the earth were finished, and all the host of them. 2 And on the seventh day God finished His work which He had made; and He rested on the seventh day from all His work which He had made. 3 And God blessed the seventh day, and hallowed it; because that in it He rested from all His work which God in creating had made.

To the Talmudic rabbis who interpreted these words, the story does not mean that on the seventh day God rolled over, pulled up the covers, and went back to sleep. In their view, only after the seventh day- Shabbat-came into being, was the world completed, and perfect.

SHABBAT...WHAT SHOULD IT MEAN TO THE NON-JEW?

"The meaning of the Sabbath," wrote Rabbi Abraham Joshua Heschel, "is to celebrate time rather than space. Six days a week we live under the tyranny of things of space; on the Sabbath we try to become attuned to holiness in time. It is a day on which we are called upon to share in what is eternal in

time, to turn from the results of creation to the mystery of creation; from the world of creation to the creation of the world" (Abraham Heschel, The Sabbath (New York: Farrar Stratus and Girous, 1951), p. 10).

Millions of words have been written about the meaning of *Shabbat* in language ranging from legal to ecstatic. It has been associated with virtually all the great themes of Judaism: freedom, covenant, peace, and redemption. Sections of the *Shabbat* liturgy recall the time when the Jews were slaves in Egypt (Deut. 5:12). **And although *Shabbat* celebrates freedom, it is also a reminder of the contrast between slavery and freedom.**

Answer for yourself: Are there more things in life to which we fall into bondage to other than Pharoahs? Yes there certainly in as described above. *Anything that robs us of the "quality" of our lives, that detracts from our personal and spiritual developement, or that takes separates us from our families has to be seen as a threat to our very existence and such areas of our lives that are "out of balanced" prevents us from not only creating but enjoying God's Sabbaths in our lives.* The Jewish notion of freedom entails both political and personal responsibilities; the mandate to work for the liberation of all oppressed people, and the task of **remaining free from enslavement to false idols, such as wealth, greed, power, and fame.**

Answer for yourself: Is Shabath a Covenant in itself? Yes.

Shabbat is called a covenant between God and His children; both Jews and non-Jews as well. We have shown on this website that before the Jewish nation accepted themselves the Sabbath we find that **prior to Moses that non-Jewish nations of the world recognized and observed the Sabbath.** We find multiple **examples of non-Jews observing the Sabbath both in the Heberw Scriptures and Old Testament** as well as **long after the time of Jesus in the New Testament as well.** We find historical evidence that **non-Jewsish believers observed the Sabbath for many centuries as well.** Of course this is long before **Emperor Constantine who will outlaw and change the Sabbath to "Sunday"; the day of the Sun and Sun Worship.**

The Sabbath is all about relationship; our relationship with our Creator God. **Relationships among people cannot be verified by the senses or by reason; therefore we give each other tokens of these relationships like wedding rings or commemorative cards or gifts at special times or at "appointed times" that mark our relationship between each other. We do the same with God and His "appointed times". Shabbat is the token between God and the people of Israel (both Jews and non-Jews make up the Israel of God).**

Ezekiel 20:12 12 Moreover also I gave them My sabbaths, to be a sign between Me and them, that they might know that I am the LORD that sanctify them. 13 But the house of Israel rebelled against Me in the wilderness; they walked not in My statutes, and they rejected Mine ordinances, which if a man do, he shall live by them, and My sabbaths they greatly profaned; then I said I would pour out My fury upon them in the wilderness, to consume them.

The above verse should give us much to think about and reflect in our lives of just how much "less" of God we have in our lives today than we could because we like they observe not, keep not, and "profane God's Sababths".

CREATING SABBATH AND ESTABLISHING OUR COVENEANT WITH GOD

Many Jews will tell you that the Sabbath is just for the Jews. Well I won't go into that here but let me say in passing that many "fences" were created down through history and various interpretations of texts were "imposed" upon non-Jews to keep them apart from Jews because in so doing Israel sanctified herself from the

sins and negative influence of the non-Jew upon the righteous Jew.

1 Cor 5:6 6 .. Know ye not that a little leaven leaveneth the whole lump? (KJV)

In such a spirit of sanctification many interpretations of religious texts were imposed upon the non-Jew in order to keep them at arms length from the Jews to lessen their negative and corrupting influence upon the nation. For let us not forget what the New Testament tell us about the non-Jew:

Eph 2:11-12 11 Wherefore remember, that ye being in time past Gentiles in the flesh, who are called Uncircumcision by that which is called the Circumcision in the flesh made by hands; 12 That at that time ye were without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope, and without God in the world: (KJV)

That being the case I can understand why the Jews did not want to associate with such people but in spite of all of this the Jewish nation is yet God's Holy Nation and Royal Priesthood and their calling is to do just that; be an intermediate between God and mankind. I said all of that to say this: the Covenant of the Sabbath, as shown in the above references articles, is offered to the non-Jew again in Isa. 56:

Isa. 56:1-6 1 ¶ Thus saith the LORD: Keep ye justice, and do righteousness; for My salvation is near to come, and My favour to be revealed. 2 Happy is the man that doeth this, and the son of man that holdeth fast by it: that keepeth the sabbath from profaning it, and keepeth his hand from doing any evil. 3 ¶ Neither let the alien, that hath joined himself to the LORD, speak, saying: 'The LORD will surely separate me from His people'; neither let the eunuch say (a non-Jew): 'Behold, I am a dry tree.' 4 For thus saith the LORD concerning the eunuchs that keep My sabbaths, and choose the things that please Me, and hold fast by My covenant: 5 Even unto them will I give in My house and within My walls a monument and a memorial better than sons and daughters; I will give them an everlasting memorial, that shall not be cut off. 6 Also the aliens (non-Jews), that join themselves to the LORD, to minister unto Him, and to love the name of the LORD, to be His servants, every one that keepeth the sabbath from profaning it, and holdeth fast by My covenant:

So we see that God invites the non-jew to "choose" to take upon himself God's Sabbaths and enter into this Coveaneant with Him.

The essence and responsibility of this covenant of Sabbath is to create wholeness-in Hebrew, **shalom**. *Shabbat* is about making peace with everyone: business associates, strangers, and especially within families. The highest priority is given to reconciliation and loving kindness. Intimacy and sexuality are among the blessings of *Shabbat*.

Finally, *Shabbat* embodies the Jewish **vision of redemption**. As God created and rested on the seventh day when His creation is "perfect" then we likewish should observe the 7th day (the Sabbath) as prophetic of the perfection that awaits us in the World to Come. Therefore the Sabbath is a picture of this Eternal Day of perfection that awaits us and we should behave on this day accordingly. Observing *Shabbat* fully means behaving as if the world were redeemed, complete, safe, and perfect **right now**. *Shabbat* is the opportunity to focus on what is right with the world, and thus to be refreshed to do the work of redemption: repairing the world (*tikkun olam*). It is a day where we recognize more than ever that we are the extension of God's perfection as souls trapped in "matter" and within our influence and through our "choices" we have the opportunity to bring that which is around us that exists in "chaos" into "harmony" and produce "shalom" where we go! We can bring Sabbath with us and produce it by our choices where we go!

Indeed, the Talmud says that if everyone on earth were to observe two consecutive Sabbaths, the whole world would be redeemed (Talmud: Shabbat 118b).

A SHORT HISTORY

The word *Shabbat* appears almost two hundred times in the Bible (the Hebrew Bible, which consists of the Torah (or Pentateuch), the Prophets, and the Writings). The earliest mention of Sabbath rest is found in Exodus, when the Israelites who have escaped from Egyptian slavery are told to gather a double portion of manna on the sixth day so they do not have to work on the seventh (Exodus 16). By the time of the first Temple, (the 10th century B.C.E.), **Shabbat was associated with joy as well as rest.** The prophet Isaiah said, "And you should call the Sabbath a delight" (Isa. 58:13).

Isa. 58:13 13 ¶ If thou turn away thy foot because of the sabbath, from pursuing thy business on My holy day; and call the sabbath a delight, and the holy of the LORD honourable; and shalt honour it, not doing thy wonted ways, nor pursuing thy business, nor speaking thereof;

During the second Temple period (the first century CE.), the nature of *Shabbat* was the subject of an intense and passionate debate whose outcome has shaped subsequent Jewish practice. Among the sect known as the Sadducees, *Shabbat* was given an extremely ascetic interpretation: virtually all movement and all indoor illumination were forbidden. However, the Pharisees (forerunners of the rabbis) permitted far more latitude, declaring *Shabbat* laws moot in cases of helping the sick or saving a life. **The Pharisees also made the lighting of candles on Friday night a precept that developed into the most evocative of all Jewish rituals** (Hayyim Schauss, *The Jewish Festivals* (New York: Schocken Books, 1962), pp. 11-12). **After the destruction of the second Temple by the Romans in 70 C.E., Shabbat observance came under the purview of rabbis, who have been interpreting and debating its meaning and practice ever since.**

Although *Shabbat* has been a constant feature of Jewish life throughout history, **Sabbath observance changed over time, and varies among Jews living in different lands.** Regardless of the particulars, however, **Shabbat has always been experienced as different from all the other days.**

Ex. 20:8 Remember the sabbath day, to keep it holy.

Key to the above verse is the idea of "remembering". Now at times I hear negative comments by Christians regarding the Rabbinic injunction to "light Sabbath candles" as being a man-made law. Forgetting that the Scriptures give the spiritual overseers of Israel (the Rabbis today) the right and authority to "bind and loose" we often speak out of turn regarding such things. Candle lighting is but a vehicle whereby one "marks this time" apart from other times and sanctifies this time before and with God thereby demonstrating before God that you "remembers" this special holy "appointed time" with God. The lighting of candles is something not done on other nights and doing so on Friday evenings sanctifies this "special appointed time with God" apart from all other nights of the week and in so doing you have chosen to make this special time "holy" before God and you demonstrate that you "remember" it as commanded by Moses in the Ten Commandments.

Shabbat is the day for wearing new clothes, for inviting guests to share the best meal of the week, for singing at the table, and for giving and receiving blessings. Jewish life and Jewish time are oriented around *Shabbat*, which takes precedence over almost everything else and there are many lessons we non-Jews need to learn from our Jewish brothers and sisters. Jewish weddings are not permitted on the Sabbath and neither are funerals; *Shabbat* is meant to be savored on its own, undiluted by other celebrations and unclouded, as much as possible, even by death since its theme is "wholeness" and "the perfect life to come" in Eternity.

Jews have often suffered for their loyalty to *Shabbat*. Antiochus Epiphanes, the villain of the Hannukah story, outlawed *Shabbat* and many Jews died defying his order. Marranos (Jews who publicly converted to Christianity during the Spanish Inquisition but practiced Judaism in secret) lit *Shabbat* candles in their cellars

(Samuel Dresner, *The Sabbath* (New York: The Burning Bush Press, 1970), p. 66). And there are heart-wrenching stories of Sabbaths remembered and observed in the darkness of Hitler's death camps.

WE MUST CHOOSE SHABBAT

The first appearance of *Shabbat* in the Torah is as a verb, *shavat*. "*And God ceased/rested/stopped.*"

Shabbat is recreated weekly; Jews make Shabbat and we as non-Jews have the same opportunity.

The first verb for most Jews today, however, is not "make" but "choose."

Isa 56:4 4 For thus saith the LORD unto the eunuchs that keep my sabbaths, and choose the things that please me, and take hold of my covenant; (KJV)

And choosing *Shabbat* is not one decision, but many. Choosing Shabbat means making a commitment to a weekly period of rest and peace. It means making distinctions between activities that are Shabbat-like from those that are work-week-like. It means avoiding things that might violate a sense of ease and peace, and planning ways to enhance that feeling.

These choices vary from one household to the next. Some unplug the telephone or turn on their answering machines during *Shabbat*, but some people find telephone conversations with family members and friends are relaxing and appropriate. Though traditionally money is not handled on *Shabbat*, some people make a distinction between shopping at the mall and taking the kids out for ice cream. Because *Shabbat* is often defined in terms of prohibitions against certain kinds of activities, many American Jews have come to think of Sabbath observance as a series of restrictions, a weekly sentence of self-denial. But Shabbat is not a retreat from the world or an exercise in asceticism. Please hear me well: "Making Shabbat is not a matter of refraining, but of doing". The Talmud says "the affairs of heaven" are permitted on the Sabbath; specifically teaching children and arranging weddings. Resting, eating, and praying are not only permitted, but mandated. There are other verbs for *Shabbat*, too; sleeping, reading, thinking, studying, talking, listening, meditating, visiting the sick, laughing, singing, experiencing joy, welcoming guests, making love, etc. Sadly the Sabbath has been given a "bad rap" by those who know not its beauty and how God desires we be "renewed body, soul, and spirit" on this day!!!

But it is not entirely easy to choose even so pleasant and life-giving a discipline as *Shabbat*. All choices have consequences. If Friday night is going to be time at home, that means turning down invitations for dinner and a movie with friends or family. And for chronically over-scheduled people, sitting still for an hour, much less an afternoon, can be a real challenge. However, these are precisely the reasons that many people view *Shabbat* prohibitions less as sacrifices than as opportunities to reorient an overly hectic life around the need for rest, relaxation, and time with family and close friends. Everyone needs and should want this and in God's foreknowledge He made provision for it if we only "choose" it!

This is not a simple change. The decision to start making *Shabbat* requires thought, discussion, planning-and it may entail discomfort and disagreement. Although it is common for one member of a family to be both instigator and guiding force behind a commitment to making *Shabbat*, it is important to include as many family members as possible in the idea. This is rarely a problem with young children, who tend to enjoy the specialness of *Shabbat* for its own sake, and quickly come to look forward to Friday night's magic. For older children, however, beginning *Shabbat* observance may seem restrictive or just plain weird. Parents need to be quite secure in their desire and enthusiasm for *Shabbat*, and they can ease the transition to it by emphasizing the playful and joyful aspects of the day and encouraging children's input as well as their participation.

It is essential for family members to talk not only about how to make *Shabbat*, but also why. Reasons can range from the practical to the mystical: *Shabbat* is something constructive and pleasant the family can do together, it is an opportunity to learn, it is something that Jews and many non-Jews have done for thousands of

years and connects us to our true Biblical heritage, it creates an opportunity to visit with friends and family we otherwise don't see, it is something beautiful and positive we want our children to remember, and it is a way of finding and building community with other Jews.

Regardless of the whys or the ways, however, a commitment to consistency and regularity is essential for *Shabbat* to work. And it is crucial to remember that *Shabbat* is not something you do for or to your family. It is something you make together.

MAKING SHABBATH HAPPEN FOR YOU

While it would be difficult to overemphasize *Shabbat's* intellectual and theological significance, the Jewish Sabbath is not an abstraction or disembodied idea that can be attained through revelation or prayer. ***Shabbat* must be understood in its uniquely Jewish form-as a mitzvah and commandment!**

A *mitzvah* is a command from God, chosen and enacted by people. The *mitzvah* of *Shabbat* is being human in the most humane context that people can imagine and create.

Just as it would be self-defeating for a novice in the kitchen to attempt an elaborate, multicourse dinner, **it is not a good idea to take on every aspect of *Shabbat* observance all at once. I recommend that you "grow" into *Shabbat* as this is how I did it and it worked great for us.**

You have to begin somewhere so I recommend that you start out slow and then progress as you get more comfortable with "choosing and making *Shabbat*". I recommend and most people begin with Friday night table rituals: lighting candles, eating *challah*, singing songs. It may take weeks before even simple acts feel natural, but after a few months of repetition, comfort and a sense of expertise will come.

And just as cooks learn through apprenticeship, the best way to learn how to make *Shabbat* is with and from others. Sharing Friday night meals, attending *Shabbat* dinners with friends only adds to your experience and learning by witnessing and partaking *Shabbat* with others. Let us not forget that in the simple lighting of candles you are sanctifying this appointed time with God and this fulfills the Commandment of Exodus 20:8 so you cannot do it wrong! In time you might wish to go so far as to attend services at different synagogues to further your experience of "choosing *Shabbat*". Other settle for just getting together with friends on Saturday morning or afternoon for Bible studies or just to visit and this provides them with ideas, models, and support for developing a personal *Shabbat* observance. If you are fortunate and open to it you will find that at times some synagogues run *Shabbat* retreats which are usually a weekend at a camp, inn, or estate, where people study, pray, relax, and practice the fine art of making *Shabbat*. The opportunities are endless.

In the next article we will pick up with the second in this series entitled: "Preparing for *Shabbat*".



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THE NON-JEWS PREPARATION FOR THE SABBATH

Shabbat is for many a beautiful vacation from the demands of the week. Like any vacation, it creates a shift in orientation to the whole week. For some people, preparing for *Shabbat* starts with avoiding late-afternoon appointments on Friday and trying to be home early.

Shabbat creates a deadline for finishing up things, for example, getting the house clean, making sure that essential errands have been run, and that *challah*, wine, and flowers have been purchased. A traditional analogy compares making *Shabbat* with inviting a Queen to your home for dinner. In other words, if Queen Elizabeth of England were coming over for the day, you would probably run the vacuum, take out the good china, and fuss over the dinner menu. Well in many ways one greater than Queen Elizabeth is coming to dinner; namely, the Sabbath Queen herself. *Shabbat is compared esoterically to a bride given to us by God, whom we long for her arrival - (source: Talmud Shabbat 119a).*

SHABBAT FOOD

The rituals of Shabbat reinforce family and communal bonds. Shabbat meals are family affairs, prescribing times for families to be together without the distraction of competing schedules or technologies.

Although Jewish law calls for three "feasts" (these 3 meals were originally called "the Lord's Supper) on *Shabbat* to ensure a sense of celebration, it also forbids for the Jewish people the lighting of fires, which traditionally means no cooking. Thus the biggest job of preparing for *Shabbat* tends to be food preparation. Although many Jews do cook on *Shabbat*, preparing even part of Saturday's meals in advance can create more time for relaxing, resting, and playing.

Historically, Friday night dinner has always been the gustatory highlight of the week for Jews, no matter what their financial circumstances. Making this Friday night meal special does not necessarily mean making it elaborate or conforming to the chicken soup and brisket menus of Eastern Europe. Remember it can be simple things done only on this night and not on other nights that fulfills the Commandment to "remember" and "observe" the Sabbath that we find in the Hebrew Scriptures. Some people find that "lighting the candles" or "making the same special meal every Friday night" allows them to sanctify this time like no other night and besides it has advantages; not only is it easier for the cook, it also reinforces the soothing, repetitive ritual nature of the meal and establishes a family tradition. Understand that "this appointed time with God can be made special" by simple things like using a certain tablecloth and flowers on the dining room table which are not used on other nights. Special silverware that is not used on other nights. The recital of the Sabbath blessings again "sanctifies this time" to the exclusion of all other times and makes it "holy" thus fulfilling the Commandment to "remember" and "observe" this special day with God. Ritual objects such as an embroidered cover for the *challah*, special candlesticks used only for Sabbath, and special wine goblets will immediately make a meal an event and also "sanctifies" this time apart from all others. In such ways you have obeyed God and sanctified the Sabbath as commanded. You can make

up your own traditions and in so doing fulfill this mitzvoh.

SLOWING DOWN ON THE SHABBAT

Shabbat releases us from the usual patterns of doing and being and celebrates the sensual, creative parts of us that may be sacrificed during the work week. Celebrating the sensual can be accomplished many ways. There are many ways to do this that are limitless; many simply just lower the lights, some take time to smell as well as taste food, other take time to simply stop and hug and kiss the people they love. In the rush to prepare home and table for *Shabbat*, it is easy to forget the importance of readying yourself. Nothing accomplishes the major shifting of gears from work to rest better than a hot shower or bath. If there is time, meditating, listening to music, and reading something that helps you get "in the mood" are also good ways to unwind. Even a few minutes to wash hands and face, shave, comb your hair, put on perfume, or change clothes can help. Some people get into the spirit of *Shabbat* by listening to special cds and tapes of Shabbat music or other Jewish tapes and records. In fact it does not have to be Jewish music for as you are seeing the Sabbath is given to all mankind. *My rule of thumb is do whatever brings you peace and promotes shalom with and within you!*

Traditionally, one's best and/or new clothes are worn on *Shabbat*. However, if wearing a good dress or suit and tie are the trappings of work, a change into comfortable casual clothes might better facilitate a shift into *Shabbat-mode*. Some people put on the traditional skullcap (*kippah* in Hebrew, *yarmulke* in Yiddish) before beginning Friday night rituals. The choices are endless and there is not "right" or "wrong" thing to do here. Again....follow the shalom/peace.

WHAT ABOUT THE CHILDREN?

Shabbat can easily become a focal point of anticipation and fun for children. Again the choices are endless. The celebration can begin with a baking session or a trip to the bakery for *challah* and other goodies. Setting the *Shabbat* table with children can be both a game and a reward, assigning special jobs to each child: candlesticks and candles for you, the *kiddush* cups for you because you're so grown up and responsible, and so on. Kids can also create *Shabbat* centerpieces of *Legos*, paper flowers or dandelions from the yard. *Shabbat* can inspire all sorts of arts and crafts projects. Because most small children love wearing hats, *kippot* (the plural of *kippah*) can be part of the fun. Some children collect them, and a "custom" *kippah* can be created with some felt, a little glue, and a plain rayon *yarmulke*. To make a Sabbath plate or set of dishes, apply Jewish symbols and lots of imagination to one of the melamine kits available in many toy stores.

Finally, when everything and everyone is ready, remove your watches. Empty your pockets. Unplug the phone for a while. You are going to a party. And remember, *Shabbat* is not a solemn occasion. Along with the candles, wine, and *challah*, smiles and laughter belong at the table.



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EXPERIENCING SHABBAT ON FRIDAY NIGHTS

In prior articles we have looked at the ["Shabbat Observance For The Non-Jew"](#) as well as the ["Non-Jew's Preparation For The Sabbath"](#).

We now move on in our study to delve into the various elements contained in the Sabbath observance itself.

The four core ritual elements of a home Shabbat evening (erev Shabbat) celebration are:

- **Saying the blessing over two Shabbat candles,**
- **Saying the blessing over the wine**
- **Saying the blessing over the bread,**
- **Eating of the Shabat meal.**

There is nothing too hard or too difficult that prevents anyone from remembering and observing the Shabbat if they truly desire to. It is our hope at Bet Emet Ministries that the following makes this easy for everyone. As we study our way through the Shabbat the above 4 steps to observing Shabbat will become perfectly clear and you will be a "pro" before too long.

Friday night rituals vary enormously from one Jewish household to the next. The same can be said for the non-Jew who observes Shabbat in his home as well. In some there are many songs; in others, there is no singing. Some families recite all the blessings in English; others do them in Hebrew. Some people discuss the weekly Torah portion at dinner; other people use the time to reflect on the week past. Some eat earlier than usual in order to attend services; others eat later than usual and linger at the table as the candles burn down and spend the Shabbat at home. Many spend the Shabbat reading, studying and discussing Torah and commentary, Mishnah and Talmud, halakha and responsa and Midrash. This is broadened by the non-Jew as he explores his Jewish Roots of the Christian faith by examining the New Testament through "Jewish Eyes". Many renew themselves by playing board games such as checkers, chess, backgammon, or read their favorite poetry or literature. **But above all the Shabbat is a day of prayer and seeking the face of God but not to the exclusion of the renewal of the whole of the person: body, soul, and spirit.** This is where the Siddur comes in very handy for the Shabbat. An exciting part of Shabbat is that according to Kabbalah (esoteric Jewish mysticism), lovemaking between husband and wife is encouraged and is a perfect picture of the harmony of Shabbat and the World to come when love and peace is the rule. **There is no "right" or "wrong way" to remember and observe the Shabbat as long as you sanctify the time and understand the message of the Shabbat and let it be applied to your life.** As you read through this article this will become abundantly clear.

The various elements of Friday night, listed above, are but a selection or a menu from which a personal *Shabbat* home ritual can be created. As with any menu, all sorts of combinations are possible. Once you find a comfortable way to proceed, it can be very helpful to make a one-page guide to the order and blessings in English, transliterated, and or in Hebrew. This "*Shabbat seder*" can then be decorated, laminated, and given to guests. We have one available to readers at Bet Emet if you so wish; all you need do is but ask.

Even with fairly detailed explanations, however, *Shabbat* is not entirely comprehensible solely from the page. The best way to learn it is to live it by watching and participating with others who are experienced at making *Shabbat*.

ESTABLISHING A FRIDAY NIGHT RITUAL

The following is but a summary suggestion for the Friday night ritual. You can either adopt and modify for your own needs to make it yours by adopting it as it stands. The following parts of this "Suggested Friday Night Shabbat Ritual" will be explained as we work our way through them.

- Giving *tzedakah*
- Singing
- Saying the blessing and lighting candles
- Blessings for children
- Blessings for husband and wife
- Blessings for wine (*kiddush*)
- Blessing over hand washing
- Blessing for *challah*
- Eating the meal
- Focused conversation
- Blessings after the meal (*birkat hamazon*)
- More singing
- Going to synagogue
- Making love

GIVING TZEDAKAH

"Tzedakah" is the Hebrew word for the acts that we call "charity" in English: giving aid, assistance and money to the poor and needy or to other worthy causes. However, the nature of tzedakah is very different from the idea of charity. The word "charity" suggests benevolence and generosity, a magnanimous act by the wealthy and powerful for the benefit of the poor and needy. The word "tzedakah" is derived from the Hebrew root meaning righteousness, justice or fairness. In Judaism, giving to the poor is not viewed as a generous, magnanimous act; it is simply an act of justice and righteousness, the performance of a duty, giving the poor their due.

Giving to the poor is an obligation in Judaism, a duty that cannot be forsaken even by those who are themselves in need. Some sages have said that tzedakah is the highest of all commandments, equal to all of them combined, and that a person who does not perform tzedakah is equivalent to an idol worshipper. Tzedakah is one of the three acts that gain us forgiveness from our sins. The High Holiday liturgy states that G-d has inscribed a judgment against all who have sinned, but teshuvah (repentance), tefilah (prayer) and tzedakah can reverse the decree.

According to Jewish law, Jewish people are required to give one-tenth of their income to the poor. This is generally interpreted as one-tenth of their net income after payment of taxes. Those who are dependent on public assistance or living on the edge of subsistence may give less; no person should give so much that he would become a public burden.

The obligation to perform tzedakah can be fulfilled by giving money to the poor, to health care institutions, to synagogues or to educational institutions. It can also be fulfilled by supporting your children beyond the age when you are legally required to, or supporting your parents in their old age. The obligation includes giving to both Jews and gentiles; contrary to popular belief, Jews do not just "take care of their own." It is permissible to

investigate the legitimacy of a charity before donating to it. We have an obligation to avoid becoming in need of tzedakah. A person should take any work that is available, even if he thinks it is beneath his dignity, to avoid becoming a public charge.

However, if a person is truly in need and has no way to obtain money on his own he should not feel embarrassed to accept tzedakah. No person should feel too proud to take money from others. In fact, it is considered a transgression to refuse tzedakah. One source says that to make yourself suffer by refusing to accept tzedakah is equivalent to shedding your own blood.

Giving money to the poor is associated with nearly all Jewish celebrations and festive occasions including the Shabbat. In moments of great joy, *tzedakah* is a way of both sharing happiness and of recalling that the world requires our attention. **Therefore it is traditional to put aside money for tzedakah on Shabbat before candles are lit.** Many families place a special tzedakah box next to the Shabbat candle holders to remind them to perform this mitzvah. Many people cherish childhood associations of *Shabbat* with little tin cans called *pushkes* which represented different charitable organizations. Making a collection box by decorating a can or jar, or making a container out of clay or paper is a great project and a wonderful way of introducing children to the concept of *tzedakah*. **In many ways, charitable donation has taken the place of animal sacrifice in Jewish life:** giving to charity is an almost instinctive Jewish response to express thanks to G-d, to ask forgiveness from G-d, or to request a favor from G-d. **According to Jewish tradition, the spiritual benefit of giving to the poor is so great that a beggar actually does the giver a favor by giving a person the opportunity to perform tzedakah. So in observing Shabbat we remember the world to come where there is no suffering and no needs and we bring an extension of that on Shabbat by giving that others might experience "Heaven on Earth".**

SINGING ON SHABBAT

Beginning a meal with a song breaks the week's routine and inaugurates *Shabbat* as a special kind of time. Although almost any song will accomplish this, many Hebrew songs (*z'mirot*) are associated with the *Shabbat* table. One of the simplest and best-known is "*Shabbat Shalom*," whose lyrics consist only of those two words.

But words are not really necessary. According to one tradition, a wordless melody or *niggun* is itself a prayer, and one of the purest forms of prayer at that. *Niggunim* (the plural) are usually fairly simple, repetitive, and easily taught.

Let me suggest this website for your Shabbat songs as well as many other beautiful selections:

<http://www.hebrewworld.com/BiblicalMusic.html>

SAYING THE BLESSING AND LIGHTING CANDLES

In all cultures throughout the world, fire is considered one of the basic elements; it is a universal symbol of power, mastery, and divinity. Friday night candle lighting dates back to the first century C.E., and the blessing is as old as the eighth or ninth century.² For Jews, the lighting of candles is the act that formally ends the week and begins *Shabbat*.

Candle lighting is the most evocative of all Jewish rituals. **The celebration of the Sabbath begins when one lights the candles, or when one recites the evening service, or at sundown --- whichever occurs first.** It is the obligation of the wife to fulfill this religious duty. According to tradition, the *mitzvah* of lighting candles is assigned to women, though it is incumbent on men in their absence. Whereas some women prefer to reserve this custom to themselves, there is a wide range of practice on this count. In many homes, all women and girls light a pair of candles, though in some families, the honor rotates and includes everyone regardless of gender. Unless a woman had been living alone, she starts to observe it on the first Sabbath after her marriage. Where

two or more married women are in the same household, either on a temporary or permanent basis, it is customary for each to light Sabbath candles separately. When the woman of a house is absent or is incapable of performing the ritual, or where a man lives alone, he lights the Sabbath candles himself. Although the woman is given priority in fulfilling this religious duty, lighting Sabbath candles is a requirement related to the general observance of the Sabbath and is a religious duty incumbent upon both men and women. According to Jewish law, candles are lit not at dark but at sunset; technically, no later than 18 -20 minutes before sunset. Among liberal Jews, the common practice is to light candles when the whole household is gathered at the table for dinner. In the absence of a Jewish calendar listing candlelighting time for a particular geographic area, the time of sundown can be found in the daily local newspaper and the candlelighting time determined accordingly. Once the time of sundown passes, the candles may no longer be lit. It is permissible for the candles to be lit somewhat earlier. This is often done in the summer months when the day is particularly long and the Sabbath might be ushered in an hour or so earlier. It is permissible for the candles to be lit somewhat earlier. This is often done in the summer months when the day is particularly long and the Sabbath might be ushered in an hour or so earlier.

The minimum number of candles lighted is two. Therefore at least two candles are lit, symbolizing the great dualities of life: female and male, light and darkness, etc. The rabbis declared that the two candles stand for the two forms of the commandment to "remember" and "observe" *Shabbat*. Although two is the minimum, there is no maximum.

The two candles symbolically represent the two forms of the fourth commandment:

- **Zachor--Remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy (Exodus 20:8), and**
- **Shamor--Observe the Sabbath day to keep it holy (Deut. 5:12).**

There are some family or local traditions where three or more candles are lighted or that call for an additional Sabbath candle for every child born. One is free to light more than the minimum if one chooses to do so. White candles intended specifically for the Sabbath eve are generally available. If they are not available, any festive dinner candles of whatever shape, design, or color may be used instead. The only condition is that they be large enough to burn during the Sabbath meal and well into nightfall. Although any candelabra are permissible, it is preferable to have a pair of candlesticks or candelabra reserved specifically for the Sabbath. Although proper ritual procedure requires that the **recitation of a blessing always precedes the performance of the mitzvah, in this instance the candles are lighted first and the benediction is recited afterward. The reason is obvious. Recital of the blessing formally ushers in the Sabbath after which it is forbidden to light a flame.** As stated the candles are lit before the blessing is recited, either silently or aloud. The procedure is to close one's eyes or cover them with the hands while the benediction is recited. When eyes are opened after the blessing, the sight of the Sabbath lights brings forth the delight that is actually regarded as the culmination of the mitzvah. The blessing recited for the Sabbath candles is:

Blessed are Thou, Lord our God, King of the universe who has sanctified us with His commandments and commanded us to kindle the Sabbath lights.

The Sabbath candles should be lighted on the table where the Sabbath meal is eaten. If this is impractical, it should at least be done in the same room.

There is a custom of circling the candles with hands and arms after lighting them, and then covering the eyes while the blessing is repeated. This practice can feel awkward or artificial to people who have never tried it or seen it done. If these gestures make you feel too self-conscious to get into a *Shabbat-like* mood, they defeat the purpose. Some people simply take a moment to take and release a very deep breath before lighting candles and reciting the blessing.

Among some Sephardic Jews, candles are lit for family members who have died. If guests are present at candlelighting, they can be invited to light candles for their families as well. A great blaze of candles is very festive.

Candlelighting is a wonderful moment for children. In many families, blowing out the *Shabbat* match is a special treat. A gift of small candlesticks on a birthday or Hannukah confers a new, more grown-up Jewish status on a child; the first time he or she uses them can be a family event. (Long fireplace matches are a good idea, and fun too.)

The only regulation regarding candlesticks or other ritual objects for *Shabbat* is the rabbinic principal of *hiddur mitzvah*, which states that when a physical object is needed to fulfill a commandment, it should be beautiful. Candlesticks handed down from one generation to the next are especially precious, but any object reserved only for *Shabbat* use quickly becomes a family treasure. Judaica shops tend to offer a large selection of candlesticks, but for something that already has the patina of age and experience, a second-hand store or antique shop may yield an heirloom.

After the candles are lit, it is proper to greet the others in the household with the words "*Shabbat Shalom*" ("Sabbath peace") or "*Gut Shabbes*" (Yiddish for "a good Sabbath"). In some families, everyone exchanges kisses.

BLESSINGS FOR CHILDREN

The Bible records several parental blessings, which are echoed in the custom of blessing children on Friday. There are three traditional blessings: First, the blessing for sons refers to Joseph's sons, Ephraim and Menashe, whose mother, Osenath, was an Egyptian-born noblewoman. The Midrash says that these two were singled out for praise because they held fast to their Jewish identity. Second, the blessing for daughters names the matriarchs: Sarah, whose response to adversity was laughter; Rebecca, the model of hospitality, and Rachel and Leah, who personify sisterhood in the most difficult circumstances.

Some parents add or substitute a more personal message for each child-praise for something that happened during the week, or just a whispered, "I love you."

For boys:

May God make you as Ephraim and Menasheh.

For girls:

Make God make you as Sarah, Rebecca, Rachel and Leah.

Lastly, there is what is known as the priestly blessing.

May the Lord bless you and keep you; May the Lord cause His spirit to shine upon you and be gracious unto you. May the Lord turn His spirit unto you and grant you peace. Numbers 6:24-26

BLESSINGS FOR HUSBAND AND WIFE

Eshet chayil, "a woman of valor," is the phrase that begins a set of the verses from the book of Proverbs, traditionally recited by husbands to wives on Friday night. *Eshet chayil* is a long list of praises for a good woman's virtues, including generosity, industry, business acumen, beauty, wisdom, cheerfulness, and loving kindness.

- *A woman of valor who can find?*
- *She is more precious than rubies.*
- *The heart of her husband trusts in her,*

- *And he has no lack of gain.*
- *She does him good and not evil,*
- *All the days of her life,*
- *She extends her hand to the poor,*
- *She reaches out her hands to the needy.*
- *She is robed in strength and dignity;*
- *She confidently faces the future.*
- *She opens her mouth with wisdom,*
- *Lovingkindness is on her tongue.*
- *Her children rise up and call her blessed,*
- *Her husband sings her praises:*
- *"Many daughters have done worthily,*
- *But you excel them all."*
- *Charm is deceitful, and beauty is vain,*
- *But a woman who reveres the Lord,*
- *She shall be praised.*
- *Give her of the fruit of her hands,*
- *And let her works praise her in the gates (selections from Proverbs 31)*

In some households, the tradition of reciting or singing these verses is abbreviated; a husband will simply look into his wife's eyes and say, "*eshet chayil*," a kind of short-hand acknowledgement of appreciation and love. Often, this traditional gesture is made reciprocal, as each spouse simply takes a moment to kiss and say "I love you." Often the wife will say over her husband:

- *Praise the Lord, Blessed is the man who fears the Lord,*
- *Who is vigilant in his commandments.*
- *His descendants shall be mighty upon the earth;*
- *He shall be blessed in the generation of the upright.*
- *Wealth and riches shall be in his house;*
- *And his righteousness endures forever.*
- *To the upright there shines a light in the darkness;*
- *He is gracious and full of compassion upon the righteous.*
- *Blessed is the man who shows mercy and lends;*
- *He shall proclaim his words with judgment.*
- *Surely he shall not be moved forever;*
- *The righteous shall be in everlasting remembrance.*
- *He shall not be afraid of evil tidings;*
- *His heart is fixed, trusting in the Lord.*
- *His heart is strengthened; he shall not be afraid,*
- *Until he sees his desire upon his enemies.*
- *He has given generously, he has given to the poor;*
- *His righteousness endures forever and ever;*
- *His horn shall be exalted with honor.*

Any such act makes it very difficult to allow left-over quarrels to compromise the peace and harmony of *Shabbat*.

BLESSINGS FOR WINE (KIDDUSH)

The word *kiddush* comes from the Hebrew *kadosh*, which means "holy." The term refers to all blessings made over wine, and there is a special *kiddush* on Friday night. The one-line core of the blessing is always the same, however:

Blessed art Thou, O Lord our God, King of the universe, Creator of the fruit of the vine.

On Friday night, this blessing is sandwiched between two longer passages. The first, from the Torah, recounts the creation of the world.

Gen. 1:31-2:3

31 ¶ And God saw every thing that He had made, and, behold, it was very good. And there was evening and there was morning, the sixth day. 1 ¶ And the heaven and the earth were finished, and all the host of them. 2 And on the seventh day God finished His work which He had made; and He rested on the seventh day from all His work which He had made. 3 And God blessed the seventh day, and hallowed it; because that in it He rested from all His work which God in creating had made.

The second is a blessing that recalls three of the great *Shabbat* themes: the creation, the exodus from Egypt, and the sanctity of the Sabbath.

- *Blessed art Thou, O Lord our God, King of the universe,*
- *Who has taught us the way of holiness through the commandments.*
- *Lovingly You have favored us with the gift of Your holy Shabbat as our inheritance, a reminder of creation, first among the sacred days which recall the Exodus from Egypt.*
- *You have chosen us of all peoples for Your service, and You have given us a sacred purpose in life. In loving favor, You have given us Your holy Shabbat as a heritage.*
- *Blessed art Thou, O Lord our God, Who hallows the Shabbat.*

There are many customs for saying *kiddush*. Some families simply do the "*boray p'ree hagafen*" part of the prayer in unison. Others sing the entire *kiddush* aloud in Hebrew. In some households, one person reads the longer passages in English and only the core blessing is recited in Hebrew.

In some families, everyone stands for *kiddush*; elsewhere, everyone sits. Some make the blessing over a single cup, which is then passed or poured into other cups. Elsewhere, everyone drinks from his or her own glass.

It is also traditional to hold the cup in a way that demonstrates that this wine is not simply for drinking or even toasting. According to the *Zohar*, a medieval book of mystical Bible interpretation, the glass is held in the palm of the right hand with the fingers facing upward and curled around the base to represent a five-petaled rose, an ancient symbol of perfection and of longing for God. *Any glass can be used for kiddush, but it is considered preferable to use a special glass or goblet to fulfill the precept of *hiddur mitzvah*, or beautifying the commandment.*

Most people who grew up with a Friday night *Shabbat* home ritual, associate *kiddush* with the thick, sweet red wines of Mogen David and Manischewitz. People who choose kosher wine today, however, have a wide selection of drier vintages. Although Jewish law calls for kosher wine, many Jews consider all wines acceptable. Some parents substitute watered wine or grape juice, reserved for *Shabbat*, for children. A special cup for *Shabbat* also makes a wonderful present for a much younger child.

BLESSING OVER HAND WASHING

Some Jews perform a symbolic hand-washing just prior to saying the blessing over *challah*, which begins the meal. Hand-washing recalls the purification ceremonies of the ancient Temple, and so the table symbolizes the altar.

Whereas any glass or cup can be used, two-handled cups or layers are made especially for this purpose, some of which bear the accompanying blessing:

The earth is the Lord's and everything in it, the world, and all who live in it; for He founded it upon the seas and established it upon the waters. Who may ascend the hill of the Lord? Who may stand in His holy place? He who has clean hands and a pure heart, who does not lift up his soul to an idol or swear by what is false. (Psalm 24:1-4)

BLESSING FOR CHALLAH

In many languages, the word "bread" is synonymous with "food." A blessing for bread is thus a blessing over food, sustenance, life. Jews make a blessing called *motzi* ("brings") over *challah*, a word that comes from a biblical reference to a sacrificial Temple offering of dough. According to tradition, *challah* is any bread prepared for the purpose of making a *motzi*, a process that requires breaking off and burning a small piece of dough and reciting a blessing. Today, *challah* generally refers to a braided egg-rich loaf with a soft, almost cake-like texture. It is available in Jewish bakeries, and happens to be one of the easiest yeast breads to bake at home. Good recipes abound and children love braiding the dough.

Blessed art Thou, O Lord our God, King of the universe, Who brings forth bread from the earth.

It is traditional to have two loaves on the table, recalling the double portion of manna the Israelites gathered on the sixth day, so they would not have to collect food on *Shabbat*. The double portion of bread also symbolizes bounty. Some families use a small *challah* roll to symbolize a second loaf. The bread is often covered with an embroidered or woven cloth that, like special *challah* plates and knives, add to the beauty of the *Shabbat* table.

There are many customs for saying the blessing. Some hold two loaves together. Some sprinkle the bread with salt, a traditional reminder of tears and of the destruction of the Temple. Because metal is considered a reminder of war, some people keep sharp knives off the table. This is why in some households no knife is put to the *challah* at all; it is ripped apart by hand instead.

EATING THE MEAL

The act of eating the Friday night meal, and all three meals commanded for *Shabbat*, is considered a *mitzvah* and a blessing. Just for your information these three meals are called "the Lord's Supper" and it the authentic "Lord's Supper" which is misrepresented in the New Testament. Today Christianity has completely serparated "the Lord's Supper" from its Sabbatical setting and has relegated in the churches to some Sunday "communion" ritual. Lost completely is its Sabbath connection and instead we are taught other "dogmas" that are simply inocrrect.

The idea of anyone going hungry on *Shabbat* seems terribly contradictory to the spirit of the day, which is why there are so many stories about feeding beggars and bringing strangers home on the Sabbath. Judaism has always been respectful of the fact that basic needs must be satisfied first, and that holiness and hunger are, in some fundamental sense, mutually exclusive. As the Talmud says, "Without food there is no Torah."

FOCUSED CONVERSATION DURING DINNER

Conversation at the *Shabbat* table is for relaxing, checking in, and catching up. In some families, this idea is

formalized. People take turns talking about the important events of the previous week; news, accomplishments, and especially things studied or learned. Conversation about Jewish topics of all sorts is very appropriate: from the weekly Torah portion to the news from Israel. It is said, "*If three have eaten at the table and speak words of Torah, it is as if they have eaten from the table of God.*" Of course other things other than the Torah portion will be discussed but let us remember that our "focus" is God and His Sabbath to which He invites mankind to "sup" with Him.

BLESSINGS AFTER THE MEAL (BIRKAT HAMAZON)

The *birkat hamazon* (blessings for food) is a series of blessings and prayers set to a series of wonderful melodies, filled with thanks to and praise for God and full of messianic references. Praying the *birkat hamawn* is also called *benching*, the Yiddish word for blessing, and is found in most daily prayerbooks or *siddurim*. On *Shabbat*, *birkat hamazon* begins with Psalm 126:

1 ¶ A Song of Ascents. When the LORD brought back those that returned to Zion, we were like unto them that dream. 2 Then was our mouth filled with laughter, and our tongue with singing; then said they among the nations: 'The LORD hath done great things with these.' 3 The LORD hath done great things with us; we are rejoiced. 4 ¶ Turn our captivity, O LORD, as the streams in the dry land. 6 Though he goeth on his way weeping that beareth the measure of seed, he shall come home with joy, bearing his sheaves.

When the world was created, God made everything a little bit incomplete. Rather than making bread grow right out of the earth, God made wheat grow so that we might bake it into bread. In this way, we could become partners in completing the work of creation.

The following is the first paragraph of *birkat hamazon*, which is sometimes used as an abbreviated version of the longer blessing.

Holy One of Blessing, Your Presence fills creation, You nourish the world with goodness and sustain it with grace, loving kindness and mercy. You provide food for every living thing because You are merciful. Because of Your great goodness the earth yields its fruit. For Your sake we pray that we shall always have enough to eat, for You sustain and strengthen all that lives and provide food for the life that You created. Holy One of Blessing, You nourish all that lives.

GOING TO SYNAGOGUE ON FRIDAY NIGHTS

The cycle of Shabbat services begins on Friday evening with *Kabbalat Shabbat* which is the "welcoming or receiving of the Sabbath". *Kabbalat Shabbat* was developed by a group of Jewish mystics who lived in Safed, Palestine. Although there are variations on the Friday evening service, virtually all of them contain some version of *L'cha Dodi*, a poem set to music from that 16th century community. Today, in many congregations when the final stanza is sung, everyone rises to face the door to symbolically welcome to Sabbath bride.

In some congregations, the Friday night service is the biggest and best-attended of the week. In others, the crowds come for *Shabbat* morning services. Some synagogues include a congregational candle lighting and *kiddush* on Friday night and some share *challah* as well. The rabbi, or whoever leads the service, may give a sermon.

Friday night services are often followed by an *oneg Shabbat* ("joy of the Sabbath"), a communal celebration that encourages touching base with old friends, meeting people, sharing food, and enjoying the spirit of the Sabbath.

For those who do not attend Friday night services a synagogue, the evening is spent relaxing at home. After the meal, clean-up tends to be kept to a minimum, although with company and conversation, *Shabbat* can even transform dishwashing from a chore into a pleasure.

Sitting by the candles to read, or study from a Jewish text (the week's Torah portion is traditional) is considered a *mitzvah*, especially because the candles are lit not merely for decoration, but for use. Some people take this time to read poetry, listen to music, sit outside and watch the night sky, read special stories to their children, or make "*Shabbat Shalom*" phone calls. This is your time to "renew" the whole individual; spirit, soul, and body so we are not to be "monks" but children of God who know our Creator desires that we enjoy this time of rest as we see fit. Again the only thing we must remember is to include God in this "special time" which is taken out of the rut of our busy and hectic lives.

MAKING LOVE ON SHABBAT NIGHT

The imagery of marriage abounds in Jewish texts; God and the people Israel are like groom and bride and the Torah their *ketubah*, or marriage contract. *Shabbat* is often described as a royal bride. The Kabbalists imagined God's unity to have been shattered by the expulsion of humanity from Eden. The feminine side of God, which is called *shechinah*, would wander the earth in exile until the redemption of the world was complete. On *Shabbat*, however, God's two halves are reconciled and united in an act of love.

In Yiddish literature of the late 19th and early 20th century, there is a keen sense that on Friday night, husbands and wives look at each other with different eyes. On a purely practical level, the men and women of the *shtetl* and ghetto looked their best. And the quarrels and conflicts of the week were put aside to abide by the Sabbath's mandate of peace. But another reason for all the smiling was the rather public secret that Friday night was the time for sex. Indeed, Jewish folklore held that *erev Shabbat* was the most auspicious time for conceiving a child.

Y'did Nefrsh, a traditional song for Friday night, makes the connection between spiritual and physical union quite explicit:

Draw me to You with the breath of love, Swiftly shall I come to stand within your radiance That I may attain that sweetest of all intimacies. My soul aches to receive your love Only by the tenderness of Your light can she be healed Engage my soul that she may taste your ecstasy.

Shabbat Shalom



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SHABBAT MORNING...WHAT TO DO?

With the morning, the focus shifts from family to community, from home to synagogue or possibly a home Bible study. I would normally say "church" but few if any Christian Churches remember or keep or observe Shabbat. If they do sadly they are Messianic Churches that adhere to idolatrous dogmas concerning "the Christ" and "Jesus" and worship the Godman. For some, Saturday morning services at a synagogue are a weekly event, whereas others attend only rarely or, on special occasions, such as a *bar* or *bat mitzvah*, which means, literally, "son or daughter of the commandment," and is a rite of passage for 13-year-old boys and girls.

For those unfamiliar with Hebrew and synagogue customs, *Shabbat* morning services can seem daunting. They were for me at least in the beginning. The best way to explore and enjoy them is to try and relax. No one is there to judge you. No one will know that this is either your first time ever inside a temple or your first time in decades. Some of the most important elements of *Shabbat* are available for newcomers as well as regulars; the sight of a community of people gathered together, the music and voices, the absence of anything to *do*, and the

opportunity to sit still and simply *be*. Following in the Hebrew/English Siddur will be difficult at first but not impossible over time in fact I bought one in order to familiarize myself with the Siddur (prayer book) used in the synagogue and read it at home until I became more comfortable with its use. Now I have come to love the Siddur (the prayerbook) and cannot part with it as it has become my very good "friend".

On days when we would not go to synagogue then we at Bet Emet would gather for a Bible Study and over time this grew into a full-fledged congregation whereby we evolved into a synagogue for Gentile Godfearers which met on Shabbat. [We adopted and adapted the "Pattern of Worship" we saw in the synagogue for the outline of our Shabbat services and these services would last into the early afternoon.](#)

After your visit to the synagogue or your home Bible study (service) then it is time to return home and share your experiences with your family if they did not accompany you. For people who do not wish to or cannot attend *Shabbat* services, ways to continue Sabbath observance through the morning include reading the Torah portion at home, singing favorite songs from the service, praying on their own, going for a walk, reading spiritual books, meditating, or any other essentially restful, Sabbath-like activity.

SHABBAT AFTERNOON

The first order of business after services is lunch, the second meal for *Shabbat*. Traditionally, breakfast does not count as one of the three Sabbath meals. The *kiddush* over wine at this meal is called "the great *kiddush*" (*kiddush rabbah*). According to legend, the fancy name was supposed to compensate for the more impressive Friday night *kiddush*. The second loaf of *challah* from the Friday night meal is often eaten at lunch. The "great *kiddush*" and the blessing for bread (*motzi*) are often said in the synagogue after services, with everyone gathered around a table of wine (or spirits) and *challah*. In general, however, most people have lunch at home, which is where they spend the remainder of Shabbat. It is always a mitzvah to invite guests home on Shabbat, especially those who might not otherwise have a warm, friendly place to eat. Encouraging children to invite friends over to eat and play helps make Shabbat special, and gives them the chance to extend their own hospitality. This mid-day meal provided an opportunity for the family to come together to fellowship and share their love and their time with each other.

Although lunch is seldom as elaborate as Friday night's meal, the noon meal is often festive or in some way different from weekday lunches. The whole notion of *Shabbat* rest discourages fancy cooking in favor of leftovers, casseroles prepared in advance, or a selection of salads and sandwich fixings. But in some families, Saturday means lunch *rabbah* (the great lunch) because it always features chocolate pudding. Shabbat can be a day of rest from saying "no" to children's insatiable passion for junk food. In some households, Shabbat is reserved for otherwise forbidden treats.

After lunch, the afternoon stretches lazily on. The goal for *Shabbat* afternoon is to achieve the same level of relaxation one feels on the last afternoon of a two-week vacation: sad to leave but also refreshed. However, because many people find it difficult to face hours of uninterrupted leisure-especially at a time when the rest of the world is busy doing errands and cleaning out the garage-it can be helpful to make specific plans.

Important to remember is that after lunch the time is spent in whatever "renews" you body, soul, and spirit. Traditional *Shabbat* afternoon activities include napping, visiting the sick, and walking without a particular destination in mind. Some people reserve these hours for activities and pastimes such as bicycle riding, swimming, writing letters, baking cookies, puttering in the garden, reading poetry, sitting still and really listening to music, and going on nature walks. *Shabbat* is a wonderful time for spouses to talk, and for parents and children to play. And the more an activity is saved only for *Shabbat*, the more *Shabbat-like* it becomes. Many might recreate, some might go fishing, some just relax and listen to music or read a good book. Other might just "piddle" around the home with the family and just enjoy the sound of "peace" generated by this time whereby you "slow down" and smell the beauty of "life" which only the Shabbat can create. Some might wash their favorite car or visit with family or neighbors. It is really up to you for you know what brings you "peace" and enlivens you as God's child.

Perhaps the most-time honored *Shabbat* afternoon activity is Torah study. Some people meet weekly with family members or a group of friends to discuss the week's Torah section, a project that requires no knowledge of Hebrew or academic background in Judaism. The first five books of the Bible have been studied for more than 2,000 years, in part for the sheer pleasure of trying to comprehend its meanings. There are no correct or ultimate answers; there are simply new levels of understanding.

One way to proceed is by reading the week's portion out loud. This not only lifts the activity out of the weekday practice of reading for information, it also means that no one will have failed to do the "homework."

Nor does a *Shabbat* study circle have to be limited to the Bible. Indeed, the phrase "studying Torah" is traditionally applied to *all* Jewish learning, which, includes the Hebrew language, a Jewish novel, a book of history or commentary, or even last Sunday's editorial about Israeli politics. The traditional caveat is that sad topics are avoided to preserve the joy of *Shabbat*.

Especially insightful for we non-Jews is the study into the Jewish Roots of our Christian Faith. Over time you will come to see and value this "Jewishness" and the wisdom contained within the sages of the Israel of God and then these various types of "Jewish Learning" will have a much higher value to you than they might at the present.

THE SHABBAT ENDS

According to the Talmud, *Shabbat* ends when three stars are visible in the sky. On overcast evenings, *Shabbat* is over when a blue thread is indistinguishable from a white thread held at arm's length. In other words, it should be dark.

Yet, there is almost no limit to how late *havdalah* can begin. The ritual that ends the Sabbath, *havdalah*, (which means "separation" or "division") dates back to Talmudic times. It is a brief, enchanting ceremony that recalls the intimate power of the Friday night home ritual, though far more melancholy because it marks *Shabbat's* passing. **Some congregations hold *havdalah* services, but this is, by and large, a home celebration.** It consists of four blessings: over wine, over fragrant spices, over fire, and over distinctions. [I direct you attention to the "Bet Emet Home Havdalah Service" elsewhere on this website.](#)

Shabbat Shalom



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EXPERIENCING SHABBAT ON SATURDAY MORNINGS AND AFTERNOON

SHABBAT MORNING...WHAT TO DO?

With the morning, the focus shifts from family to community, from home to synagogue or possibly a home Bible study. I would normally say "church" but few if any Christian Churches remember or keep or observe Shabbat. If they do sadly they are Messianic Churches that adhere to idolatrous dogmas concerning "the Christ" and "Jesus" and worship the Godman. For some, Saturday morning services at a synagogue are a weekly event, whereas others attend only rarely or, on special occasions, such as a *bar* or *bat mitzvah*, which means, literally, "son or daughter of the commandment," and is a rite of passage for 13-year-old boys and girls.

For those unfamiliar with Hebrew and synagogue customs, *Shabbat* morning services can seem daunting. They were for me at least in the beginning. The best way to explore and enjoy them is to try and relax. No one is there to judge you. No one will know that this is either your first time ever inside a temple or your first time in decades. Some of the most important elements of *Shabbat* are available for newcomers as well as regulars; the sight of a community of people gathered together, the music and voices, the absence of anything to *do*, and the opportunity to sit still and simply *be*. Following in the Hebrew/English Siddur will be difficult at first but not impossible over time in fact I bought one in order to familiarize myself with the Siddur (prayer book) used in the synagogue and read it at home until I became more comfortable with its use. Now I have come to love the Siddur (the prayerbook) and cannot part with it as it has become my very good "friend".

On days when we would not go to synagogue then we at Bet Emet would gather for a Bible Study and over time this grew into a full-fledged congregation whereby we evolved into a synagogue for Gentile Godfearers which met on Shabbat. [We adopted and adapted the "Pattern of Worship" we saw in the synagogue for the outline of our Shabbat services and these services would last into the early afternoon.](#)

After your visit to the synagogue or your home Bible study (service) then it is time to return home and share your experiences with your family if they did not accompany you. For people who do not wish to or cannot attend *Shabbat* services, ways to continue Sabbath observance through the morning include reading the Torah portion at home, singing favorite songs from the service, praying on their own, going for a walk, reading spiritual books, meditating, or any other essentially restful, Sabbath-like activity.

SHABBAT AFTERNOON

The first order of business after services is lunch, the second meal for *Shabbat*. Traditionally, breakfast does not count as one of the three Sabbath meals. The *kiddush* over wine at this meal is called "the great *kiddush*" (*kiddush rabbah*). According to legend, the fancy name was supposed to compensate for the more impressive Friday night *kiddush*. The second loaf of *challah* from the Friday night meal is often eaten at lunch. The "great *kiddush*" and the blessing for bread (*motzi*) are often said in the synagogue after services, with everyone gathered around a table of wine (or spirits) and *challah*. In general, however, most people have lunch at home,

which is where they spend the remainder of Shabbat. It is always a mitzvah to invite guests home on Shabbat, especially those who might not otherwise have a warm, friendly place to eat. Encouraging children to invite friends over to eat and play helps make Shabbat special, and gives them the chance to extend their own hospitality. This mid-day meal provided an opportunity for the family to come together to fellowship and share their love and their time with each other.

Although lunch is seldom as elaborate as Friday night's meal, the noon meal is often festive or in some way different from weekday lunches. The whole notion of *Shabbat* rest discourages fancy cooking in favor of leftovers, casseroles prepared in advance, or a selection of salads and sandwich fixings. But in some families, Saturday means lunch *rabbah* (the great lunch) because it always features chocolate pudding. Shabbat can be a day of rest from saying "no" to children's insatiable passion for junk food. In some households, Shabbat is reserved for otherwise forbidden treats.

After lunch, the afternoon stretches lazily on. The goal for *Shabbat* afternoon is to achieve the same level of relaxation one feels on the last afternoon of a two-week vacation: sad to leave but also refreshed. However, because many people find it difficult to face hours of uninterrupted leisure-especially at a time when the rest of the world is busy doing errands and cleaning out the garage-it can be helpful to make specific plans.

Important to remember is that after lunch the time is spend in whatever "renews" you body, soul, and spirit. Traditional *Shabbat* afternoon activities include napping, visiting the sick, and walking without a particular destination in mind. Some people reserve these hours for activities and pastimes such as bicycle riding, swimming, writing letters, baking cookies, puttering in the garden, reading poetry, sitting still and really listening to music, and going on nature walks. *Shabbat* is a wonderful time for spouses to talk, and for parents and children to play. And the more an activity is saved only for *Shabbat*, the more *Shabbat-like* it becomes. Many might recreate, some might go fishing, some just relax and listen to music or read a good book. Other might just "piddle" around the home with the family and just enjoy the sound of "peace" generated by this time whereby you "slow down" and smell the beauty of "life" which only the Shabbat can create. Some might wash their favorite car or visit with family or neighbors. It is really up to you for you know what brings you "peace" and enlivens you as God's child.

Perhaps the most-time honored *Shabbat* afternoon activity is Torah study. Some people meet weekly with family members or a group of friends to discuss the week's Torah section, a project that requires no knowledge of Hebrew or academic background in Judaism. The first five books of the Bible have been studied for more than 2,000 years, in part for the sheer pleasure of trying to comprehend its meanings. There are no correct or ultimate answers; there are simply new levels of understanding.

One way to proceed is by reading the week's portion out loud. This not only lifts the activity out of the weekday practice of reading for information, it also means that no one will have failed to do the "homework."

Nor does a *Shabbat* study circle have to be limited to the Bible. Indeed, the phrase "studying Torah" is traditionally applied to *all* Jewish learning, which, includes the Hebrew language, a Jewish novel, a book of history or commentary, or even last Sunday's editorial about Israeli politics. The traditional caveat is that sad topics are avoided to preserve the joy of *Shabbat*.

Especially insightful for we non-Jews is the study into the Jewish Roots of our Christian Faith. Over time you will come to see and value this "Jewishness" and the wisdom contained within the sages of the Israel of God and then these various types of "Jewish Learning" will have a much higher value to you than they might at the present.

THE SHABBAT ENDS

According to the Talmud, *Shabbat* ends when three stars are visible in the sky. On overcast evenings, *Shabbat* is over when a blue thread is indistinguishable from a white thread held at arm's length. In other words, it should be dark.

Yet, there is almost no limit to how late *havdalah* can begin. The ritual that ends the Sabbath, *havdaIah*, (which means "separation" or "division") dates back to Talmudic times. It is a brief, enchanting ceremony that recalls the intimate power of the Friday night home ritual, though far more melancholy because it marks *Shabbat's* passing. **Some congregations hold *havdalah* services, but this is, by and large, a home celebration.** It consists of four blessings: over wine, over fragrant spices, over fire, and over distinctions. [I direct you attention to the "Bet Emet Home Havdalah Service" elsewhere on this website.](#)

Shabbat Shalom

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THE BET EMET GUIDE TO SHABBATH: OBSERVING THE SABBATH AT HOME

Before we begin this "Sabbath Service" let us remember what we have learned up to now. We have seen that there are [multiple examples of the non-Jew observing the Sabbath with the Jew; not only that but some of the passages are worded as if a "command" from God. As if that is not enough we find both the example of James and Paul in the New Testament referencing the non-Jews keeping and observing the Sabbath as well.](#) Today, unlike the earliest centuries, the non-Jew does not observe or keep the Sabbath in the Christian Church since [Constantine changed the Sabbath to Sunday.](#) Below is a "worship service" which you might adapt to your home and family in restoring "the Pattern of Worship" once given to the Saints (Jude 1:3).

WHY SHOULD I OBSERVE THE SABBATH?

Wholeness in Hebrew is called "shalom". *Shabbat* is about making peace with everyone; especially within families. The highest priority is given to reconciliation and loving kindness. It is a time that we become "one" with God and our loved ones. *Shabbat* fully means behaving as if the world was redeemed (complete, safe, perfect) right now! *Shabbat* is the opportunity to focus on what is right with the world, & thus to be refreshed to do the work of redemption: repairing the world. The world is not complete; it our job to repair the world, to perfect it, & doing so will bring the Messiah.

It is mandatory that Shabbat be understood in its uniquely Jewish form as a **commandment of God**, Exodus 20:8-11: *"Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy. Six days shalt thou labor, and do all thy work: But the seventh day is the Sabbath of the LORD thy God: in it thou shalt not do any work, thou, nor thy son, nor thy daughter,... **nor thy stranger (Gentile) that is within thy gates:** For in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that is in them, and rested the seventh day: wherefore the LORD blessed the Sabbath day, and hallowed it."* This is a command from God, chosen and required to be obeyed by God's people. Observing the Sabbath is not a suggestion, its God's commandment to you and me!

Isaiah 56

- **3. Neither let the son of the stranger, that hath joined himself to the LORD (believing Gentiles), speak, saying, The LORD hath utterly separated me from his people: neither let the eunuch say, Behold, I [am] a dry tree.**
- **4 For thus saith the LORD unto the eunuchs (strangers-Gentiles) that keep my Sabbaths, and choose [the things] that please me, and take hold of my covenant;**

Notice that the Lord informs us that "strangers" (Gentiles) who keep and observe God's *Shabbat*, not only choose for themselves God's will, **but please God in the process.** The reward is that we literally take hold of

God during the Sabbath and receive the "double-portion" from God that only can come to those who honor and observe the Sabbath.

Shabbat is a picture of redemption. The Apostolic Church informs us of the conditions which Gentiles needed to fulfill in order to be accepted as "Israel". One of these was the observance of *Shabbat*. It can be easily shown that the fulfillment of other commandments of Judaism (such as the Festivals) were not prohibited to Gentiles. This was understood by the early Gentile believers (God-fearers), who were attracted to the Jewish way of life & accepted many Jewish commandments without becoming full proselytes (Sabbath, festivals, etc). This was also the attitude of early Christians who are our models today.

In Acts 20:7-8 we find Paul holding a Gentile "church service" in Troas, a Greek city, on the Sabbath. The time frame tells an amazing story; thirty years after Yeshua's death, as recorded in the New Testament, the Gentile believers were still keeping the Sabbath, as had the Jews since even before Sinai! Paul, not only observed the Sabbath, but he taught the Gentiles to do likewise because he knew God had given the Sabbath to all mankind; Jew or Gentile. The early Gentile believers met in the synagogues on the mornings of Sabbath with Jews, and later met in their homes, as testified by the Book of Acts, on Sabbath evenings for the "Havdalah" service where they celebrated the Messianic distinctiveness of their faith.

"And He said to them, 'The Sabbath was made for man, and not man for the Sabbath. Therefore, the Son of Man is also Lord of the Sabbath.'" (Mark. 2:27-28). "There remains therefore a rest for the people of God. For he who has entered His rest has himself also ceased from his works as God did from His. Let us therefore be diligent to enter that rest..." (Hebrews 4:9-11).

Answer for yourself: Now let me ask you: have you entered into that rest? *One thing is for certain, if you sanctify & observe Sunday as the Sabbath instead of Saturday, you break the Fourth Commandment, as commanded by God, and you have never experienced the "double portion" given by God to those who sanctify the Sabbath. Let us keep the Sabbath!*

KINDLING THE CANDLES & THE SABBATH BLESSING:

Baruh ata Adonai, Eloheynu melech ha-olam, asher kid-shanu b'mitz-votav, v'tzivanu l'hadlik neyr shel shabbat.

Blessed art Thou, O Lord our God, King of the universe who has taught us the way of holiness through the Mitzvot, and enjoined upon us the kindling of the Sabbath light.

ON FESTIVALS:

(When the festival falls on Sabbath, add the words in brackets.)

Baruh ata Adonai, Eloheynu melech ha-olam, asher kid-shanu b'mitz-votav, v'tzivanu l'hadlik neyr shel [shabbat ve] yom tov.

Blessed art Thou, O Lord our God, King of the universe who has taught us the way of holiness through the Mitzvot, and enjoined upon us the kindling of the [Sabbath and] Festival lights.

RECITATION OF THE V'SHAMRU:

Exodus 31:16-17 informs us of the reason we are having this special observance. V'Shamru can be spoken or sung; the words are as follows:

The Israelites are to observe the Shabbat, celebrating it for the generations to come as an everlasting covenant. It will be a sign between me and the Israelites forever, for in six days the Lord made the heavens and the earth, and on the seventh day he abstained from work and rested.

MEDITATIONS TO READ FOR THE SABBATH CANDLE LIGHTING:

- Gracious God, thank You for the opportunity and privilege of ushering in another Shabbat of rest, tranquility, and peace. With a full heart, I thank You for the blessings of the week which has passed, and for the grace which I was granted to overcome its trials and difficulties. I ask Your blessings for the week that lies ahead. Grant health, wisdom and contentment to my loved ones and friends. Help us to strengthen each other with love, gentle words and acts of kindness. Bestow Your blessings upon all Your children. May this home be a sacred temple in which You will delight to dwell.
- May the brightness of these candles banish all gloom, anxiety, and care from my heart and from the hearts of my loved ones. May this Shabbat bring us peace and serenity, joy and rest. Keep aglow within us, O God, the spirit of gratitude for Your many blessings, so that we may know the sweet taste of contentment and the rich harvest of sharing. Kindle in our home a deeper love for one another, for our people, and for all Your children.
- As we light our Shabbat candles to set apart this special gift for our family, may all of us be reminded that it is the light of the Messiah that shines in us and in our home. As we light the candles, let us be mindful that the Messiah opens our eyes of understanding and brings enlightenment to our spirits of his truth and his Torah. May the light of these candles spread throughout our home to express our desire that the light of Messiah and the joy of his Sabbath rest be spread throughout our home.
- We thank You, O God, for our family and for what we mean and bring to one another. We are grateful for the bonds of loyalty and affection which sustain us, and which keep us close to one another no matter how far apart we may be. We thank You for implanting within us a deep need for each other, and for giving us the capacity to love and to care. Help us to be considerate and modest in our demands of one another, but generous in our giving to each other. May we never measure how much love or encouragement we offer; may we never count the times we forgive. Rather, may we always be grateful that we have one another and that we are able to express our love in acts of kindness. Keep us gentle in our speech. When we offer words of criticism, may they be chosen with care and spoken softly. May we waste no opportunity to speak words of sympathy, of appreciation, of praise. Bless our family with health, happiness, and contentment. Above all, grant us the wisdom to build a joyous & peaceful home in which Your spirit will always abide.

SHARING SHABBAT WITH FAMILY:

- We thank You, O God, for Your gift of Shabbat,
- For the home in which we observe it,
- And for the dear ones with whom we share it.
- May the joy of Shabbat gladden our hearts and our spirits,
- And may its peace quiet our spirits and guide us in truth.
- Bring us closer to one another in love and affection;
- With laughter, gentleness, and soft words,
- With shared concerns, responsibilities, and mutual respect.
- Help us to make our home a sanctuary for Your Spirit,
- Warmed by reverence, adorned by Your tradition,
- And not the traditions of men.
- Continue to forge family bonds that are strong and enduring,
- Based on truth, trust, and faithfulness.
- Keep us far from strife and anger;
- May we be spared shame and reproach.

- Help us so to live in the week ahead
- That You may look upon all we have done
- And find it good and worthy of Your blessing

SHARING SHABBAT WITH FRIENDS:

- We are grateful, O God, for the heritage of Shabbat, and for the companionship of those whom we have gathered.
- May our coming together help to banish worry and anxiety, and enable us to share moments of true Shabbat joy.
- May the hands of those who break bread together be hands of friends who strengthen and support one another.
- May the voices which sing and pray on this Shabbat be voices of kindness and truth at all times.
- Grant us the capacity to value our friends and to enrich the lives of those whom we love.
- May we deepen our concern for all Your children, and renew our devotion to our People and our Faith.
- On this Shabbat which we share together, help us to feel Your presence, O Source of life and love.
- Scripture enjoins us to "call the Shabbat a delight." As we share its joy and warmth with our friends, we add to our "Shabbat delight" by celebrating these special hours with people for whom we have special feelings. And so, we pray...
- Bless us, O God, with Shabbat peace and serenity.
- Strengthen the bonds of friendship which link us;
- Deepen the mutual concern and caring which enrich us.
- May we find the spiritual rewards of observing Shabbat,
- As we sing together and speak together,
- Sharing special moments and a precious heritage.
- May the wine of Kiddush, our symbol of joy,
- Remind us of the many blessings which You bestow,
- In this world which is ours, to protect and to perfect.
- May we nurture our bodies and our souls on this Shabbat,
- And lovingly serve You with all that we have and are.
- On this Sabbath Eve, we lift our voices,
- In words of blessing, friendship, and peace.
- Blessed art Thou, O Lord our God, King of the universe,
- Who has taught us the way of holiness through the commandments.
- Lovingly You have favored us with the gift of Your holy Shabbat as our inheritance, a reminder of creation, first among the sacred days which recall the Exodus from Egypt.
- You have chosen us of all peoples for Your service, and You have given us a sacred purpose in life. In loving favor, You have given us Your holy Shabbat as a heritage.
- Blessed art Thou, O Lord our God, Who hallows the Shabbat.

THE HAND-WASHING:

The earth is the Lord's and everything in it, the world, and all who live in it; for He founded it upon the seas and established it upon the waters. Who may ascend the hill of the Lord? Who may stand in His holy place? He who has clean hands and a pure heart, who does not lift up his soul to an idol or swear by what is false. (Psalm 24:1-4)

ALL IN TURN; AS YOU WASH RECITE:

I dedicate my hands to Messiah, the hope of glory, to serve him only. I present my body a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is my reasonable service. I vow to not conform to this world, but be continually transformed by the renewing of my mind by God's Torah, that I may prove and demonstrate what is good, acceptable, perfect, and the will of God.

PARENTAL BLESSING:

FOR SONS:

Y'simha Elohim k'efra-yim v'hi-mena-sheh

May God bless you as He blessed Ephraim and Manasseh.

FOR DAUGHTERS:

Y'simeyh Elohim k'sara, rivka, rahel, v'leya.

May God bless you as He blessed Sarah, Rebecca, Rachel, & Leah

Y'VAREHEHA---THE THREEFOLD BLESSING:

THE LEADERS: RECITE THE FOLLOWING FOR ALL ASSEMBLED:

Y'va-reh'ha Adonai v'yish-m'reha, Ya-eyr Adonai panav eyle-ha vihu-neka, Yisa Adonai panav eyle-ha v'ya-seym l'ha shalom.

May the Lord bless you and keep you; May the Lord cause His spirit to shine upon you and be gracious unto you. May the Lord turn His spirit unto you and grant you peace. Numbers 6:24-26

EYSHET HAYIL: WOMAN OF VALOR: READ TO WIFE BY HUSBAND TAKEN FROM PROVERBS 31

- A woman of valor who can find?
- She is more precious than rubies.
- The heart of her husband trusts in her,
- And he has no lack of gain.
- She does him good and not evil,
- All the days of her life,
- She extends her hand to the poor,
- She reaches out her hands to the needy.
- She is robed in strength and dignity;
- She confidently faces the future.
- She opens her mouth with wisdom,
- Lovingkindness is on her tongue.
- Her children rise up and call her blessed,
- Her husband sings her praises:
- "Many daughters have done worthily,
- But you excel them all."

- Charm is deceitful, and beauty is vain,
- But a woman who reveres the Lord,
- She shall be praised.
- Give her of the fruit of her hands,
- And let her works praise her in the gates (selections from Proverbs 31)

THE RIGHTEOUS MAN: READ TO HUSBAND BY WIFE TAKEN FROM PSALM 112

- Praise the Lord, Blessed is the man who fears the Lord,
- Who is vigilant in his commandments.
- His descendants shall be mighty upon the earth;
- He shall be blessed in the generation of the upright.
- Wealth and riches shall be in his house;
- And his righteousness endures forever.
- To the upright there shines a light in the darkness;
- He is gracious and full of compassion upon the righteous.
- Blessed is the man who shows mercy and lends;
- He shall proclaim his words with judgment.
- Surely he shall not be moved forever;
- The righteous shall be in everlasting remembrance.
- He shall not be afraid of evil tidings;
- His heart is fixed, trusting in the Lord.
- His heart is strengthened; he shall not be afraid,
- Until he sees his desire upon his enemies.
- He has given generously, he has given to the poor;
- His righteousness endures forever and ever;
- His horn shall be exalted with honor.

MEDITATION BEFORE KIDDUSH:

- On this Sabbath, which is a reminder of creation,
- We thank you, O God, for the world which You created.
- You have filled Your world with beauty for our eyes,
- With music and laughter for our ears,
- With soft things for us to touch,
- With fragrances for us to smell,
- With fine foods to sustain us and to bring us delight.
- As we enjoy the many blessings
- Which You have so bountifully granted,
- May we, too, bring goodness into the lives of others.
- As we recall Your blessings,
- Too many to be counted, too constant to be merited,
- May we be moved to thank You always, as we do now,
- For the fruit of the vine which You have created
- And for the Shabbat which You have sanctified.
- Amen.

ON THE KIDDUSH:

The [Kiddush](http://jewishrootscx.netfirms.com/bet_emet_home_sabbath_service.htm) expresses beautifully the essence of the Shabbat. Its very name, meaning "sanctification,"

underscores the holiness of the Shabbat, while its recitation over a cup of wine which "gladdens the heart of man" points to the joyous mood of the day. The two themes (sanctify & joy) permeate the entire Shabbat and create a unique blending of the spiritual and the pleasurable; a characteristic of traditional Jewish teaching.

When the Ten Commandments appear in the Torah for the first time (Exodus 20), the Shabbat is linked with God's creation of the world and His rest on the seventh day. When the Ten Commandments appear for the second time (Deut. 5), Shabbat is linked with the liberation of the Israelites from Egyptian bondage. In the [Kiddush](#), both associations are invoked: "a reminder of Creation," and "a reminder of the Exodus from Egypt."

As we recite the Kiddush, we recall the purpose of Creation and we recall the central event in the ancient history of Israel..the going out of Egypt in which God's concern for the oppressed is dramatically revealed. The Sabbath is a sign by means of which we are called upon to remember the purpose of creation and the holiness of the existence of God's people.

The Kiddush was originally a prayer to be recited in the home at the Shabbat table and later incorporated in the synagogue liturgy.

When the Jews lived in Babylon some were so poor that they could not afford to purchase wine. A congregation Kiddush was therefore arranged so that all could participate in this important ceremony.

In many lands the synagogue served as an inn for wayfarers, some of whom ate their meals there. For their benefit, the Kiddush was recited at the end of the synagogue service. When the synagogue ceased to house travelers, some literalists suggested that the Kiddush be eliminated from the public service. The practice, however, had become deeply rooted and appreciated; and the Kiddush has continued as a popular part of the community worship on Shabbat.

KIDDUSH FOR SHABBAT EVENING:

The sixth day....

The heavens and the earth, and all within them, were finished. By the seventh day. God had completed the work which He had been doing; and so God rested from all His work. Then God blessed the seventh day and sanctified it because on it He rested from all His work of creation.
Genesis 1:31-2:1-3.

MEDITATION OVER THE WINE:

In Jewish thought the wine represents joy. When we lift the cup of wine and recite the suggested blessing, called the Kiddush, we are really thanking God for all the joy that He gives us. Since we are believers we indeed have much for which we should bless God. In the context of this Erev Shabbat time, we are especially thanking the Lord for giving the Shabbat and for giving us the eternal rest we have in Messiah. So by raising this cup of joy, we are expressing to each other and to the Lord, the joy that we have by faith in HaShem's Messiah.

THE BLESSING OVER THE WINE:

Baruch ata Adonai, Eloheynu meleh ha-olam, boreh p'ri ha-gafen.

Blessed art Thou, O Lord our God, King of the universe, Creator of the fruit of the vine.

MEDITATION OVER THE CHALLAH:

As a blanket of dew covered the double portion of manna in the wilderness every sixth day, so the challah is covered. Why do we celebrate Shabbat with two challot? Because as Israel wandered in the desert, the Lord our God provided all of their needs. He is the Lord who provides. He never asks us to do something we are unable to do. During Israel's wanderings in the desert, He provided a double portion of manna on the sixth day so that His children would not need to go out to gather on the seventh day.

HAMOTZI: BLESSING OVER THE CHALLAH:

Baruch ata Adonai, Eloheynu meleh ha-olam, ha-motzi lehem min ha-aretz.

Blessed art Thou, O Lord our God, King of the universe, Who brings forth bread from the earth.

THE MEAL: LETS US ENJOY GOD'S BOUNTY:

Time to eat and enjoy God's provision.

GRACE AFTER THE MEAL:--BIRKAT HA-MAZON:

When the Lord brought back those that returned to Zion, it was like a dream. Then was our mouth filled with laughter, and our tongue with singing. Then the nations said: "The Lord has done great things for them"; truly the Lord has done great things for us, we rejoice! Bring back the rest of our homeless, O Lord. They that sow in tears shall reap in joy. Though sadly they carry seed to the field, gladly they bring home the sheaves. (Psalm 126)

SHALOM ALEYHEM...PEACE BE UNTO YOU

- Peace be unto you, O ministering angels,
- Messengers of the Most High, the King of kings,
- The Holy One, blessed be He.
- May your coming be in peace, messengers of peace.
- Bless me with peace, O messengers of peace.
- And may your departure be in peace, messengers of peace.
- Angels of the Most High, blessed be He.

RESPONSIVE READING:

- Blessed be our God of whose bounty we have partaken, and through whose goodness we live.
- *By Your grace and lovingkindness, O Lord, You nourish us and sustain us.*
- Blessed art Thou, O Lord our God, King of the universe, Who provides food for all.
- *We thank You for our liberation from bondages and for our heritage of freedom.*
- We are grateful for Your gift of the Torah which enriches and exalts the mind and soul of Your people.
- *Remember in mercy, O Lord, Your people Israel, Jerusalem, Your city, the place of Your glory.*
- O merciful God, bless all assembled at this table. Amen.
- *O merciful God, bless all who are rebuilding Zion so that Your word may again go forth from Jerusalem.*
- O merciful God, bless all who help bring justice and peace to the world. Amen.

SONGS FOR THE SHABBAT:

SHALOM ALEICHEM

- Shalom aleichem malachei ha-shareit
- Malachei Elyon
- Mimeleh malchei ha-melachim
- Ha-Kodosh barukh hu.
- Peace be unto you O ministering angels,
- Messengers of the Most High,
- The Supreme King of kings,
- The Holy One, blessed be He.
- Bo'achem l'shalom malachei
- Ha-shalom, malachei Elyon,
- Mimelech malchei ha-melachim
- Ha-Kadosh barukh hu.
- Enter in peace O messengers of peace,
- Messengers of the Most High,
- The Supreme King, bless me with peace,
- Depart now in peace.

SHABBAT SHALOM

- Shabbat shalom, Shabbat shalom
- Shabbat, Shabbat, Shabbat,
- Shabbat Shalom.
- Shabbat shalom, Shabbat shalom
- Shabbat, Shabbat, Shabbat,
- Shabbat Shalom.
- Shabbat Shabbat....Shabbat, Shabbat shalom
- Shabbat Shabbat....Shabbat, Shabbat shalom

HENEI MATOV (ELIJAH THE PROPHET)

- He-nei ma-tov, oo-mah-na-yim
- She-vat a-khim gam ya-khad
- (repeat)
- He-nei ma-tov, he-nei ma-tov
- Li, li ,li ,li ,li ,li ,li ,li ,
- (repeat)
- Behold! How good and how pleasant it is,
- For brethren to dwell together ...
- (repeat)
- In unity, to dwell in unity,
- Li, li ,li ,li ,li ,li ,li ,li ,
- (repeat)

SHEMONEH ESREI-AMIDAH..."THE PRAYER" (the long version of "the Lord's Prayer")

The following is [the benedictions](#) listed for your ease of praying.

PATRIARCHS

Blessed are You, HASHEM, our God and the God of our forefathers, God of Abraham, God of Isaac, and God of Jacob; the great, mighty, & awesome God, the supreme God, Who bestows beneficial kindness and creates everything, Who recalls the kindness of the Patriarchs and brings a Redeemer to their children's children, for His Name's sake, with love.

O King, Helper, Savior, and Shield, Blessed are You, HASHEM, Shield of Abraham.

GOD'S MIGHT

You are eternally mighty, my Lord, the Resuscitator of the dead are You; abundantly able to save.

He sustains the living with kindness, resuscitates the dead with abundant mercy, supports the fallen, heals the sick, releases the confined, and maintains His faith to those asleep in the dust. Who is like You, O Master of mighty deeds, and who is comparable to You, O King who causes death and restores life and makes salvation sprout!

And you are faithful to resuscitate the dead. Blessed are You, HASHEM, Who resuscitates the dead.

HOLINESS OF GOD'S NAME

You are holy and Your Name is holy, and holy ones praise You every day, forever, for You are God, the great and holy King. Blessed are You, HASHEM, the holy God.

INSIGHT

You graciously endow man with knowledge and teach insight to a frail mortal. Endow us graciously from Yourself with wisdom, insight, and knowledge. Blessed are You, HASHEM, gracious Giver of knowledge.

REPENTANCE

Bring us back, our Father, to Your Torah, and bring us near, our King, to Your service, and influence us to return in perfect repentance before You. Blessed are You, HASHEM, Who desires repentance.

FORGIVENESS

Forgive us, our Father, for we have sinned; pardon us, our King, for we have willfully sinned; for You are the good and forgiving God. Blessed are You, HASHEM, the gracious One Who pardons abundantly.

REDEMPTION

Behold, please, our affliction, take up our grievance, and redeem us with a complete redemption speedily for Your Name's sake, for You are God, the powerful Redeemer. Blessed are You, HASHEM, Redeemer of Israel.

HEALTH AND HEALING

Heal us, HASHEM; then we will be healed; save us; then we will be saved, for You are our praise. Bring complete recovery for all our ailments, for You are God, King, the faithful and compassionate Healer.

Blessed are You, HASHEM, Who heals the sick among His people Israel.

Bring cure and healing for all our illnesses, all our sufferings, and all our ailments, for You are God, King, the faithful and compassionate Healer. Blessed are You, HASHEM, Who heals the sick of His people Israel.

YEAR OF PROSPERITY

Bless on our behalf O HASHEM, our God, this year and all its kinds of crops for the best, and give dew and rain for a blessing on the face of the earth, and satisfy us from its bounty, and bless our year like the best years for blessing. For You are the good and generous God Who blesses the years. Blessed are You, HASHEM, Who blesses the years.

INGATHERING OF EXILES

Sound the great shofar for our freedom, raise the banner to gather our exiles and speedily gather us together from the four corners of the earth to our land. Blessed are You, HASHEM, Who gathers in the dispersed of His people Israel.

RESTORATION OF JUSTICE

Restore our judges as in earliest times and our counselors as at first; remove from us sorrow and injustice; and speedily reign over us-You, HASHEM, alone with kindness and compassion. Justify us through righteousness and judgment. Blessed are You, HASHEM, the King Who loves righteousness and judgment.

AGAINST HERETICS

And for slanderers let there be no hope; & may all the heretics perish in an instant; & may all the enemies of Your people be cut down speedily. May you speedily uproot, smash, & cast down the wanton sinners-destroy them, lower them, speedily in our days. Blessed are You, HASHEM, Who breaks enemies & humbles wanton sinners.

THE RIGHTEOUS

On the righteous, on the devout, on the elders of the remainder of Your people, the family of Israel, on the remnant of the academy of their scholars, on the righteous converts and on ourselves may Your compassion be aroused please, HASHEM, our God, and give goodly reward to all who sincerely believe in Your Name. Put our lot with them, and may we never feel ashamed, for we trust in You, and upon Your truly great compassion do we rely. Blessed are You, HASHEM, Mainstay and Assurance of the righteous.

REBUILDING JERUSALEM

And to Jerusalem, Your city, may You return in compassion, and may You rest within it, as You have spoken. May You rebuild it soon in our days as an eternal structure. May You rebuild it soon in our days as an eternal structure, and may you speedily establish the throne of Your servant David within it. Blessed are You, HASHEM, the Builder of Jerusalem.

DAVIDIC REIGN

The offspring of Your servant David may You speedily cause to flourish, and enhance his pride through Your salvation, for we hope for Your salvation all the day (and look forward to salvation). Blessed are You, HASHEM, Who causes the pride of salvation to flourish.

ACCEPTANCE OF PRAYER

Merciful Father, hear our voice, HASHEM our God, pity and be compassionate to us, and accept-with compassion and favor-our prayer, for God Who hears prayer & supplications are You. From before Yourself, our King, turn us not away empty-handed. Be gracious with us, answer us, and hear our prayer, for You hear the prayer of each mouth of Your people Israel with compassion. Blessed are You, HASHEM, Who hears prayer.

TEMPLE SERVICE

Be favorable, HASHEM, our God, toward Your people Israel, turn to their prayer and restore the service to the Holy of Holies of Your Temple. Speedily accept the fire-offerings of Israel and their prayer with love & favor, and may the service of Your people Israel always be favorable to You.

May our eyes behold Your return to Zion in compassion. Blessed are You, HASHEM, Who restores His Presence to Zion.

THANKSGIVING

We gratefully thank You, for it is You who are HASHEM, our God and the God of our forefathers for all eternity; our Rock, the Rock of our lives, Shield of our salvation are You from generation to generation. We shall thank You and relate Your praise-for our lives, which are committed to Your power & for our souls that are entrusted to You; for Your miracles that are with us every day; & for Your wonders and favors in every season-evening, morning, and afternoon. The Beneficent One, for Your compassion were never exhausted, & the Compassionate One, for Your kindness never ended-for we have always put our hope in You.

For all these, may Your Name be blessed, exalted and extolled, our King, continually forever and ever.

Everything alive will gratefully acknowledge You, Selah! and praise and bless Your great Name sincerely, forever, for it is good. O God of our salvation and help, Selah! The most generous God, Blessed are You, HASHEM, Your Name is 'The Generous One' and to You it is fitting to give thanks.

PEACE

Establish peace, goodness, blessing, life, graciousness, kindness, and compassion upon us & upon all of Your people Israel. Bless us, our Father, all of us as one, with the light of Your countenance, for with the light of Your countenance You gave us, HASHEM, our God, the Torah of life, and peace. And may it be good in Your eyes to bless us and to bless all of Your people Israel, in every season and in every hour with Your peace (with abundant strength and peace).

Blessed are You, HASHEM, Who blesses His people Israel with peace. May the expressions of my mouth and the thoughts of my heart find favor before You, HASHEM, my Rock and my Redeemer.

My God, guard my tongue from evil and my lips from speaking deceitfully. To those who curse me, let my soul be silent; and let my soul be like dust to everyone. Open my heart to Your Torah, then my soul will pursue Your commandments. As for all those who oppose and who design evil against me, speedily nullify their counsel and disrupt their design. May it be Your will, HASHEM, my God and the God of my forefathers, that human jealousy may not rise up against me, nor my jealousy upon others; may I not become angry today, and may I not anger You. Rescue me from the Evil Inclination and place in my heart submissiveness and humility. O our King and our God, cause YOUR Name to be unified in Your world; rebuild Your city, lay the foundation of Your House, perfect Your Sanctuary; gather in the scattered exiles, redeem Your sheep, and gladden Your congregation. Act for Your Name's sake; act for Your right hand's sake; act for Your Torah's sake; act for Your sanctity's sake. That Your beloved ones may be given rest; let Your right hand save, and respond to me. May the expressions of my mouth and the thoughts of my heart find favor before You, HASHEM, my Rock and my Redeemer. He Who makes peace in His heights, may He make peace upon us, and upon all Israel. Now

respond: Amen.

May it be Your will, HASHEM our God and the God of our forefathers, that the Holy Temple be rebuilt, speedily in our days. Grant us our share in Your Torah, and may we serve You there with reverence, as in days of old and in former years.

AFTER THE MEAL:

The time following the meal could be spent singing some family songs together. In addition, if you have Erev Shabbat services, you're all dressed and ready to go! If not, enjoy the special blessings of an early bed time.

The Erev Shabbat service is an excellent time to invite guests into your home. Perhaps you could invite another person or family from your congregation. You might also use this time to invite someone who does not know the Messiah. Conducting a Friday evening meal in such a fashion as we have described is conducive to making a Jewish family feel at home and is a good discussion stimulator!

SELAH!

As strangers (Gentiles), or men and women wishing to return to the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, we must remember the Hebrew roots of our Christian faith. Romans 11:18 indicates that those engrafted branches, inserted into the "olive tree" of God'S Israel, do not support the root! The root (Jews) supports the "new, wild" branches (Gentile believers). It should be obvious to you that there is absolutely no way we as believing Gentiles can possibly understand the writings of these ancient people of God without understanding the customs, manners, beliefs, idioms, word meanings and traditions, as they were being used when they were written. In doing this we can return to the "faith once given to the saints." We at Bet Emet Ministries are aiding others in returning to the original faith of Yeshua as depicted in the New Testament; as we might expect a first century orthodox Jew believed and lived it. Let us never forget that it was "this faith" that was taken in the Great Commission to the Gentiles of the world, not what the majority practice today.

By turning (teshuvah) to the Apostolic Doctrine of the early church we will discover that remembrance and observance of Shabbat was only one small part of the Apostle's Doctrine! Observance of Shabbat sustains God'S creation and gives all of us a part in repairing God'S world ravaged by sin. Not only do we aid God in repairing what man "broke" by sin, but we seize our part in creating God'S Kingdom here on earth (co-creators and co-laborers). When we, as God'S servants, imitate Him by doing good through correct teaching, sharing, exhorting, giving, and being obedient to Him, it is as through we are revealing what is in heaven above to those who don't know God'S will for their lives.

MORE THOUGHTS ON SHABBAT:

***Shabbat*, the Hebrew word for Sabbath, has been described a thousand ways. It has been called a shelter, palace, fortress, bride and queen. *Shabbat* is the only day of the week with a Hebrew name at all. All of the other names for days of the week are pagan names! Now let me ask you, which day of the week has God overseen to protect from man's attempts to corrupt since time immemorial? **The Sabbath (Saturday) will always be God's day!** The idea that one day out of seven should be devoted to rest and spiritual reflection has always been a radical concept. Its earliest practice challenged the ancient world, where labor was the lot of beasts and slaves, and leisure was the privilege of the rich and powerful. Today, when the machinery of life never stops, when everyone has too much to do and not enough time in which to finish, **Shabbat continues to force us to look at the questions that challenge our value systems.** The challenge presented by the Sabbath takes all of us to our very roots: "*The heaven and earth were finished, and all their array. One the seventh day God finished the work and stopped. And God blessed the seventh day and made it holy; because on it God rested from all the work of creation*" (Gen. 2:1-3). Only after the seventh day of *Shabbat* was the world completed and perfect.**

SHOULD YOU NOT CHOOSE TO BE FREE?

Six days a week we live under the tyranny & influence of things that occupy space and put demands upon our time. On the *Shabbat* we try to become attuned to holiness in time. It is a day on which we are called to share in what is eternal in time, to turn from the results of creation to the mystery of creation; from the world of creation to the created goal for the world. God has created all for His *Shabbat*! Do you not yearn for that eternal rest with God that will never end?

Sections of the *Shabbat* liturgy recall the time when the Jews were slaves in Egypt. And although the *Shabbat* celebrates freedom, it is also a reminder of the contrast between slavery and freedom. The Jewish notion of freedom entails both political and personal responsibilities; the mandate to work for the liberation of all oppressed people, and the task of remaining free from enslavement to false idols, such as false religion, wealth, power, and fame.

In addition to "remembering" and "keeping" the Sabbath, there is a very important idea in the Book of Isaiah (58:13): *"If thou turn away thy foot because of the Sabbath, from pursuing thy business on My holy day; and **call the Sabbath a delight**, and the holy of the Lord honorable, and shall honor it, not doing thy wonted ways, not pursuing thy business, nor speaking thereof."* The two basic ideas derived from the verse are: *oneg shabbat* ("Sabbath delight") and *kavod shabbat* ("Sabbath honor," paying special honor to the day). The Sabbath is to be treated as a day of delight (in this context, quiet enjoyment) and a day to be welcomed and treated as an honored guest (like a bride or a queen). We welcome the bride of the Sabbath; the Sabbath queen.

WE MUST CHOOSE SHABBAT:

The first appearance of *Shabbat* in the Torah is in the form of a verb, *shavat*: *"And God ceased (rested/stopped)"*. *Shabbat* is recreated weekly; **Israel is to make Shabbat**. The first verb for most Jews & Gentiles (who are grafted into Israel) today, however, is not "make" but "choose." **And choosing Shabbat is not one decision, but many.**

CHOOSING SHABBAT MEANS:

- (1). Making a commitment to a weekly period of rest and peace.
- (2). Making distinctions between activities that are "*Shabbat-like*" from those that are "work-week-like".
- (3). Avoiding things that might violate a sense of shalom, ease and peace, and planning ways to enhance that feeling.
- (4). Patterning your Sabbath activities after the Heavenly example.

Because *Shabbat* is often defined in terms of prohibitions against certain kinds of activities, many have erroneously come to think of *Sabbath* observance as a series of restrictions or a weekly sentence of self-denial. But *Shabbat* is not a retreat from the world or an exercise in asceticism. Making *Shabbat* is not a matter of refraining, but of *doing*. The Talmud says, **"the affairs of Heaven are mandated for Shabbat"**, specifically teaching children the Torah and arranging weddings. Resting, eating, and praying are not only permitted, but mandated. There are other verbs for *Shabbat*, too; sleeping, reading, thinking, studying, talking, listening, meditating, visiting the sick, laughing, singing, welcoming guests, making love. Other examples of ways in which others honor the day are for worshippers to wear special Sabbath clothes ("the Sabbath best"); eat special meals (one on Friday night and two during the day...these taken collectively are called **The LORD's Supper!**); take time for prayer and for study of the Torah; spend time with one's family; and banish care and worry so far as possible. Enjoy Shabbat!

Mark 2:27 27 And he said unto them, The sabbath was made for man, and

not man for the sabbath: (KJV)



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BET EMET MINISTRIES: ORDER OF SHABBAT SERVICE

The following is a summary of the Shabbat Services held by Bet Emet Ministries which were part of our congregation. Much of the following can be adopted and adapted for your own use in conducting your Shabbat Bible Studies in your own home. Often we held the following "service" in our home or various homes where we would meet. We chose to use the Bokser Siddur due to its simplicity in light of the fact that most of our congregation of non-Jews had little or no background in Hebrew. The Bokser Siddur was just perfect and we came to love and cherish this book as we had our Stone Edition of the Hebrew Scriptures (the Jewish Tanakh). The page numbers listed for your ease and convenience correspond to the Bokser Siddur. The Bokser Siddur can be found at:

http://www.amazon.com/exec/obidos/tg/detail/-/0874413680/qid=1078839618/sr=1-3/ref=sr_1_3/104-5302005-5491118?v=glance&s=books

Opening Of The Service:

Borhu (call to worship).....pp109 (pastor or teacher)

Shema...The Opening Song (Congregation Would Sing The Shema along with the cassette tape of the music rendition chosen for this song)

Opening Prayer.....pp1 (pastor or teacher)

Welcome/Announcements

Worship The Lord In Song:

Congregation Worship Service: (Songs To Be Announced On A Weekly Basis And A Cassette Made Previously Of About 8 Or More Songs In Various Orders To Be Played During Service Whereby The Congregation Could Sing Along). This Became The Responsibility Of A Designated Servant Within The Congregation.

Shema:

Reading of The Shema...(Congregation Would Stand.....pp 48-49).

Pastoral Exhortation From The Word Of God For The Coming Week:

Prayer Service:

Congregational Prayers.....pp 6-8, 109, 111, 112, (congregation prayed together while seated)

Sabbath Psalms.....pp101-107 (selections varied by week and divided among the congregation; reader would stand when these were read to honor the Word of God).

Amidah [Silent Prayer].....pp 51-60 (congregation stand, pray silently, be seated when finished)

Alenu.....pp 79-80 (congregation prayed corporately...would pray while seated)

Kedushah.....pp 137....(congregation would stand and recite together)

Mourner's Kaddish.....pp 80(congregation would stand and recite together)

Torah Service:

Blessing Before Torah.....pp 4, 156 (pastoral blessing by pastor/teacher)

Torah Reading: (read weekly by various in congregation; reader would stand when reading the Word of God)

Torah Teaching: (short discussion by pastor or teacher followed by questions by congregation whereby we discussed the passages among ourselves)

Blessing After Torah.....pp 11 "Kaddish" (pastor or teacher)

Concluding of Service:

Aaronic Blessing/High Priestly Prayer.....pp 4 (by pastor or teacher)

Concluding Congregational Prayer.....pp124 Adon O Lam...(congregation stand and recite together)

Yigdal.....pp125 (congregation stand and recite together)

Offering:

Sanctifying Gifts To God Deut. 26:12-19 (we never took up offerings or asked for offerings....a small box was positioned for those wishing to bless and further the ministry...totally optional...between you and God...Would be given during the fellowship times when others not observing)

Worship The Lord In Dance And Music:

(depended upon where we were meeting and space allowed; but music was accustomed weekly)

Oneg/Food/Fellowship/Refreshments:

Conclusion Of Shabbat Service:

Congregation Would Regather And Hold Hands And Sing *Hine MaTov*

Then the Shabbat Service was concluded



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DID PAUL TEACH NON-JEWS TO KEEP THE SABBATH AND THE HAVDALAH SERVICE?

Let me stimulate you to consider what is behind **Acts 20:7...in doing so let us remember that what we find in this text long after the crucifixion and death of Yeshua is the picture of non-Jewish believers in Yeshua being taught to keep the Sabbath and the Havdalah service.**

What should jump to the forefront of our minds is the question that asks: If this was what was being taught to the non-Jewish believers in Yeshua in fulfillment of the Great Commission then why have I not been taught this before now by my Christian Church? The answers to these types of questions are not always comforting when you begin to realize that you have bought into a replacement religion and have not been taught the truth due to anti-Semitism that has reigned unchecked in Gentile Christianity for going on 1900 years at present. This provokes an even larger question: in your actions and religious beliefs are you really a follower of Yeshua/Jesus or have you just been told you are and not having the necessary knowledge before now you never knew any different?

Answer for yourself: Did you know that Paul, a Jew, is conducting a Hebraic worship service in these Scriptures?

Acts 20:7 7 And upon the first day of the week, when the disciples came together to break bread, Paul preached unto them, ready to depart on the morrow; (KJV)

What we find here is that the **word "day" is in italics....meaning it is added to the text for smoothness of reading....but there is only one problem...if you translate "On the first of the week" from English back to Greek back to Hebrew (remember he is a Jew and that would have been his thought series) we find "as the day was beginning to dawn"...we encounter a deception....overlooked in Greek and English....mainly; that for a Jew the day begins at 6:00 p.m. and not at 12:00 p.m...so the time frame of the passage is not daylight..but dusk!**

Here is the Key that you miss by reading the English of most Christian Bibles and poor translations: In other words, verse seven, Acts 20: **upon the first of the week (or as the first of the week was beginning to dawn)...in other words...as Sunday was approaching (6:01 p.m. on Saturday really Sunday began)...in other words...on the evening of the Sabbath (Saturday-for Paul kept the Sabbath and not Sunday)...he**

was conducting and leading these Greeks (like you and me)...in a Havdalah service. What we find is that these Greek believers in Yeshua were observing NOT a Sunday morning service that is totally disjointed from a Sabbath service, but the concluding part of the synagogue Sabbath Service; and this mind you was over 30 years following Jesus'/Yeshua's death so his death changed nothing in this regard as you can see!

We find again that these Gentiles, to whom the Great Commission was taken, where Jesus instructed that these Gentiles be taught "to observe those things that I commanded you"...and one of the many "things they were taught to observe" was a Havdalah service which was part of the "pattern" of worship given to David and handed down through Solomon, even handed down past the crucifixion of Jesus, even the destruction of the Temple in 70 C.E. This pattern of worship (ie. Havdalah for instance) continued well into the third and fourth century for Gentiles before it was banished at the Council of Nicea by Constantine.

Answer for yourself: If Paul were alive to day and he came to your city would he not teach us the same as he did in Troas? Remember, Paul was teaching Gentiles like you and me to keep Havdalah over 30 years after the cross.

Also, notice, that there were "many lights in the upper chamber".

Answer for yourself: Why?

The reason is so simple once you understand the dynamics of the Havdalah service. Each believer had his own candle and just before the main candle was extinguished (as part of the service) each believer would light their own individual candles, thus each has his own illuminated candle (they were themselves the light of the world) and we now better understand the event as Paul preached from 6:00 PM to midnight..

Please don't discount what I say. Study the Hebrew roots of the early Gentile church, find when it was changed, by who, and why!

Answer for yourself: Lastly, if Paul taught them this, why have you not been taught this before? Don't you want to do what Jesus said and follow his example?

You are not any more saved if you do or if you don't...you are only more obedient to those things Jesus taught we are to observe.

This should stimulate your thinking in the things I write. Blessings to all.



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HAS YOUR PASTOR LED YOU IN A HAVDALAH SERVICE YET?

Let me stimulate you to consider what is behind Acts 20:6-7

Acts 20:6-7 6 And we sailed away from Philippi after the days of unleavened bread, and came unto them to Troas in five days; where we abode seven days. 7 And upon the first day of the week, when the disciples came together to break bread, Paul preached unto them, ready to depart on the morrow; and continued his speech until midnight. (KJV)

Answer for yourself: Did you ever notice that the word "day" in Acts 20:7 is in italics; meaning that it is not in the Greek manuscripts but added later supposedly for clarity? More on this later.

Answer for yourself: Did you know that Paul, a Jew, is conducting a Hebraic worship service in these Scriptures?

Answer for yourself: Just where is Paul located when performing this worship service and who were in his audience? Troas in Asia Minor or let us say in Greece as we are know it today. **This was a Gentile nation.**

What we find upon close examination of the text in my King James Bible is that in Acts 20:7 the word "day" is in italics....meaning it is added to the text for smoothness of reading.

Answer for yourself: So what is the problem with that?

If you translate **"On the first of the week"** from English back to the "Greek" and then put in back into Hebrew context (remember Paul is a supposedly a Jew and that would have been his thought process since priding himself on being a "pharisee of pharisees") we find that the above phrase is literally rendered:

"as the day was beginning to dawn"

Here we have a terrible deception that goes overlooked by 2.5 billion Christians when reading this passage in English. We fail to realize that for Jews the day begins not at 12:00 midnight as we learned since influenced by Rome but according to Genesis "evening and morning was the first day." We have here a deception that is overlooked because we approach the Bible as Christians almost totally ignorant of the Jewish language and culture of the documents which we are reading. For a Jew the day begins at 6:00 p.m. and not at 12:00 p.m. (midnight).

In other words, verse seven, Acts 20: **upon the first of the week** (or as the first of the week was beginning to dawn) is a reference to sundown on Saturday which was the Sabbath. Let us say it another way; "as Sunday was approaching" (6:01 p.m. on Saturday is really when Sunday began in Jewish reckoning of time). What we find here is that on the evening of the Sabbath and before Sunday began (Saturday-for Paul kept the Sabbath and not Sunday) we find Paul was leading these Greeks (like you and me)...in what is called in Jewish

terminology a Havdalah service. What we find is that these Greeks were observing not a Sunday morning service that is totally disjointed from a Sabbath service, but they were worshipping and were being led by Paul in a concluding part of the synagogue Sabbath Service.

Answer for yourself: Should we find that strange? No not really if we paid attention to what James said in Acts 15 when addressing what to do with the Gentile problem since so many were turning to God due to the ministry of Paul outside of Palestine:

Acts 15:21 21 For Moses of old time hath in every city them that preach him, being read in the synagogues every sabbath day. (KJV)

We find again that these Gentiles, to whom the Great Commission was taken, when Jesus instructed that these Gentiles be taught "to observe those things that I commanded you" were being taught just that....obedience to the Commandments of God. In particular we are addressing in this article the observance and keeping of the Sabbath. We see in this veiled mention of Paul in Troas that he was teaching these Gentiles the observance of the Sabbath and this was one of the many "things they (the Gentiles) were taught to observe." The Havdalah service, as seen in James' reference and Paul's example, was part of the "pattern" of worship given to David and handed down through Solomon; even handed down past the crucifixion of Jesus, even the destruction of the Temple in 70 C.E. as the message that was to be taken to the Gentile nations. This pattern of worship (ie. Havdalah for instance) continued well into the third and fourth century for Gentiles before it was banished at the Council of Nicea by Constantine. Just read Constantine's "Easter Letter" and see how he changed the religion of Jesus as practiced in Gentile nations in so many ways in the early 4th century.

Answer for yourself: If Paul were alive to day and he came to Dallas, or you city (wherever) or any Greek or American city today, would he not teach us the same as he did in Troas? Remember, Paul was teaching Gentiles like you and me to keep Havdalah over 30 years after the cross.

Answer for yourself: We often hear by unknowledgeable pastors and teachers: "We don't have to do this any longer because Jesus 'fulfilled' it." Does this example in Acts 20:6-7 look to you as if the early church, James, or Paul for that matter who was out teaching Gentiles believed that Jesus life or death "fulfilled" and "nullified" the Sabbath? It sure does not? Should Christian pastors study more? I will let you answer that!

Acts 20:8 8 And there were many lights in the upper chamber, where they were gathered together. (KJV)

Also, notice, that there were many lights in the upper chamber

Answer for yourself: Why was this:

The reason for this is because that was part of the Havdalah service; the concluding part as the Sabbath left and as Sunday began at 6:01 PM in reckoning of time (as the day was dawning).

One needs only to read of how the Havdalah service was conducted to see that as the Sabbath was departing that everyone present lit his own candle as the center candle was extinguished (part of the service). The believers would light their own individual candles, thus the reference to there being "many lights in the upper chamber." Let us know forget that Paul was now preaching past sundown where he preached from 6:00 PM to midnight on the morning of Sunday (after sundown Saturday is when again Sunday began in Judaism).

Please don't discount what I say. Study the Hebrew roots of the early Gentile church, find when it was changed, by who, and why! Then ask yourself just "whom" you are following in keeping Sunday and not the Sabbath as both God commanded and as Jesus and the early Church instructed the Gentiles.

Answer for yourself: Lastly, if Paul taught them this, why have you not been taught this before?

You are not any more saved if you do or if you don't keep the Sabbath; you are only more obedient to those things Jesus taught we are to observe. The key is Isa. 56 where the Gentile Godfearers were instructed to choose those things that please God and take hold of His Covenant.

Isa 56:1-6 1 Thus saith the LORD, Keep ye judgment, and do justice: for my salvation is near to come, and my righteousness to be revealed. 2 Blessed is the man that doeth this, and the son of man (Gentiles are included) that layeth hold on it; that keepeth the sabbath from polluting it, and keepeth his hand from doing any evil. 3 Neither let the son of the stranger (explicit reference to Gentiles), that hath joined himself to the LORD, speak, saying, The LORD hath utterly separated me from his people: neither let the eunuch (explicit reference again to Gentiles) say. Behold, I am a dry tree. 4 For thus saith the LORD unto the eunuchs (explicit reference to Gentiles) that keep my sabbaths, and choose the things that please me, and take hold of my covenant: 5 Even unto them will I give in mine house and within my walls a place and a name better than of sons and of daughters: I will give them an everlasting name, that shall not be cut off. 6 Also the sons of the stranger (explicit reference to Gentiles), that join themselves to the LORD, to serve him, and to love the name of the LORD, to be his servants, every one that keepeth the sabbath from polluting it, and taketh hold of my covenant; (KJV)

Answer for yourself: Did you notice the repeated connection between Gentiles choosing to keep God's Sabbaths (holy days and weekly sabbath)?

This is what the early Church, James, and Paul were doing. They were instructing the Gentile nations to choose those things pleasing to God and in this reference in Acts 20 that included the Sabbath; something the vast majority of 2.5 billion Christians today in the world do not do because of being taught incorrectly.

Answer for yourself: Let us end this article by asking ourselves: "Who are we really following as Christians today....Constantine or Jesus?"

This should stimulate your thinking in the things I write. Blessings to all.



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CONCLUDING THE SABBATH WITH THE HAVDALAH SERVICE

Three stars have appeared in the sky. Havdalah, or the "Separation" of the holy day from the days of work begins. We give thanks for the Sabbath day that is now ending. We are grateful for its many blessings: for peace and for joy, rest for the body, and refreshment for the soul. We hope that something of its meaning and message remains with us as we enter the new week, lifting all that we do to a higher place of holiness.

The solemn Havdalah is recited both in synagogue and at home.

Havdalah means distinction: [This marks the distinction between sacred and ordinary.](#)

ITEMS NEEDED TO OBSERVE THE HAVDALAH SERVICE

- Wine or grape juice
- Wine glass
- A havdalah candle-two candles twisted together or just put two candles together.
- A spice box containing sweet smelling spices like cinnamon, nutmeg, and allspice
- A tray or large plate for the cup and candles.

HAVDALAH SERVICE

The service will starts when three stars are visible. This is traditionally observed by the woman. This marks the end of the Shabbat. She will then say, *"O God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, guard thy people. The beloved Shabbat is departing."* She will then light a single candle and exclaim, *"A good week, a full week, a fortunate week, on us and on all of Israel. Amen."* *"A good week "* is the greeting as the men come home.

THE ACTUAL SERVICE BEGINS HERE:

Reader: Behold, God is my deliverance; I will trust, and will not be afraid; truly the Lord is my strength and my song; He has delivered me indeed. Joyfully shall you draw upon the fountains of deliverance. It is for the Lord to bring help; my God, thy blessing be upon thy people. The Lord of hosts is with us; the God of Jacob is our Stronghold. Lord of hosts, happy is the man who trusts in thee. O Lord, save us; may the King answer us when we call. The Jews had light and joy, gladness and honor. So be it with us. I will take the cup of deliverance, and will call upon the name of the Lord. (Is. 12.2-3; Ps. 3.9; 46.12; 84.13; 20.10; Est. 8.16; Ps. 116.13)

(Fill the cup till it overflows. Do not drink any. Recite the following blessing while holding cup up, and fingers pointing up.)

1st BLESSING

Baruch ata Adonai, Eloheynu melech ha-olam, borey p'ri ha gafen.

Blessed art thou, Lord our God, King of the universe, for creating the fruit of the vine.

2nd BLESSING

(Lift the spice box to God while reciting the following blessing)

Baruch ata Adonai, Eloheynu Melech Ha-Olam, Borey Miney V'Samim.

Blessed art Thou, O Lord our God, King of the universe, who creates various kinds of spices.

(Pass the spice box around. The spice box is not used if the next day after the Shabbat is a festival.)

3rd BLESSING:

(Lift the candle to God while reciting the following blessing)

Baruch ata Adonai, Eloheynu Melech Ha-Olam, Borey Norey Ha aish.

Blessed art Thou, O Lord our God, King of the universe, who creates the lights of fire.

Reader: God came from Teman, the Holy One from Mount Paran. His glory covered the heavens and His radiance filled the earth. His splendor was like the sunrise; rays flashed from His hand, where His power was hidden. (It is from Hab. 3.5)

(After the candle is lit the reader hold his hands before the candle till see the light seep through his hand and fingers without burning himself)

CALLING OF ELIJAHU HA-NAVI TO COME AND INAUGURATE THE MESSIANIC ERA.....THE SONG IS SUNG BY ALL

- Eliyahu Hanavi (Elijah the Prophet)
- Eliyahu Ha-navi, Eliyahu Ha-tishbi (Elijah the prophet, Elijah the Tishbite)
- Eliyahu, Eliyahu, Eliyahu Ha-giladi (Elijah, Elijah, Elijah the Giladite)
- Bimheira v'yameinu yavo eileinu Im Mashiach Ben David (May he come soon in our time and bring Messiah son of David)

(This song is song because of the traditional belief, that Messiah will not return on a Shabbat, due to its sacredness. So, once the Shabbat is over, Elijah is called to arrive because he must appear before the Messiah, in order to announce him.)

DISTINCTION BETWEEN SACRED TIMES WITH GOD & ORDINARY TIME

BLESSING:

Baruch ata Adonai Eloheynu melech haOlam. Hamavdil bain kodesh l'chol bain l'choshech bain Yisrael la-amim, bain yom hash-vii l'shaishet y'mai hama-asheh. Baruch ata Adonai hamav-dil bain-kodesh lichol.

Reader and group: Blessed art Thou, O Lord our God, King of the universe, who has made a distinction between the sacred and the ordinary, between light and darkness, between Israel and the other nations, between the seventh day and the six working days. Blessed art Thou, O Lord, who has made a distinction between the sacred and the profane.

(Drink the wine and pass it around for all to sip or have individual wine cups filled for all)

PRAYER FOR COMING WEEK

King of the Universe, O Father, who is merciful and forgiving, in Your goodness favor us with peace as we start the six working days; free us from all sin and transgression and cleanse us from all iniquity and wickedness. Please cause us, O Merciful God and King, to cling to the study Of Your Word, and to occupy ourselves with the doing of good deeds. May it be your will, that we hear, in the days to follow, news of gladness and joy. Keep us free from the envy of any man, and may we envy none. O Father of Mercy, bless and prosper the work of our hands, and the work of all who have thoughts of good in their hearts towards us, and your people Israel; but for all those who plan evil against us, and your people Israel, frustrate them and prevent them from carrying out their wicked schemes. As it is said, "Take counsel together, and it shall be brought to nought; speak the word, and it shall not stand; for God is with us." O Father, in your mercy and forgiveness, open the gates of light and blessing, of redemption and salvation. Guide our feet to walk in Your ways and fill us with rejoicing, peace, and holiness. Direct us into the study of your Torah and inspire us to pray without ceasing; and in us fulfill the scripture:

How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him that brings good tidings, that announces peace, the harbinger of good tidings, that announces salvation; that says unto Zion, Thy God reigns! Amen. (Selah). Yeshayahu 52.7 (Isaiah)

(The candle is put out with the wine that overflowed from the cup...as this ends the service)

Some like to make the candle fight to stay lit, this shows the reluctance to let the Sabbath to end.

(A finger is dipped in the wine and passing it over the eyes alludes to Psalm 19.9 where God's commands are described as "enlightening the eyes.")

SYMBOLISM USED IN THE HAVDALAH

The twisted candles... They represent a couple of things: It first represents a link between creation and redemption. The candle used in the Havdalah services has two wicks because it is to be a torch. A torch is something with at least two wicks. The Hebrew for torch is l'pidot. It is a synonym for the Messiah. Refer to the vision Avraham had of the torch between the two halves of the bull in Gen. 15. Also it is a picture of both Jews and Gentiles being the "one people of God" as we see from the Scriptures (one faith and the two sticks in

Joseph's hand becoming one).

The overflowing cup..The glass represents as a visual sign of the fullness and completion of the week. As the wine spills, the Shabbat departs and reminds us that God's blessing both in this life and the life to come are more than we could ever ask for or deserve.

Putting out the candle...It shows the Shabbat ending which is sad because each week the people look forward to the Shabbat

Spice box...It is to cheer the soul since the Shabbat is departing and the realization that God's ultimate manifestation of redemption and Eternal Life must wait....as we experience it only symbolically in this life and the full manifestation of it awaits God's eternal sabbath. The intention is that this last fragrance will carry you through the pressures of the week until once again you can celebrate the Shabbat.

In conclusion let us not forget that Paul taught the non-Jews in Asia, Minor, during his missionary journeys to keep and observe the sabbath and the havdalah service.

Sadly that is not the experience today for many as followers of Jesus and "the Christ". But it can be!!!

Blessings..Craig Lyons M.Div.



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THE HOME HAVDALAH SERVICE

I. LIGHT THE HAVDALAH CANDLE (BY THE READER OF THE SERVICE)

The lighting of a candle announces the end of the Sabbath, during which making fire is prohibited. The candle used for *havdalah* has at least two wicks because the blessing refers to the "lights of the fire." *Havdalah* candles, which are available in Judaica shops, are often multicolored and contain several braided wicks.

II. ISA 12:2-6...READING OF THE PROPHET

Congregation:

Isa 12:2-6 2 Behold, God is my salvation; I will trust, and not be afraid: for the LORD JEHOVAH is my strength and my song; he also is become my salvation. 3 Therefore with joy shall ye draw water out of the wells of salvation. 4 And in that day shall ye say, Praise the LORD, call upon his name, declare his doings among the people, make mention that his name is exalted. 5 Sing unto the LORD; for he hath done excellent things: this is known in all the earth. 6 Cry out and shout, thou inhabitant of Zion: for great is the Holy One of Israel in the midst of thee. (KJV)

III. RAISE A FULL CUP OF WINE AND SAY--

Reader:

"Let us bless God together for the wine"

(DON'T DRINK YET!...LIFT THE WINE AND CONGREGATION RECITE)

"Baruch Atah Adonai Elohenu Melech ha'olam bore peri ha-gafen"

"Blessed are You, O Lord our God, King of the universe, Creator of the fruit of the vine. Amen!"

The wine is put down without drinking at this time.

IV. SHAKE SPICES...SMELL THEM...THEN PASS TO OTHERS TO ENJOY FRAGRANCE-----

Next comes the blessing over spices. The sense of smell has been put to religious use since ancient times, and

incense was used in the Temple in Jerusalem. There are a number of explanations for the presence of spices at *havdalah*. According to one legend, during *Shabbat* people are given an additional soul and when the Sabbath ends and this soul departs, the spices revive us, lest we faint. The sweetness of the spices symbolizes both the sweetness of paradise and also the wish for a sweet week to come.

After this blessing is recited, something fragrant is passed around for everyone to sniff and enjoy. Flowers or freshly cut fruit can be used. Most Jews who celebrate *havdalah*, however, own a spicebox filled with cloves and other spices. The oldest spiceboxes date from 16th century Germany, when they were often made in the shape of towers or turrets. Today, spice boxes come in all shapes and sizes, made out of everything from tin to wood to porcelain. They can be purchased in Judaica shops, and often come as part of *havdalah* sets that include a candle-holder, *kiddush* cup, and tray.

Reader:

"Let us bless God together for the spices"

Congregation:

Baruch Atah Adonai Eloheinu Melech ha' olam bore mi-ne bes-amim.

Blessed are You, O Lord our God, King of the universe, Creator of many kinds of spices. Amen!

V. LIFT THE HAVDALAH CANDLE---

Next comes the blessing over the fire of the candle, which has been burning. The rabbis reasoned that because God started the first week with light, it is fitting to begin every week with a prayer of thanks for light. Because all Jewish blessings require some form of action, it is traditional to hold the hands up in order to feel the warmth of the flame, and to use the light to distinguish between the nails and fingers. This custom probably derives from folk beliefs that fingernails revealed omens of the future. However, because there was great rabbinic opposition to such forms of divination, the rabbis devised alternative interpretations. According to one of these, Adam and Eve were covered by a protective shell before their expulsion from Eden, so looking at fingernails recalls paradise.

Reader:

"Let us bless God together for the flame"

Congregation:

Baruch Atah Adonai Eloheinu Melech ha' olam bo-re me'ore ha'esh.

Blessed are You, O Lord our God, King of the universe, Creator of the lights of fire. Amen!

(Reader Cups his hands & extend them to flame-examine)

VI. THANKING GOD FOR THE SEPARATION OF THE HOLY FROM THE SECULAR

Finally, there is the *havdalah* blessing itself, which thanks God for creation and for the distinctions that differentiate the universe into the place we inhabit and sanctify.

Reader:

Let us bless God together for the separation of sabbath from the rest of the week

Congregation:

Baruch Atah Adonai Elohenu Melech ha'olam ha-mavdil be-yn kodesh lechol be-yn or lech-o-sheck be-yn Yisrael leamim be-yn yom hashevi'i lesh-eshet yeme hama'aseh.

Blessed are you, O Lord our God, King of the universe, who makes a distinction between the holy & secular, between light and darkness, between Israel & the other nations, between the seventh day and the six working days. Blessed are You, O Lord our God, who makes a distinction between the holy & the secular.

VII. MEDITATION

Reader:

Havdalah is not for the close of Shabbat alone; it is for all the days. Havdalah means "separate yourself from the unholy; strive for holiness."

Havdalah means

- ----separate yourself from fraud & exploitation; be fair and honest with all people.
- ----separate yourself from indifference to poor and the deprived, the sick and the aged; work to ease their despair and their loneliness.
- ----separate yourself from hatred & violence; promote peace among people of all nations

May God give us understanding to reject the unholy & to choose the way of holiness. May the one who separates the holy from the profane inspire us to perform these acts of Havdalah.

VIII. NOW WE SIP WINE....&...POOR THE RESIDUE OF THE WINE INTO A PLATE

After this blessing the wine is drunk. Before anyone drinks, however, some is spilled into a plate or tray. This gesture symbolizes sadness and loss; as *Shabbat* ends, so ends its glimpse of redemption, of a world made whole. *Havdalah* expresses a longing for a never-ending *Shabbat*, which for Jews is expressed in the image of the messiah. The prophet Elijah (*Eliyahu*) is the legendary harbinger of the messiah and, because according to Talmudic legend Elijah will come after *havdalah*, it is traditional to sing "*Eliyahu Hanavi*."

IX. EXTINGUISH CANDLE IN REMAINING WINE WHICH WAS POURED INTO A PLATE

Some people begin *havdalah* with "*Eliyahu Hanavi*", and others conclude with it by lowering the burning candle into the wine while singing "*Eliyahu Hanavi*", timing it so that the light sizzles out with the very last word. Now we sing the song.

X. PRAYER:

Reader:

May God who separates the sacred from the profane, forgive our sins and make us secure and as numerous as the sea and as the stars of the night

XI. BLESSING: "SHA-OU-A-TOV"...

At the conclusion of *havdalah*, everyone says "*Shavua toy*." "A good week." In some families, everyone kisses or takes a moment to make a wish for the coming week. "*Shavua toy*" is also the name of a very simple, well-known song.

A good week. A week of peace. May gladness reign & joy increase.

XII. IF YOU INCORPORATE A KADDISH ..

(At this times, as we prepare for worship, we invite you to participate in the grape juice, bread, & spices, ...and also in the blessing of giving)

In doing Tzedakah, you cannot neglect the house that brings you teachers and gives you a place to know about HaShem and His truth.

Please rise....sing with us.....

XII. WE ALL SING TOGETHER "EILYAHU HANAVI" ONCE AGAIN (Elijah The Prophet)

- Ei-li-ya-hu ha-na-vi
- Ei-li-ya-hu ha-tish-bi;
- Ei-li-ya-hu, Ei-li-ya-hu,
- Ei-li-ya-hu ha-gil-a-di.
- Be-me-hei-ra ve-ya-mei-nu,
- ya-vo ei-lei-nu;
- im ma-shi-sah ben Da-vaid,
- im ma-shi-ach ben Da-vid.
- Ei-li-ya-hu...

Elijah the prophet, Elijah the Tishbite. Elijah of Gilead. Soon in our days, Elijah will come with the Messiah, the son of David.



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A DEEPER LOOK INTO THE ANCIENT PASSOVER

Lev. 23:4-5 4 These are the appointed seasons of the LORD, even holy convocations, which ye shall proclaim in their appointed season. 5 In the first month, on the fourteenth day of the month at dusk, is the LORD'S passover.

The festival of Passover is known in Jewish tradition as the **"Season of Our Freedom."** Its **central theme is Release.** There are two ways to view and interpret the message of the Passover:

- **The Seasonal Message**
 - On the seasonal plane, it marks the release of the earth from the grip of winter. On the seasonal plane, Passover inaugurates the reaping of the new grain; man sows the seed, but God -or the cosmic power - provides the rainfall and sunshine which quickens it.
- **The Historical Message**
 - On the historical plane, it commemorates the exodus of the Children of Israel from Egypt. On the broad human plane, it celebrates the emergence from bondage and idolatry. Again, on the historical plane, it commemorates the birth of the Jewish nation: Israel was prepared to face the hazards of the wilderness, so God, in His providence, brought it to Sinai, gave it the Law, and concluded the Covenant.
- **The Message To The Soul....Gnosis**
 - On the broad human plane, it celebrates the attainment of freedom and of the vision of God: man casts aside his idols and repudiates his ignorance and obscurantism, and in that very act God reveals His presence and imparts knowledge.

The three aspects of the Passover festival run parallel to one another: the dark and dreary winter corresponds at once to the dark era of bondage and to the black night of ignorance, while the burst of new life in spring corresponds, in turn, to the flowering of Israel and the burgeoning of freedom. In each case, the release is accompanied by a positive achievement; it is not simply an escape. It is also a cooperative act between God and man.

Yet the freedom which is celebrated in the Passover festival is freedom of a special kind. Our own modern concept of freedom has developed through diverse channels and is today a fusion - or, perhaps, a confusion - of several originally distinct categories of thought. It is mixed up, for instance, with ideas of sovereign independence, personal liberty and democratic government; yet none of these ideas - however fervently Jews may today adhere to them - enters significantly into the Passover ideal. **In Jewish tradition, freedom, in the modern sense, is scarcely a virtue; at best, it is an opportunity.** What matters is **one's willful dedication**, and it is this and this alone that **forms the theme of the Passover story.** If Israel had gone forth out of Egypt, but not accepted the Covenant at Sinai, it would have achieved liberation; that is, mere release from bondage but it would not have achieved freedom, in the Jewish sense of the term. **For the only freedom, says Judaism, is the yoke of the Torah (one's bond and link to God's instruction); the only true freedom and independence is the apprehension of God.**

The complex of ideas which today make up the Passover festival is the result of a long process of development

and, more especially, of Judaism's inspired transformation of a primitive seasonal ceremony.

Answer for yourself: Did Judaism reinterpret the ancient's seasonal celebrations and observances and infuse them with their understanding of God's message entrusted to them? Yes. Let us see the proof. Leviticus chapter 17 holds the key we need to understand Judaism's transformations of the prior ancient's celebrations of equinox and solstices observances. God is now reinterpreting them and bringing to them deeper meanings (Gnosis) expressed above (historically and soul related meanings).

Leviticus 17:1- 1 And the LORD spoke unto Moses, saying: 2 Speak unto Aaron, and unto his sons, and unto all the children of Israel, and say unto them: This is the thing which the LORD hath commanded, saying: 3 What man soever there be of the house of Israel, that killeth an ox, or lamb, or goat, in the camp, or that killeth it without the camp (understand that one's sacrifice was to be his meat and food for his family as well), 4 and hath not brought it unto the door of the tent of meeting, to present it as an offering unto the LORD before the tabernacle of the LORD, blood shall be imputed unto that man; he hath shed blood; and that man shall be cut off from among his people.

Time for us to catch up with what is being said. The Rabbis teach us that God, at this time in Israel's past, takes their current festivals and holy days and "reinterprets them" for Israel. No longer are the children of Israel to practice these observances in the ways in which they had inherited; new meanings were to be attached to them for the children of Israel and they are to keep these same seasonal observances (equinox and solstice observances) forever.

5 To the end that the children of Israel may bring their sacrifices, which they sacrifice in the open field, even that they may bring them unto the LORD, unto the door of the tent of meeting, unto the priest, and sacrifice them for sacrifices of peace-offerings unto the LORD. 6 And the priest shall dash the blood against the altar of the LORD at the door of the tent of meeting, and make the fat smoke for a sweet savour unto the LORD. 7 And they shall no more sacrifice their sacrifices unto the satyrs, after whom they go astray. This shall be a statute forever unto them throughout their generations. 8 And thou shalt say unto them: Whatsoever man there be of the house of Israel, or of the strangers that sojourn among them, that offereth a burnt-offering or sacrifice, 9 and bringeth it not unto the door of the tent of meeting, to sacrifice it unto the LORD, even that man shall be cut off from his people.

Before I comment on the above passage it benefits us to look at how the KJV translates the above 7th verse of Lev. 17:

Lev 17:7 7 And they shall no more offer their sacrifices unto devils, after whom they have gone a whoring. This shall be a statute for ever unto them throughout their generations. (KJV)

What we find here is that God, YHWH, instructs the Moses and the children of Israel that no longer are they to sacrifice in open fields animals unto false gods and goddesses; from now on and forever the children of Israel are to bring their sacrifices to the door of the Tabernacle and the Levitical Priesthood and all offerings and sacrifices are now to be continually devoted to YHWH alone! There is definitely a re-definition of the sacrificial system as it existed previously to the Levitical Priesthood and practiced by the ancients. But let us understand as well that is the very "same" festivals and seasonal observances connected with the sun and the changing of the seasons which were to be continually kept; only with new meanings and emphases attached per the instructions given to Moses by YHWH.

The nature of the Passover ceremony is described in detail in the twelfth chapter of the Biblical Book of Exodus. At full moon in the first month of spring, we read, it was customary for every family to slaughter a lamb or goat at twilight and then, in the middle of the night, to eat it in common, along with unleavened bread and bitter herbs.

Answer for yourself: Why a lamb or goat and not a bull or ox? If you have been a reader of Bet Emet Ministries for long then you know that due to the precession of the equinoxes the constellation of Taurus which had rose with the Vernal Equinox for over 2,100 years had moved and the constellation of Aries (lamb/ram) had taken its place. The changing of a "bull-Taurus" centered religion of Egypt to a "bull-Aries" centered religion proposed by Moses and others before him like Pharaoh Jacoba (Jacob) was the reason for the Exodus (that is right...there were more than one). The eating of this lamb had to be done "in haste," and whatever portion of the meat remained unconsumed had to be burned before the break of dawn. Moreover, as soon as the slaughtering had been effected, a bunch of hyssop was dipped into the victim's blood, and a few drops were sprinkled with it on the doorposts and lintels of each house. The application of the blood of the lamb to the door is in reality a literary confusion with the earlier Exodus by Pharaoh Jacoba when he invaded Upper Egypt and his secret followers (Aries-lamb proponents as was Pharaoh Jacoba) marked their houses so to escape the fury of Jacoba and identify themselves as secret followers of Pharaoh Jacoba. This way they marked their homes and the fury and possible death at the hands of Jacoba's army would "pass over" them. Pharaoh Jacoba would lead his followers out of Upper Egypt as the first Exodus. This all important ceremony grew and came to be known as "pesah", and was followed immediately by a six-day festival, called the Feast of Unleavened Bread, during which no fermented food was allowed to be eaten, and the first and last days of which were regarded as especially sacred and marked by a total abstention from work (a high sabbath).

Pruned of its later interpretations, this ceremony falls into a common pattern of seasonal festivals in many parts of the world. The essence of such festivals is to restrengthen the bonds of kindred and community at the beginning of a new agricultural cycle. This is done by partaking of a meal in common - "breaking bread together"- for thereby a common substance is absorbed. The practice is well attested in antiquity. When, for example, persons or tribes entered into compacts with one another, as in the case of Abraham and Abimelech, or of Moses and Jethro, in the Bible, the agreement was usually sealed by eating together - a custom which underlies our own word "companion" (properly, "one who eats bread with another") and which survives also in the familiar usage of "having a drink on it."

On such occasions, however, it is not only how one eats but also what one eats that is important, for the food consumed is believed itself to impart new life and vigor. Accordingly, special precautions have to be taken to ensure that it is pure and free of putrescence, and in a Near Eastern country this means that it has to be eaten at once and "in haste," and not lie around in the sun. It means also that no fermented food may be absorbed with it, since fermentation is the result of putrefaction, and that bitter herbs must be eaten at the same time as an effective cathartic against any impurity that may inadvertently have been consumed.

Let us remember that over time this seasonal festival evolved. Once the meal is finished, it becomes necessary to mark by some outward sign those who have participated in it and thereby entered into renewed ties with one another. The usual method of doing this is to sprinkle some of the animal's blood on the foreheads of all present or on the flaps of their tents or doorposts of their houses.

Answer for yourself: Is this a carry over from Pharaoh Jacoba's invasion of Upper Egypt where his secret followers marked their homes to signify by a lamb's blood that they were secret followers and supporters of Pharaoh Jacoba and the changing of a Taurus-Centered Egyptian faith into a new Aries-Centered Egyptian Faith? Yes, it is.

This, for example, is the practice among the Amur Arabs of Palestine and at New Year ceremonies in Madagascar. Additionally, this sprinkling of blood serves a further purpose. In primitive societies, the family

consists not only of its human members but also of its god. He, too, therefore is regarded as being present at the communal meal and as being bound by the bond which it cements. Accordingly, the mark of blood on the forehead or the doorpost affords a means whereby he may readily recognize those individuals or households with whom he has entered into a pact of friendship and protection. It thus becomes, in effect, a device for averting supernatural hurt. Again we find this common theme from Pharaoh Jacoba's incursion into Upper Egypt in his attempt to unify all of Egypt under the sign of Aries.

The old meanings associated with this festival were to change according to Lev. 17 as we saw above. The Israelites took over this primitive rite and gave it a meaning all their own, thereby relating it to their own historic experience and justifying its continued observance.

PASSOVER GETS A NEW MEANING....AS IT IS LIFTED OUT OF ITS HISTORICAL CONTEXT

The Exodus from Egypt, they said, had coincided with the traditional *pesah* ceremony, and because their ancestors had so meticulously carried out the prescribed regulations and dashed the blood upon the doorposts of their houses, Jehovah had been able instantly to recognize His own protégés when He came to smite the firstborn in the land. To fully understand the above statement it is necessary to gather a few pieces of information. First archeology and historical records outside of the Old Testament which was rewritten by Ezra indicated that the Jewish race began from intermarriages between Egyptians and Semites. That being the case then it is very important to understand the Jewish race as the children of Egypt. This explains why Judaism today carries, for the most part, identical religious tenants held sacred by their Egyptian parents who were themselves monotheists. Sadly few understand the Egyptian religion correctly or the history that surrounds it and these facts escape their attention. Jacoba's Exodus following his failed attempt to unify all of Egypt did end in an Exodus of him, his army, and his followers from Upper Egypt. Since a Pharaoh was believed to be a God of sorts or God's representative then it is easy to see how the story is somewhat altered over time to reflect Jehovah "recognizing" His own people when he came to smite the firstborn in the land instead of Jehovah's/God's representative in the form of a Pharaoh who was able to recognize His own people when he invaded by them putting a lamb and lambs blood on their doors and homes to signal that they were secret followers of Pharaoh Jacoba and the religious changes he proposed for all of Egyptian religion.

All of the elements of the traditional ceremony were then fancifully explained as memorials of that momentous event. Let us remember what we saw above; namely, that the food consumed was believed itself to impart new life and vigor; therefore special precautions had to be taken in order to ensure that it was pure and free of putrescence, and as we saw above this means that it has to be eaten at once and "in haste," and not lie around in the sun. It also meant that no fermented food may be absorbed with it, since fermentation is the result of putrefaction, and that bitter herbs must be eaten at the same time as an effective cathartic against any impurity that may inadvertently have been consumed.

Knowing this then it is not hard to understand how the "story" changes as we find the evolution of historical events becoming blurred over time. Thus we find taught that the unleavened bread was necessitated that since Israel was forced to make a hurried departure from bondage then there had been no time to wait for the dough to rise and the bread had therefore to have been baked without yeast. The eating "in haste" comes to commemorate the haste with which the departure had been made. Indeed, the very name of the festival (the original significance of which is obscure) was now connected ingeniously with the Hebrew word *pasah*, "skip," and taken to imply that, on seeing the sign of blood, God had "skipped" or **passed over** the houses of the Israelites and spared them from the plague. In reality Pharaoh Jacoba had skipped over the houses of his secret followers and supporter in the South of Egypt and spared them an equally sure death.

Much of this explanation is, to be sure, historically frail and is only coming to light with current archeological

studies when coupled with the historical accounts of Manetho. **Modern scholarship has made it virtually certain that the Biblical narrative of the Exodus represents a foreshortened and anachronistic account of what really took place.** In the light of historical and archaeological research, it has become increasingly improbable that all of the tribes of Israel, as they later existed, ever went down to Egypt or came out of it. It is now generally conceded that the confederation was of later origin and grew up gradually in the Holy Land after the Conquest, so that the story of a common ancestor who went down to Egypt with all his sons is erroneous as to time and place as inherited by us in the Old Testament. Only a certain portion of what subsequently became the Children of Israel, according to some scholars, only the Joseph tribes, ever went down to Goshen, and the conquest of Canaan was the result not of a single coordinated invasion but of the successive expeditions and gradual infiltration of various Hebrew tribes, which had begun before the Exodus and continued for some time after the arrival of the "redeemed" Holy Land.

Then, too, it must be borne in mind that the Biblical narrative is a saga, not a factual report, and therefore embellishes the record of events with all kinds of fantastic and legendary details drawn from the storehouse of popular lore. Moses' staff, for example, has parallels in the magical wands and weapons borne by heroes and deliverers in the folk tales of many nations; the miraculous parting of the Red Sea finds counterparts in the ancient Indian myth of Krishna's flight from the tyrannical King Kamsa and in the statement of various Greek writers that the Pamphylian Sea drew back and gave passage to the troops of Alexander the Great when they were marching against the Persian hosts of Darius III.

Nevertheless, even though the story of the Exodus as depicted in the Old Testament cannot yet be confirmed from any extra-Biblical source, and although we may readily detect in it several obviously legendary traits, in broad substance it is indeed consistent with everything that we now know about political conditions in the Near East at the period in question. The historical records of Pharaoh Manetho details these "Exoduses" from Egypt over theological diversities on several occasions (basically star wars/constellations). Historical records have confirmed that there indeed existed at that period, in virtually all parts of the Near East, a special class of persons (not, however, an ethnic unit) known as Hebrews, who did not enjoy full civic rights and who lived largely as mercenaries and freebooters, and who on several occasions made marauding raids upon Palestinian and Syrian cities. History also confirms that the land of Goshen (modern Wadi Tumilat), on the eastern confines of Egypt proper, had long been recognized as a free grazing ground or reservation for neighboring nomads, and it establishes that in the fourteenth century B.C.E. there was indeed a change of regime in Egypt which was unfavorable to aliens, for at that date the **Hyksos, or Foreign Princes (Abraham for example), who had been in control of the country for some two hundred years, were finally expelled and replaced by a native Egyptian monarch.** Furthermore, we know that the new Pharaoh's successor, Ramses II (1298-32 B.C.E.) did indeed renovate for himself the abandoned Hyksos capital in the Delta and call it after his own name, and that he also built a store city named Pithom, just as is described in the Bible. Lastly, an inscription of Pharaoh Merneptah (1232-24 B.C.E.), discovered in his mortuary chapel at Thebes, **mentions the presence of the Israelites in the Holy Land in 1227 B.C.E.**

Against this general background, it would seem not at all improbable that a particular group of Hebrews (what the Bible describes as the "family of Jacob"....who were themselves supporting Aries over Taurus) should have migrated from the Holy Land to Goshen, to settle under the more favorable regime of the Hyksos (themselves Aries oriented over Taurus since recognizing the precession of the equinoxes had moved Taurus from behind the Sun); that it should at first have thrived and prospered but subsequently, after the fall of that regime, have been viewed with suspicion and enslaved; and that it should eventually have sought freedom by linking up with other Hebrews in a concerted attack on the Holy Land. We just jumped over the Exodus of Akhenaton, the Biblical Moses, whom himself was a supporter of Aries over Taurus as well. And that, when the legendary trimmings are stripped away, is substantially the story related in the Bible. These were literally "star wars" fought over the message of God in the Heavens and the recalcitrant attitude of part of Egypt to change its Taurus centered religion that had existed for well over 2,100 yrs. This theological debate and wars precipitated several Exoduses according to Manetho. This revolution in Egyptian religion was short lived and the residue of these Aries centered faith will venture to Palestine and replant that faith in another Equinox Temple of which we read about in the Old Testament. Simply said the Patriarchs and Jewish heroes like David and Solomon

were in reality Egyptian Pharaohs and this knowledge is only coming to light in the last one hundred years. These were the leaders of an Aries oriented faith which finds its ultimate and successful expression in the children of these Egyptians; the Jewish Nation. Nor, indeed, is it in any way remarkable that these events do not find large mention in Egyptian records, for it must be remembered that to the Egyptians of the period, the Children of Israel were in no sense a formidable or important power, but merely a motley crowd of gypsies on a relatively distant reservation who would desire freedom and follow those who offered it to them. Following someone who challenged the existing Egyptian authority (religious, military) like Moses was their ticket to freedom; especially following prior failed attempts to change Egyptian religion from a Taurus based faith to an Aries based faith. These Egyptians/Semites were considered outcasts after such failed attempts and put to hard labor since being considered traitors to Egypt by the Taurus controlled Priesthoods. They welcomed Moses attempt to again change Egyptian religion and welcomed the Exodus to their freedom; both political, physical, and religious where they could worship God as they saw fit with the Gnosis they had received from Him.

In Judaism, however, the story of the Exodus has long since been lifted out of a purely historical context. The Jewish attitude toward it stems from the premise that events transcend the moments of their occurrence; that anything which happens in history happens not only at a particular point in time but also as part of a continuous process and therefore involves as its participants not only a single generation but also all who went before and all who follow after. The Exodus of the Children of Israel from Egypt (a mixed multitude of Egyptians and Semites) involved also both the patriarchs of the past and their children's children of the future, for it validated the mission of the former and determined the destiny of the latter (followers of Aries over Taurus). **It is this ideal Exodus, this Exodus detached from a mooring in time, that is really celebrated in the traditional Seder service on the first two evenings of the Passover festival.** commemorates one's freedom and liberty to search for God and His truths without restraint; both past, present, and future as had been done by their ancestors during that 2,100 year period of the change from Taurus to Aries at the Spring Equinox in Egypt. The Passover Seder not only commemorates at this special time of the season God's goodness and provision to his people (new grain, rainfall, sunshine, photosynthesis), but historically the exodus of the Children of Israel from Egypt. It celebrates the emergence from mankind's bondage and idolatry. The Seder commemorates the birth of the Jewish nation: Israel was prepared to face the hazards of the wilderness, so God, in His providence, brought it to Sinai, gave it the Law, and concluded the Covenant. But behind all of this enumeration of God's goodness we see man's search for and God's gift of freedom: physically, emotion, and spiritual whereby man can attain an accurate vision of God. In so doing man has to cast aside his idols and repudiates his ignorance, and in that very act God reveals His presence and imparts His knowledge. Let me close this part of the article and mention again the courage of those who undertook the colossal task of challenging the religious status quo of Egypt who clearly was not in step with God and His new message to them in the Heavens.

Ps 8:3 3 When I consider thy heavens, the work of thy fingers, the moon and the stars, which thou hast ordained; (KJV)

Ps 19:1 1 The heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament sheweth his handywork. (KJV)

THE SEDER

The Seder (the word means simply "order of service" or "formal procedure") is at once a substitute for the ancient paschal sacrifice and a fulfillment of the Biblical injunction (Exod. 13:8) to retell the story of the Exodus to one's children.

Exod 13:8 8 And thou shalt shew thy son in that day, saying, This is done because of that which the LORD did unto me when I came forth out of Egypt. (KJV)

The principal feature of the ritual is the eating of various foods traditionally associated with the departure from Egypt. These are:

- **matzah, or unleavened bread;**
- **bitter herbs (e.g. horse-radish), taken to commemorate the bitterness of servitude; and**
- **haroseth, a mixture of chopped apples, nuts, raisins and cinnamon, which symbolizes the mortar in which the Israelites labored while they built the store-cities of Pithom and Raamses (Exod. 1:11).**

Moreover, the meal is introduced by the consumption of parsley dipped in salted water. During the course of it, a minimum of four cups of wine must be drunk, recalling the four expressions used in Exodus 6: 6-7 to describe God's deliverance of Israel, viz.,

- I will **bring you out** from under the burden of the Egyptians, and
- I will **rid you** of their bondage, and
- I will **redeem you** . . .
- **and I will take you to Me for a people.**

In addition, besides the food actually consumed, the shank-bone of a lamb and a roasted egg have to be placed on the table. **The shank-bone symbolizes the paschal offering**, while the **roasted egg** is, in all probability, a later importation from pagan custom and, like the corresponding Christian Easter egg, **exemplifies the beginning of life in spring (reminiscent of the cosmic egg of Egypt in their creation accounts).**

There is a strict religious protocol about the manner in which the ritual foods are to be eaten. The *matzah*, for example, consists of three cakes placed one above the other and popularly known as "the priest, the Levite, and the Israelite." At the beginning of the service, the celebrant breaks the middle cake in half and sets one of the halves aside, wrapping it in a napkin. This, known as **afikomin**, is subsequently distributed among the company and constitutes the last thing eaten at the ceremony. The bitter herbs, in addition to being eaten separately, are also served in a "sandwich," between pieces of *matzah*, thereby carrying out to the letter the Biblical commandment (Exod. 12:8) which enjoins that unleavened bread and bitter herbs be eaten together as an accompaniment of the paschal meal. **At the conclusion of the supper, an extra cup of wine is filled for the prophet Elijah who, it is believed, will come on Passover night to herald the final redemption of Israel.** The main door of the house or apartment is flung open for a few moments to permit his entrance.

Those present at the Seder ceremony are expected to adopt a **casual, reclining posture, symbolizing that of freemen at ancient banquets.** In some parts of the world, however, everyone appears in hat and coat, with satchel on back and staff in hand, thus re-enacting the Departure from Egypt.

The narrative portion of the ceremony is known as the **Haggadah**, or Recital, and consists in a repetition of the Scriptural story of the Exodus, embellished by rabbinic comments and elaborations and rounded out by the chanting of psalms, hymns and secular songs.

The narrative is introduced by a series of questions (*Mah Nishtanah*), asked by the youngest member of the company: "Why is this night different from all other nights?" All that follows is regarded as the answer.

High points of the Haggadah are: the "Section of the Four Sons," the "Litany of Wonders," and the chanting of "Hallel."

The first of these is based on the fact that the Bible speaks four times of "thy son's" inquiring about the meaning of Passover, and each time poses his question in different terms:

- **Once (Deut. 6:20), he is represented as asking, "What mean these testimonies and statutes and judgments which the Lord our God hath commanded us ?"**
- **Another time (Exod. 12:26), he demands brusquely, "What means this service of yours?"**
- **A third time (Exod. 13:14), he asks simply, "What is this?"**
- **And a fourth time (Exod. 13:8), the question is not even framed, but merely implied.**

This variation, said the sages, is purposeful; in each case the form of the question typifies the character and attitude of the inquirer, who is respectively wise, wicked, simple and too young to ask. Each must be answered differently, in appropriate fashion.

The "Litany of Wonders" is a cumulative poem reciting the benefits conferred by God on Israel at the time of the Exodus. Not only did He lead them out of Egypt, but He also punished the Egyptians; not only did He part the Red Sea, but He caused them to pass through it dryshod; not only did He lead them to Mount Sinai, but He gave them the Law; not only did He give them the Law, but He brought them to the Promised Land; not only did He bring them to the Promised Land, but He built the temple in Zion. As each of these benefits is recited, the company responds loudly with the word Day yenu, "Alone 'twould have sufficed us !" In all, fifteen benefits are enumerated, alluding, so the rabbis said, to the numerical value of the Hebrew word *Yah*, one of the names of God (cf. Exod. 15:2; Ps. 68:4).

The Hallel ("Praise") is the group of psalms, 113- 118, which is recited at all new moons and at all festivals and which is introduced by the word *Hallelujah*, "Praise ye the Lord." In the present instance, they are deemed especially appropriate, because one of the psalms (Ps.114) in fact describes events connected with the Exodus. These psalms, it may be added, were very probably the hymns intoned by Jesus and his disciples at its observance of Passover; called incorrectly the Last Supper.

Properly understood, the Seder ceremony is no mere act of pious recollection, but a unique and inspired device for blending the past, the present and the future into a single comprehensive and transcendental experience. The actors in the story are not merely the particular Israelites who happen to have been led out of bondage by Moses but **all** the generations of Israel throughout all of time. In an ideal sense, all Israel went forth out of Egypt, and all Israel stood before Sinai; and all Israel moved through darkness to the Presence of God, in the wake of a pillar of fire. Whenever the trumpets sound in history, they sound for all ages; and when the bell tolls, the echo lives on forever.

This is not a rarefied piece of modern rationalization. The conception of the Seder as an experience rather than a recitation runs like a silver thread through the whole of Jewish tradition and finds expression on every page of the Haggadah. *"Every man in every generation," says a familiar passage (quoting the Mishnah), "must look upon himself as if he personally had come forth out of Egypt. It was not our fathers alone that the Holy One redeemed, but ourselves also did He redeem with them."* Similarly, in the Litany of Wonders, it is not "they" but **we** who are said to have wandered for forty years and to have been fed upon manna in the wilderness, and finally to have reached the Promised Land. Everywhere the emphasis is placed squarely on the durative and ideal significance of the Exodus rather than on its punctual and historic reality. The Haggadah is the script of a living drama, not the record of a dead event, and when the Jew recites it he is performing an act not of remembrance but of personal identification in the here and now.

The Seder ceremony, said the sages, is valid only when the "bread of affliction" and the bitter herbs are actually before you. In a sense larger than they intended, these words epitomize its essential significance.

It may be said, in fact, that the central theme of the Seder is not-as commonly supposed-the Exodus from Egypt. That is merely its highlight. The central theme is the entire process of which that particular event happens to have been the catalyst. In Jewish tradition, the deliverance from Egypt is important only because it paved the way to Sinai; that is, to Israel's voluntary acceptance of its special and distinctive mission as the carrier of God's Laws to the nations; and what the Seder narrative relates is the whole story of how Israel moved progressively from darkness to light, from the ignorance and shame of idolatry to the consciousness and glory of its high adventure.

All through the ages, the very structure of the narrative has evoked its acceptance. In ancient times it began, on a note of shamefaced humility, with the words, "At first our fathers were worshipers of idols," (or, in an alternative version: "A wandering Aramean was my father") and ended with the triumphant

chanting of the Psalms of Praise. Today, even though later accretions have somewhat obscured this dramatic sequence, it still opens (in most parts of the world) with a reference to the "bread of affliction" and closes in a breathless and inspired climax with the defeat of the Angel of Death. Moreover, the very sentence which begins with the words, "At first our fathers were worshipers of idols," ends significantly with the proud affirmation: ***"But now the Presence of God has drawn us to His service."***

The several features of the ritual and the several elements of the narrative in turn reinforce this sense of **continuousness**. For neither ritual nor narrative is the product of a single age or environment-a mere heirloom or museum piece passed down intact and piously conserved. On the contrary, some parts of each go back to the days of the Second Temple, while others are no earlier than the fifteenth century. Ritual and narrative alike are therefore dynamic, not static creations - virtual kaleidoscopes of Jewish history - reflecting in their growth and development the various phases of Israel's career.

The form of the meal, for example, with the reclining on cushions, the preliminary dipping of parsley in salted water, and the customary consumption of eggs as an hors d'oeuvre, reproduces the typical pattern of a Roman banquet, and one may even suppose that the recital of the narrative and the conclusion of the repast with the chanting of psalms may have been modeled after the Roman practice of having literary works read aloud at meals and regaling oneself afterward with choral entertainment. Indeed, it is not at all impossible that the initial invitation to the hungry and needy, and the prescription that at least four (originally, three) cups of wine must be drunk, are likewise of Roman origin. For the fact is that it was common Roman practice for "clients" to wait upon their patrons during the day in order to pay their respects to them; and for this attention they were often rewarded by a formal invitation to join the company at supper. Similarly, *pace* the traditional explanations of the three or four glasses of wine, it is not without interest that a normal Roman dinner actually entailed a minimum of three cups - one for the preliminary libation to the gods, a second for the mutual toasting of the guests, and a third in honor of the hosts or, under the Caesars, of the emperor. To be sure, this minimum was usually exceeded; but so, too, are the minimum three or four cups of the Seder!

On the other hand, **the afikomin is distinctly Greek**, although the term now bears a meaning quite different from that which attached to it in Hellenic speech. The Talmud says that "men must not leave the paschal meal *epikomin*." This last word was really the Greek *epi komon*, a popular expression for "gadding around on revels"- the common nightly pastime of the "gay blades" of Hellas. The term, however, was subsequently misunderstood, and the sentence wrongly rendered: "Men must not leave out the *afikomin* after the paschal meal." The curious, unintelligible expression was then taken to refer to some special condiment or "dessert" which had to be served at the conclusion of the repast, and thence arose the custom of distributing small pieces of unleavened bread and calling them *afikomin*!

Similarly, when the door is opened "for Elijah," we are plunged at once into the Middle Ages, for the real purpose of this act seems to have been to provide an effective rebuttal of the terrible Blood Libel which asserted that Jews employ the blood of Christian children in the preparation of *matzah*. The door was flung open so that all might have a chance of beholding the complete innocence of the proceedings.

Lastly, the secular songs and ditties with which the service now concludes and which constitute its most recent - though most familiar - feature take us straight into Renaissance Europe. One of these songs, the famous "*Ehad mi yodea*" ("Who knows one?"), for example, has been traced by students of comparative literature to a popular and widespread "counting- out rhyme," the earliest specimen of which appears in Germany in the fifteenth century. In that earlier version, incidentally, the successive numbers refer to God, Moses, and Aaron, the three Patriarchs, the four Evangelists, and the five wounds of Jesus! Similarly, the *Had Gadya* ("Only One Kid") finds its earliest prototype in a fifteenth-century German folk song, *Der Herr der schickt das Jockli hinaus*, though here again, the wide popularity of the song is shown by the fact that early versions of it have turned up in most European countries.

It should be observed also that, in Oriental lands, quite a different set of popular chants is appended to the Haggadah. The Sephardim, for instance, have many such chants written in the Ladino, or Judeo-Spanish, dialect current especially in the Levant, while elsewhere, Judeo-Arabic and Judeo-Persian songs are in use. The

inclusion in it of those "native" compositions likewise bespeaks the true character of the Seder as an expression of the total, continuous experience of the Jewish people.

Even the illustrations which adorn the older editions of the Haggadah conspire to create a picture of the entire stretch of Jewish history. The "wicked son" (who balances on one leg from one Seder to the next) is simply a Roman centurion; the one who is "too young to ask," and who holds up his hands like a questioning child, is taken directly from an earlier print of a slave in supplication before Hannibal; while the store-cities of Pithom and Raamses, which the Israelites were compelled to build for Pharaoh, are the walled towns of fifteenth-century Europe! All the centuries seem, as it were to blend and blur.

Nor is it only in the accidental development of its form, or in the externals of the traditional "book of words," that the "continuous" character of the ceremony is evoked. Several of the poems which have been added to the narrative portion of the Haggadah revolve around the theme that Passover was the occasion not only of the deliverance from Egypt but also of all the main deliverances - and, indeed, of all the main events - in Jewish history. This, of course, is pious fiction, but the fact that it was invented shows that in the minds of successive generations of Jews the Seder has always exemplified a continuous and durative experience. Moreover, that experience is projected into the future as well as retrojected into the past. Every detail of the Exodus, it is maintained, foreshadows an element of Israel's ultimate redemption.

On the final night of deliverance-the "night of vigil," as the Bible calls it (Exod. 12:42) - God will come to Israel as a lover serenading his beloved and eventually winning her as his own.

In another sense, too, the Passover story is a continuous experience. For if it is true that the punctual event which it celebrates possesses also a durative character, involving the children of all generations, it is equally true that the particular historical occasion of the Exodus represents a situation which is in itself seemingly perpetual and which is by no means confined to a single moment of time. In a larger sense, the villain of the piece is not a particular Egyptian Pharaoh - Seti I or Ramses II - but all the tyrants who have ever opposed Israel at any time; the Sea of Reeds is not the particular Lake Timsah (or any other similar expanse of water) which the Israelites had to cross on their way to Sinai, but all the obstacles which Israel has ever encountered throughout its career and which have yielded when the emblem of God was lifted above them; the manna is not the peculiar gum of *Tamarix gallica mannifera*, as learned botanists assure us, but that divine sustenance on which Israel has been fed continually while it has been roaming the world's desert to the place of Revelation - that "bread of angels" which has to be gathered afresh every morning and which (as the sages acutely observed) tastes different to every man. And the journey through the wilderness, in the wake of a cloud by day and a pillar of fire by night, is the eternal progress of Israel toward the Kingdom of God.

As we saw in the beginning of this study above the Passover is not to be understood only on the historical plane but as well On the seasonal plane. Passover marks the time when, in Palestine, the heavy rains of winter give place to the light showers, or "dews," of spring; and for this reason special prayers for "dew" are included in the morning service of the first day. But this dew is not merely a blessing of nature; it is also a symbol of God's beneficence toward Israel both in the past and in the future. It is the dew which was mentioned in Isaac's blessing upon Jacob (Gen. 27, 28); to which Moses compared his final discourse (Deut. 32:2); which fell upon Gideon's fleece as a sign that Israel would be saved from the Midianites (Judg. 6:37-38). It is also the dew of rejuvenation and resurrection - the "dew of youth" with which God anoints His Messiah (Ps. 110:3), and the "dew of lights" which, as the prophet says, will eventually fall on the "land of the shades" (Isa. 26:19).

WHAT ABOUT OUR PASSOVER TODAY?

The Passover festival then has two basic messages for modern man.

- The first is that deliverance from the scourge of bondage and the night of ignorance lies just as much in our own hands as in God's. If it is true that God delivered Israel from Egypt "not by the hand of an angel,

nor by the hand of a seraph, nor by the hand of any one man sent, but by His own glory and His own **self**," it is equally true that in the world of men it is by the hands of men that His glory and His being can alone be revealed. The knowledge of God is precious and we must make every attempt to acquire it and once obtained we must then utilize it in concrete actions and behaviors that further the Kingdom of God in and through us and in the world.

- As we saw above the second message of Passover is that deliverance is continual. "The festival is celebrated," says the Haggadah, in its answer to the "wise son," "because of that which the Lord did for **me**, when **I** came forth out of Egypt." And the wise son understands. And I hope you do as well.

Much of this material was adapted from various books in my library; in particular excerpts taken from Theodor H. Gaster's Festivals of the Jewish Year.



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THE PASSOVER AND THE HISTORICAL EVIDENCE

By Jewish tradition, the Exodus took place on Thursday, the fifteenth of *Nissan* in the year 2448 after Creation (variously identified as 1313, 1308, 1306, and 1280 B.C.E.). Working with stated time spans in the Bible books I Kings and Judges and excavations in Israel, archaeologists and historians generally place it at the latter date.

Although there are no Egyptian records corroborating the Torah's story which is not unusual in a culture that erased any evidence of weakness we are able to find various aspects of Egypt's history that provide neat correspondences to the Torah's account. Historians look back to Amenophis IV, also known as Akhenaton (1383-1365 B.C.E.), as a starting point. Many scholars today believe him to be the Biblical Moses of the Hebrew Scriptures. You might read that he abolished multiple idol worship in favor of monotheism of the sun but sad to say without much study on your part such an oversimplification does him and his movement within Egypt a terrible injustice for he was not a "sun worshipper" and although Egypt is known to have representations of various gods and goddesses these were all "attributes" personified that revealed the One true Creator; in other words these were but various pictures and representations of the "All in the One". In truth I have found upon my years of Egyptian study that at the core Egypt was an Ethical Monotheism. While he, by other's standards today, erroneously objectified his deity, he may have gotten the right idea through however in the fact that we find today this same influence of Akhenaton within the Israelites who were one of the foreign groups allowed to sojourn in the rich graze-land of Goshen on the edge of the kingdom. It is because of his influence in Egypt which no doubt affected these Israelites we find the same Ethical Monotheism in Judaism today. When his short-lived religious revolution was reversed and the Thebian priests were reinstated by his son, the Israelites that remained in Egypt who did not follow Moses in this Second of 4 Exoduses became victims of persecution at the hands of these reinstated Priests of Egypt. This is the story behind the story and if you want a fuller understanding of the events that lie beneath the pages of your Old Testaments in this regard then I highly recommend our [Egyptian-Christian Website](#) where the facts are there for your inspection.

Ramses 11 (1300-1234 or 1347-1280 B.C.E.), known for his ego, massive building program, and use of foreign slaves, gets the most votes as the Pharaoh who initially pressed the Israelites into forced labor following Akhenaton's departure (Moses). Many believe that it is he who was the adversary of Moses and date the Exodus under his son, Merneptah, who ruled a declining Egypt at the close of the thirteenth century B.C.E. It is interesting to note that the Torah specifies that two pharaohs were involved in the oppression [Exodus 1:8-10; 2:23].

This timing coincides with the four hundred thirty years Israel spent in Egyptian exile (Exodus 13:40), counted from the time the patriarch Abraham began his wandering in Egypt-dominated Canaan around the age of seventy. The Jewish midrash resolves the discrepancy between these 430 years and the 400 years told to Abraham: the four centuries began with the birth of Isaac. The covenant God made with Abraham, at the beginning of the Egyptian period, occurred three decades earlier. According to Jewish tradition, Israel sojourned in Egypt only two hundred ten years, beginning when Jacob settled there. That period is said to have been equivalent to four hundred years of suffering.

The search for artifacts and documents that can verify the Bible's account continues today, and archaeologists and historians still debate its veracity. Scholars (Winston Churchill among them) do not doubt that Israel was in Egypt. Many conclude, using evidence drawn from the political and social situation of the time, and the logic of human psychology, that the Exodus story is based on fact. For one thing, they point out, no other people in the history of the world has ever conceived a national myth that gives itself such a disgraceful past. It could only be a reflection of an actual occurrence. Besides that we have Manetho's writings, or what is left of them, that detail this as well. Manetho was an author and an Egyptian priest who was offered the patronage of the Ptolemaic court, the result of which was an orderly account, written in Greek, of the history of the Egyptian Pharaohs, which is still the basis of our conventional numbering of the dynasties.

While not denying that an unusual departure from Egypt took place, some secular scholars, contrary to classic Jewish tradition, claim that the Exodus account is the result of history mixed with fragments of folklore and legend influenced by other nations. They cite, for instance, a common myth of a child hidden at birth, often rescued from a watery death, who grows up to be a great leader and threat to the existing power structure. They also note that the particular rites by which Israel commemorated the event were borrowed from two distinct preexisting seasonal festivals observed by the Israelites themselves, long before the Exodus occurred and combined with new meaning into Khag Hapesakh/Khag Hamatzot (Passover and Unleavened Bread).

SEARCHING FOR THE "PATTERN OF WORSHIP".....ALL THE WAY BACK WITH EGYPT LONG BEFORE THERE WAS A "JEWISH NATION"...THERE WAS A "PASSEOVER"

Answer for yourself: Why is this important in our search for the recovery of the "Pattern of Worship" to know that we find the rudiments of what we call today "the Jewish Passover" in Egypt long before Moses?

Simply because it takes us further back into time to where we find the earliest records of mankind's sanctification of "times and seasons" which were given to man in the beginning by the Creator Himself. It is from such evidence we can trace down through history these "appointed times" with God whereby man worshiped the Creator in ways that are connected uniquely with these special times (Spring Equinoxes, Summer Solstice, Autumn Equinox, Winter Solstice, etc.). The good news for us to day is that the Jewish nation, as children of these earlier Egyptians, carry the heritage of their "spiritual" and "physical" fathers and the framework of the worship of these same "fathers" which comes down to us as the earliest records of mankind's worship of God on this planet. The parallels in the worship of God, as connected to these "special times and seasons" as found in the earliest Egyptian records which can be also found in Judaism today are simply astounding and we have them available at our fingertips today if we only know to "look". We see from such comparisons that there is truly nothing "new" under the sun but that is not enough; we must regather the original meanings of these "parallels" in worship if we hope to ever understand the true message connected with the worship of God at these special "appointed times" since down through history they have become heavy laden with false interpretations which has been affixed to them by Rome and others.

One of these "appointed times" was celebrated by shepherd families at the time of the spring full moon, when the flocks produced new lambs. It involved rituals similar to the paschal sacrifice designed to elicit good luck and protect the sheep and goats before the tribe left their winter quarters for spring grazing. This festival was supposedly brought with the Israelite shepherds following the Exodus when they settled in the rural areas of Canaan (predominantly the south).

The peasants in the land (the northern farmers) recognized the arrival of spring (the Spring Equinox) with a festival related to new grain. Prior to harvesting the barley, the Jews would get rid of all their sour (fermented) dough (used instead of yeast as a leavening agent) and old bread, perhaps to

protect against an unproductive year. The first sheaf of the newly cut grain was offered as a sacrifice (First Fruits Offering).

Answer for yourself: Do you see the parallels from above with the later Jewish Passover and Unleavened Bread and even First Fruits? What do these ceremonies and times of "sanctification" mean to these ancients and have we heard this message today? Is within these "times and seasons" a message from the Divine about His true salvation offered to mankind? Does this message of the Divine found in these early ceremonies overlap with the message we find in Judaism today and does this message contradict the message of Rome and the Council of Nicea when they overturned Biblical Judaism and started a new official religion called Christianity? Our continued study will show us for certain the answer to these above questions.

Over time, say many scholars, Israel gave the rites deeper meaning based on their experiences, which included religious persecution, slavery and liberation from it. Even so behind it all remains the simple "gospel" given to all mankind which they don't hear today as Christians; unless of course they have studied Biblical Judaism and know it inside out for after all it was the faith of the Jesus depicted in the New Testament. For a deeper understanding of these events that led up to Akhenaton's religious revolution in Egypt and how this involved not only him but his ancestors as well such as Abraham, Pharaoh Jacoba (Jacob), and other Patriarchs (historically Pharaohs as archeology teaches us today) and even Joseph (chief vizier to Pharaoh) then you need to study in detail our Egyptian-Christian website to find out that God's image in the Heavens above was at the core of these 4 Exoduses from Egypt of which Moses' was the Second. **It all has to do with the precession of the Equinoxes and the movement of the Constellations above; in particular Taurus and Aries (the bull and the lamb).**

Answer for yourself: Does this not sound somewhat familiar in light of the various "sacrifices" of "bulls" and "lambs" we read about in the Old Testament? It sure does but you have to read the website to find out what this is all about. Let us move on in our study.



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THE POST-EXODUS PASSOVER

The children of Israel were still wandering in the desert when they celebrated the first anniversary of the Exodus (Numbers 9:1-5). Since they had been commanded that anyone considered ritually impure could not offer a sacrifice (Leviticus 22:3-6), **a second Passover**, Pesakh *Sheni*, was instituted for those who on *Nissan* 14 had had contact with a corpse. To be held one month later (*Iyar* 14), in the same way as on *Nissan* 14, it was to be observed in the future by anyone who had been prevented from making the sacrifice in *Nissan* because she or he had been either ritually impure or on a journey.

Answer for yourself: Why is this celebration and observance of the Passover so important? This was the last Pesakh observed by the journeying Israelites until they crossed the Jordan River into Canaan at the Passover season thirty-nine years later. **Then, the first religious act ordained was circumcision for every male.** With the exception of Caleb ben Yefunah and Joshua ben Nun (of the twelve spies sent to scout Canaan, the only ones who retained their faith in God [Numbers 14:24-30]), the circumcised men who had left Egypt had all died in the wilderness, and those born after the Exodus had not been entered into the covenant because of the rigors of desert existence.

The act of allegiance reaffirmed their part of the covenant made between Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob and God, the deal God offered the Israelites in Egypt and which they accepted at Sinai: He would be their God and lead them to the Land of milk and honey, and they would be His people, following His laws and acting as His agents for good on Earth. **In other words Israel would be God's Holy Nation and Royal Priesthood for all mankind.**

Exod 19:5-6 5 Now therefore, if ye will obey my voice indeed, and keep my covenant, then ye shall be a peculiar treasure unto me above all people: for all the earth is mine: 6 And ye shall be unto me a kingdom of priests, and an holy nation. These are the words which thou shalt speak unto the children of Israel. (KJV)

Once each man had become part of the people of Israel, sharing its responsibilities and destiny through this act of identification, the community was able to offer the paschal lamb (Joshua 5:2-10). **Every year afterward, the sacrifice would be a reminder of the nation's responsibilities under the covenantal contract.**

As long as the elders who guided the people after Joshua's death were still alive, the Israelites remained true to their Redeemer. **But in the face of ignorance, lack of leadership, inaccessibility to Torah, and strong pagan influences around them, the next generation, which had not personally experienced the rigors of slavery and the miracles of salvation, wandered away from their parents' traditions, the sanctification of this "appointed time with God, along with the true message of God within these traditions and prior commandments".**

Answer for yourself: Can we make parallels to this having happened to the non-Jews in Christianity today? We certainly can without a doubt!

"Pesakh", commemoration of one of the greatest things to have ever happened to the Jews, and which was observed first by non-Jewish Egyptians, was probably no more than a private family affair for a minority of pious people.

For hundreds of years the Israelites pursued an off-again, on-again relationship with their religion. They revived it under Samuel (the eleventh-century B.C.E. prophet), abandoned it after Solomon's kingdom split into rival idolatrous Israel and Jerusalem-centered Judah (932 B.C.E.), briefly approached it at Judean King Hezekiah's instigation (726 B.C.E.), then largely ignored it until they were within a generation of losing the Temple (619 B.C.E.).

At that time, in a clean-up campaign at the sanctuary, King Josiah's people found some Torah scrolls. **Shocked at how much tradition had been lost, the monarch initiated a reformation. A call for repentance went out to all!** All altars outside the capital were eliminated, and Jerusalem was established as the only meeting place for all pilgrimages. A public reading of Deuteronomy, containing the laws, led to immediate repentance by the people, capped by a public celebration of Passover attended by three hundred thousand people.

"Since the time of the prophet Samuel, no Passover like that one had ever been kept in Israel. . ." (II Chronicles 35:18).

Let us continue our study.



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THE PASSOVER AS OBSERVES IN BABYLON

The Jews, exiled to Babylon *after* destruction of the Temple in 586 B.C.E., celebrated the Egyptian redemption as a model for their own hoped-for deliverance. Although in the absence of the sanctuary they could not make the paschal (or any other) sacrifice, they developed new ritual in prayer service.

Those who remained in the Diaspora (Greek for "dispersion," indicating any place Jews live outside Israel and their situation away from the homeland) continued to observe the holiday long after others returned to the Land when the Temple was rebuilt (516 B.C.E.). Jewish life in the Holy Land was revived, largely through the efforts of the scribe and leader Ezra, and though there continued to be periods of neglect and ignorance, such as the one leading up to the Maccabean Revolt, second century B.C.E., Passover from then on continued to be widely celebrated.

While maintaining the Bible's framework for observance, the ritual was expanded and enriched. The penalty for purposely not participating in the Pesakh sacrifice was *karet* (being cut off from the community). So the Jews made tremendous effort to get to Jerusalem. Anyone within a thirty-day journey (about nine hundred miles in those days), including a woman, was obligated to make the pilgrimage. Gradually during the Second Temple period, Pesakh emerged as the greatest Jewish national holiday.

The residents of Jerusalem welcomed the population-doubling pilgrims into their homes, providing free accommodation (the city was considered the common property of all the people); the travelers customarily left the skins of the paschal lambs for their hosts in appreciation. Overflow crowds stayed in surrounding villages or camped in the fields. A carnival atmosphere pervaded, the days and nights filled with festive meals, music, Torah study, and Temple pageantry, which began on the morning of Erev Pesakh (Nissan 14).

Through a series of signals from the Temple, and the Mount of Olives opposite, the people were informed when to stop eating leavened foods and when to destroy any leavened food left in their possession. Starting at noon on Nissan 14, in three groups successively crowding the Temple courtyard, the Israelites brought their paschal offerings, and unlike other sacrifices, slaughtered the animals themselves with the assistance of the priests and to the accompaniment of the Levite orchestra.

As prescribed by Torah, each family unit roasted its own lamb on a portable clay stove set up in the home courtyards. Dressed in white, groups embracing different status and economic strata joined together. With biblical references, they told the story of the night of the Exodus, based on Torah's commandment to pass it on to one's children (Exodus 12:26-27, 13:8, 13:14; Deuteronomy 6:20).



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THE PASSOVER BEFORE THE FALL OF JERUSALEM

Two historic developments led to the evolution of Pesakh observance into the form we know today:

- **the dominion of Rome over Palestine and**
- **the emergence of rabbinic Judaism.**

In the centuries following Ezra's religious revival, controversy over the approach to Torah (and probably not a little over political maneuvering) split Jewish leadership. The Sadducees believed in literally following Torah and only what was explicitly stated in it. The Pharisees, heirs of Ezra and fathers of rabbinic Judaism, believed in extrapolating from Torah according to the Oral Tradition, also called Oral Law (*Torah Sheh B'al Peh*), believed by them to have been given at Mount Sinai along with the Written Law (Torah, or *Torah Sheh Bikhtav*) and passed from generation to generation by word of mouth. It allowed them to interpret the Torah's precepts for changing conditions in the world and the Jewish community.

A major disagreement related to Passover concerned their respective understandings of the Torah's designated timing for the counting of the *omer* (a measure of grain, commonly identified as a sheaf), the agricultural element of Passover and the system for marking off the fifty days between Pesakh and its companion holiday, Shavuot. At the start of the counting, a handful of meal ground from the grain was burned at the altar, the rest baked and eaten by the priest. A measure was sacrificed every day of the period. Not a single Jew could eat bread made from grain of the new harvest until the *omer* sacrifice had been made. The Israelites believed it symbolized protection for the harvest from harmful conditions, particularly winds.

Although one reference makes the first day relative (*"start to count when the sickle is first put to standing grain"* [Deuteronomy 16:9]), the original instruction tells the Israelites to offer the first sheaf, which initiates the count of seven weeks, on *"the day after the Sabbath"* (Leviticus 23:15). **The Sadducees insisted that Torah meant the Sabbath that fell during Pesakh and therefore started their count on that Saturday night. The Pharisees took "Sabbath" to mean the day of rest that was the first sacred day of Passover and therefore began their count at the start of the second day of the festival-even if it meant cutting the barley on Saturday, an act normally forbidden that day.** An elaborate barley-cutting ceremony that took place on Shabbat, just to emphasize their point, is described in Talmud.

It is interesting that the Ethiopian Jews, who did not reject Oral Law as did the Sadducees but were cut off from mainstream Judaism before it was written and explained, understood that "Sabbath" to mean the day after Passover ended, since the entire festival is a period of rest. So they began their count and celebrated Shavuot six days later than that of the Jewish world.

The triumph of the Pharisees in the last century prior to the destruction of the Second Temple led to new observances and themes for the holiday. An expanded religious service, which we know as the Passover seder (order, for the order of service), began to develop. Looking for symbols of freedom and luxury, the sages found them in the culture to which Israel had been exposed for about two hundred years: Roman banquets and Greek

(Hellenistic symposia: drinking wine throughout the meal (with a blessing of thanks to God), reclining on sofas, eating leisurely, and discussing the topic of the evening.

During the Roman occupation, Passover's theme of redemption fanned the hopes of a messianic deliverance. Having long believed that God would again provide miracles such as those experienced at the Exodus, the Jews anticipated a new Moses who would lead them to freedom on the eve of Passover. With this expectation the Jews continued to celebrate Pesakh as a commemoration of the first redemption and the imminent occurrence of the second. The last supper of Jesus, which took place during the Roman rule, was the meal of the paschal sacrifice on the Erev Pesakah 33 C.E.

Outside Jerusalem, where the sacrifice could not be made (some people symbolically ate roast lamb), Passover was observed with services at the local synagogue and at home with the same family service performed in the capital. It consisted of:

- **a kiddush (sanctification over wine);**
- **eating herbs or some spring vegetable-dipped in vinegar or red wine**
- **three questions asked by a child about the out-of-the-ordinary rituals being performed at the table**
- **household head's answers to the questions personalized according to the child's level of comprehension;**
- **explanations of the significance of the night of Nissan 14;**
- **a meal of the paschal lamb, *matzah*, bitter herbs (*maror*), and a pasty mixture of fruit, nuts, and wine called *kharoset*;**
- **a cup of wine following the post-meal grace;**
- **and for those who had eaten the paschal lamb (in Jerusalem only), chanting of Hallel (Psalms of Praise, 113-118).**

Let us continue our study



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THE PASSOVER AFTER THE FALL OF JERUSALEM

Like all other aspects of Jewish worship, the paschal sacrifice and everything connected with it had to be reevaluated once the Temple was destroyed (70C.E.). All that remained possible of the biblical commandments for observance was the prohibition of leavening. Though now truly *Khag Hamatzot*, it retained the name Pesakh (for the passing over), although the *pesakh* (paschal offering) could no longer be made, and became a home ceremony featuring the story of ancient slavery and salvation. That story served as a model for the fight to liberate Jerusalem from Roman occupation in the next century, and for following generations, for the struggle to maintain Jewish life.

As if to bolster their own hopes, the sages elaborated on the number of miracles God performed for the Israelites in Egypt and emphasized the moral significance of the holiday. To commemorate their importance, the paschal sacrifice and its accompaniments appeared on the Passover table in symbolic form, and the typical two cups of wine for festive meals was doubled so one would fall at each of the key points in the ceremony. Detailed, formalized responses to the *seder's* questions began to be set down, and expressions of thanksgiving were added, along with the proclamation that every Jew, in every generation, was to feel that she or he had personally experienced the Exodus.

Rabbi Gamliel, the first-century sage, expanded the story beyond the events of *Nissan 14* to include all the wonders and miracles of the entire Exodus. He issued the famous dictum included in the written version of the *seder*, that "He who does not stress these three rituals on Passover does not fulfill his obligations: pesakh, matzah, and mar or." The three questions became four and were periodically changed in order to reflect altered aspects of the ritual and remain a challenge to children. Specific political developments were reflected in additions, such as interjection of a prayer for a brighter future by Rabbi Akiva. The sage who died a martyr in the second-century Hadrianic persecutions felt that the existing prayer thanking God for the great light of freedom and redemption was incongruous with reality for the Jews living in the shadow of Rome.

Commentary, analysis, and legend were added to embellish the meaning of the Passover story throughout editing of the *Mishnah* (the written version of the Oral Law, second century) and development of the Talmud (commentaries on the *Mishnah*, fifth century) with its tractate devoted to the laws and stories of Pesakh (*Pesakhim*, paschal lambs).

Since Pesakh *Sheni* (called Minor Passover in *Mishnah*) was instituted strictly to allow for sacrifice to be made, absence of the Temple ruled out its need. For symbolic commemoration, a prayer of supplication was omitted from daily service. The sages determined that the period of the *Omer*, however, seen as a link between Pesakh and Shavuot, should still be counted, even though the offerings that marked its start and end had been eliminated. It became a period of semi-mourning, when weddings, haircuts, and playing of musical instruments were prohibited (except for on the new moons of *Iyar* and *Sivan*, which fall within it, and its thirty-third day).

During the early Talmud period (second century), one new observance was added: the fast of the firstborn. The only fast limited to a segment of the community, it is attributed to Rabbi Judah Hanasi (redactor of the

Mishnah), who fasted on this day. Ironically, some say that although he was a firstborn son, his action was not in commemoration or appreciation for Israel's firstborn having been spared when the Egyptians were killed in the tenth plague. He simply had a weak constitution and wanted to save his appetite for the anticipated *seder* meal! Thus can customs be born.



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THE PASSOVER DOWN THROUGH THE MIDDLE AGES TILL TODAY

Discussions among the sages continued for centuries until the content and format of the *seder* became relatively established and universally accepted. By the eleventh century, the text which is a combination of biblical passages, material from *midrash*, and liturgical poems was established and is virtually the one we use today, and in the next century appeared in a separate publication called the *Haggadah*.

Jews in the medieval European ghettos loved Passover, finding inspiration in the events of the past and eternal hope for the future.

THE BLOOD LIBELS

Unfortunately, the joyous anticipation generated by the approach of the holiday gave way to abject terror, beginning in the latter part of the Middle Ages with the spread of malicious blood libels at Passover time, which occurs around the date of Easter. In 1144, the first accusation, in Norwich, England, maintained that the Jews had killed a Christian child, repeating the crucifixion of Jesus.

The ridiculous and slanderous lie, enhanced with the claim that the murdered child's blood was needed for the baking of *matzah*, spread all over Europe, inciting massacres against innocent Jews. Christians in Arab lands in the nineteenth century and Nazis in the twentieth century kept the lie alive. The trumped-up cases and murderous rampages even spread as far as America in the 1920s. Recently, the libel has resurfaced in post-Soviet Russia.

The sad reality inspired fictional accounts, the best known being Heinrich Heine's *The Rabbi of Bacherach* and Bernard Malamud's *The Fixer*, based on the 1911 Jacob Beilis case in Russia, which also served as background for Sholom Aleichem's *The Bloody Hoax*. The legendary Golem, the clay automaton said to have been created by Rabbi Yehudah Lavi of Prague (the Maharal) in the late sixteenth century, existed primarily to guard the community against attacks spurred by the false charges.

Despite the threats, the Jews never ceased observing Pesakh, believing with the indomitable faith for which they are famous (and despised) that the story needed to be told, and deriving renewed strength from it. The only major change was the addition, between the fourteenth and sixteenth centuries, of a number of songs following the service, although these were not universally adopted.

The messages of Passover continued to inspire oppressed Jews throughout the world. Based on the description of Passover in the prophetic books of the Bible to which they had access in the Christian version, the *marranos* (hidden Spanish and Portuguese Jews forced to renunciate Judaism during the fifteenth-century Inquisition and their descendants) continued to observe Passover. Jews in the Warsaw ghetto observed a modified *seder* on Erev Pesakh 1943, the night of the start of the ill-fated heroic uprising. Even concentration camp inmates somehow scrounged up the barest essentials and prayed for the deliverance of their people and vanquishing of their

oppressors.

In the post-World War II era, the theme of freedom became linked with the fate of displaced, Soviet, Ethiopian, and other endangered communities of Jews whom many prayed would be liberated. It is no coincidence that the most famous of the ships bringing refugees to Palestine after the war was named *Exodus* ' 47, and that the powerful metaphor was used for the name of the dramatic clandestine airlift that brought close to ten thousand Ethiopian Jews to Israel in 1984-1985 (Operation Moses) and the campaign to fund immigration and settlement of Jews from the former Soviet Union (Operation Exodus).

With its universal messages of freedom from oppression for all people, and its particularistic promises of protection for the people of Israel, Passover remains the most observed holiday among Diaspora Jews.



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THE JEWISH ENCYCLOPEDIA ON THE PASSOVER...WHAT CAN THE GENTILE LEARN?

If you have access to the Jewish Encyclopedia you learn some very important things if you read about the Passover. Let us not forget that we are looking into the possible existence of a "Pattern of Worship" that exists that is a true picture of the worship of God as intended originally to which the Christian Church as severely departed in this day. In researching the Passover from a Jewish Perspective we find many astonishing things.

Other names by which the Passover is called are :

- Hag ha-mazzot (fest.);
- Hag ha-Pesah (fest.);
- Pesah (fest.); Seder, Passover

Traditionally the passover is a spring festival spring festival, beginning on the 15th day of Nisan, lasting seven days in Israel and eight in the Diaspora. It commemorates the Exodus from Egypt. The first and seventh days (the first two and last two in the Diaspora) are yom tov (a "festival" on which work is prohibited) and the other days hol ha-mo'ed ("intermediate days" on which work is permitted).

NAMES AND HISTORY

The biblical names for the festival are: hag ha-Pesah ("the feast of the Passover," Ex. 34:25), so called because God "passed over" (or "protected") the houses of the children of Israel (Ex. 12:23), and hag ha-Mazzot ("the feast of Unleavened Bread"; Ex. 23:15; Lev. 23:6; Deut. 16:16). Pesah is the paschal lamb, offered as a sacrifice on the eve of the feast (14th Nisan) in Temple times; it was eaten in family groups after having been roasted whole (Ex. 12:1–28, 43–49; Deut. 16:1–8). A person who was unable (because of ritual impurity or great distance from the Sanctuary) to keep the "first Passover" could keep it a month later—Pesah Sheni ("the Second Passover," also called "Minor Passover," Num. 9:1–14).

According to tradition, the Passover rites were divinely ordained as a permanent reminder of God's deliverance of His people from Egyptian bondage. The critical view points to two distinct festivals in the Bible; the feast of unleavened bread, a pastoral feast, and the Passover, an agricultural feast.

In the Book of Joshua (5:10–11), it is said that the Israelites led by Joshua kept the feast at Gilgal. The Book of Kings relates that Passover was kept with special solemnity in King Josiah's reign in the seventh century B.C.E.: *"The king commanded all the people, saying: 'Keep the passover unto the Lord your God, as it is written in this book of the covenant. For there was not kept such a passover from the days of the judges that judged Israel, nor in all the days of the kings of Israel, nor of the kings of Judah; but in the eighteenth year of King Josiah was this passover kept to the Lord in Jerusalem'"* (II Kings 23:21–23).

As far as can be ascertained, the Passover festival was kept throughout the period of the Second Temple. Josephus records contemporary Passover celebrations in which he estimates that the participants who gathered in Jerusalem to perform the sacrifice in the year 65 C.E., were "not less than three millions" (Jos., Wars, 2:280). The Talmud (Pes. 64b) similarly records: *"King Agrippa once wished to take a census of the hosts of Israel. He said to the high priest, 'Cast your eyes on the Passover offerings.' He took a kidney from each, and 600,000 pairs of kidneys were found there, twice as many as those who departed from Egypt, excluding those who were unclean and those who were on a distant journey; and there was not a single paschal lamb for which more than ten people had not registered; and they called it: 'The Passover of the dense throngs.'"* Allowing for hyperbole, the account of immense crowds assembled to offer the paschal lamb cannot be too far from historical reality.

The Samaritans considered all the biblical rules regarding the sacrifice of the lamb in Egypt (Ex. 12) to be applicable for all time. The practice, as recorded in the Mishnah (Pes. 9:5), is that only Pesah Mizrayim ("Passover of Egypt") required the setting aside of the lamb four days before the festival, the sprinkling of the blood on lintel and doorposts, and that the lamb be eaten in "haste." The Mishnah (Pes. 10:5) explains the commands of the lamb sacrifice and the eating of mazzah ("unleavened bread") and maror ("bitter herbs") as follows:

- the lamb is offered because God "passed over" (pasah);
- the unleavened bread is eaten because God redeemed the Israelites from Egypt (Ex. 12:39);
- and the bitter herbs, because the Egyptians embittered their lives (Ex. 1:14).

With the destruction of the Temple, the offering of the paschal lamb came to an end, although it is possible that for a time the sacrifice was continued in modified form in some circles (Guttman, in: HUCA, 38 (1967), 137–48). The other rites and ceremonies of the Passover festival continued as before. The Samaritans, however, still sacrifice the paschal lamb in a special ceremony on Mt. Gerizim near Shechem. The Last Supper, mentioned in the New Testament (Mark 14, Matt. 26, Luke 22), may be the seder meal.

Early Christians observed Easter on Passover and Roman Christians on the Sunday after Passover. Later the blood libel against Jews was frequently connected with the Passover festival.

THE SEDER

The special home ceremony on the first night of Passover, the seder ("order"), is based on the injunction to parents to inform their children of the deliverance from Egypt: *"And thou shalt tell thy son in that day, saying: It is because of that which the Lord did for me when I came forth out of Egypt"* (Ex. 13:8). The Mishnah (Pes. 10:4) gives a formula of four questions which are asked by the child and to which the father replies "according to the son's intelligence". During the Middle Ages a special order of service for the seder was adapted with a formal reply to the questions (culled from various rabbinic sources) and with supplementary material such as table hymns and jingles calculated to appeal to children. These are recorded in the Passover Haggadah. The Mishnah (Pes. 10:1) rules that even the poorest man in Israel must not eat on the first night of Passover unless he reclines. In mishnaic times, free men would normally recline at meals and on this night all must demonstrate that they are free. In the Middle Ages, in many communities, the custom of reclining at meals during the year was abandoned, but it became a duty to recline at the seder. During the seder, one must partake of four cups of wine (Pes. 10:1). These were interpreted symbolically as corresponding to the four expressions of redemption in the Book of Exodus (6:6–7) or the four cups mentioned in the Book of Genesis (40:11–13) in connection with the dream of the chief butler (TJ, Pes. 10:1, 37c).

On the seder table are the following items: three (in some rites two) cakes of mazzot placed one on top of the other; a roasted egg and shankbone or other bone (as reminders of the paschal lamb and the festival offering in Temple times); a dish of salt water (for "dipping" and as a symbol of the Israelites' tears); maror such as lettuce (or horseradish) for "dipping"; and haroset ("clay"), a paste made from almonds, apples, and wine (Pes.

10:3) for the purpose of sweetening the bitter herbs and as a symbol of the mortar the Israelites used when building under the lash of their taskmasters. The seder follows this standard order:

- (1) kaddesh ("sanctification"): the festival is introduced by the Kiddush benediction in which God is praised for giving the festivals to Israel;
- (2) rehaz ("wash"): the hands are washed in accordance with the ancient practice of ritual purification before partaking of anything dipped in liquid;
- (3) karpas ("greens"): the parsley is dipped in salt water;
- (4) yahaz ("division"): the middle mazzah is broken in two and one half is hidden. This latter portion is known as the afikoman ("the after-meal") and is eaten at the end of the meal, as a reminder of the paschal lamb which was eaten at the end so that its taste would remain in the mouth. It is customary for children to look for the afikoman, a prize being given to the successful finder;
- (5) maggid ("recitation"): the Haggadah is recited;
- (6) rahzah ("washing"): the ritual washing of the hands before breaking bread;
- (7) mozi ("bringing forth"): Grace before Meals is recited: "Blessed art Thou... who bringest forth [ha-mozi] bread...";
- (8) mazzah: pieces of the top mazzah and the broken middle one are eaten;
- (9) maror: the bitter herbs are dipped in the haroset and eaten;
- (10) korekh ("binding"): a sandwich is made of pieces of the bottom mazzah and bitter herbs and eaten. This is a reminder of Hillel's practice in Temple times, based on the verse: "They shall eat it [the paschal lamb] with unleavened bread and bitter herbs" (Num. 9:11);
- (11) shulhan arukh ("prepared table"): the festive meal is eaten;
- (12) zafun ("hidden"): the afikoman is found and eaten;
- (13) barekh ("blessing"): Grace after Meals is recited;
- (14) Hallel ("psalms of praise"): Psalms 115–8 are recited. It was customary in Temple times to recite these psalms at the time of the offering of the paschal lamb (Pes. 5:7);
- (15) nirzah ("acceptance").

It is customary to have on the seder table a full cup of wine known as "Elijah's cup." Reflections on past deliverance awaken hope for the final redemption, and Elijah, being the herald of the Messiah (Mal. 3:23), is welcomed; toward the end of the seder, the front door of the house is opened to demonstrate that this is a "night of watching" (Ex. 12:42) on which Israel knows no fear. In the Diaspora the seder is repeated on the second night. On the second night of Passover the counting of the omer is begun. The laws of Passover in the Talmud occur in the talmudic tractate Pesahim. In the United States several additional prayers have been suggested by different groups. These include a prayer on behalf of the Holocaust victims, one for Russian Jewry, and a prayer of thanksgiving for the State of Israel, usually combined with a fifth cup of wine. The

LAWS AND CUSTOMS OF THE PASSOVER

No hamez ("leaven") is to be found in the house or owned during Passover (Ex. 12:15, 19). On the night before the festival, the house is thoroughly searched for hamez (Pes. 1:1). All leaven found in the house is gathered together in one place and burned on the following day before noon (Bedikat Hamez).

According to rabbinic authorities, the obligation to eat mazzah applies only to the first night (Pes. 120a); it is customary, therefore, to prepare special mazzot, the wheat of which has been under observation from the time of reaping or grinding (mazzah shemurah), for it. During the remainder of the festival, though leaven may not be eaten, there is no obligation to eat mazzah. Some rabbinic authorities were opposed to the use of mazzot baked by machine.

Utensils in which leaven has been cooked, baked, or boiled must be specially treated before they can be used on Passover. The method is to immerse them in a caldron of boiling water, or, if they are utensils used on a fire, to heat them in a fire until they glow. However, not all vessels can be treated so. Unlike other forbidden food which becomes neutralized and may be eaten if mixed in 60 times its bulk, on Passover, the smallest admixture of

hamez is enough to render a dish forbidden (see Dietary Laws).

On the first day of Passover in the synagogue, a special prayer for dew (tal) is recited and the phrase morid ha-geshem is not said. On the Sabbath of Passover, the Song of Songs is read in the synagogue (Ashkenazi rite). Full Hallel is recited on the first day (two days in the Diaspora) and half-Hallel the rest of the festival. On the last day Hazkarat Neshamot is recited. When the liturgy refers to the festival, it does so as "the period of our freedom." Herut ("freedom"), is, in fact, the dominant note of Passover.

A CRITICAL VIEW OF THE PASSOVER

Now here is where it gets very interesting to the discriminating reader.

The feast of Passover consists of two parts: The Passover ceremony and the Feast of Unleavened Bread. Originally both parts existed separately; but at the beginning of the Exile they were combined. Passover was originally not a pilgrimage feast, but a domestic ceremony consisting of the slaughtering and eating of the paschal animal. This animal—according to Exodus 12:21 (J) a sheep or goat, according to Deuteronomy 16:2, either a sheep or a bovine animal, according to Exodus 12:5 (P; cf. II Chron. 35:7), a year-old lamb or kid—was killed, in accordance with later texts (Ex. 12:6; Lev. 23:5; Num. 9:3–5; 28:16 (33:3); Josh. 5:10; Ezek. 45:21; Ezra 6:19; II Chron. 35:1), on the 14th of the first month (i.e., the 14th of Nisan, March/April), "between the evenings" (Ex. 12:6b; Lev. 23:5; Num. 9:3, 5, 11; 28:4, 8), i.e., at the setting of the sun. The early texts, Exodus 23:15 and 34:18, however, place the Festival of Unleavened Bread in "the season of the hodesh of Abib, since it was at the hodesh of Abib that you went free from Egypt," and Deuteronomy 16:1ff. places the slaughtering of the Passover sacrifice in "the hodesh of Abib, seeing that it was in this hodesh of Abib that you went free from Egypt at night..., so that you may remember the day you went free from Egypt"; and it has been argued that the last cited passage in particular makes poor sense unless hodesh designates not a 30-day period ("month") but a single day, i.e., the New Moon. (Both senses of hodesh are well attested; which is intended in this case can be confirmed only from the context.) The rite of touching the lintel and the doorposts of the house (formerly the tent) with blood from the paschal animal was connected with the slaughter (Ex. 12:7, 13 [P], 22 [J]). The flesh of the animal was boiled, according to Deuteronomy 16:7; but later—by II Chronicles 35:13a—this was interpreted in light of the P (Ex. 12:8–9) to mean broiling (cf. LXX, Deut. 16:7), and this is the rabbinic halakhah (Pes. 5:10). The flesh was then eaten with unleavened bread and bitter herbs (Ex. 12:8b; cf. Deut. 16:3a), during the night (Ex. 12:8a), in a community meal, in which the whole family or a combination of families (Ex. 12:4), but no uncircumcised persons (Ex. 12:48b; cf. 12:44–45, 48a [P]), took part. No flesh was allowed to remain until the next day (Deut. 16:4b).

Nothing is found in the Bible about the original meaning of the Passover rite. There is no clue in the name "Passover" (Heb. pesah) because its etymology is uncertain. The assumption that the Passover was originally a sacrifice of the firstborn (G. Beer and others) is incorrect

- (1) because according to Exodus 22:28–29 and Leviticus 22:27, the firstborn of the sheep, ox, and goat was to be offered on the eighth day,
- (2) because according to PC (Ex. 12:5), the Passover animal had to be a year old, and
- (3) because the regulations about the firstborn in Exodus 34:19, 20a and 13:11–13 are connected with the eating of mazzot (Ex. [34:18]; 13:3–10), but not with the Passover (Ex. [34:25]; 12:24–27a; Kutsch, Segal).

Originally the Passover was celebrated by transient breeders of sheep and goats, later by the Israelites, to secure protection for their flocks prior to leaving the desert winter pasture for cultivated regions (Rost).

Answer for yourself: Did we just read that the Passover existed in Egypt long before the Israelites? We sure did. Now when you go to our Egypt site you find out all about this and how the these Gentile Egyptians kept the Passover long before there was a Moses or an Exodus. This is fascinating stuff if you ask me.

The rite of the blood (see above) as well as the regulation, which was later still in force (Ex. 12:46b; cf. Num. 9:12), whereby no bone of the Passover animal was to be broken had an apotropaic significance. The oldest literary record in Exodus 12:21 (J) already presupposes the Passover. **Hence the old nomadic custom is "historicized" by being connected with the main event in the Israelite salvation history, the Exodus. The reason for this connection was, from a traditional-historical standpoint, the situation of departure which belonged also to the Passover. Moreover, the rite of the blood made it possible to connect the Passover with the story of the killing of the Egyptian firstborn (Ex. 12:23), which was also inserted into the tradition of the Exodus as the reason why the Pharaoh let the Israelites go (Ex. 11:4ab–8; Kutsch). This "historicization" has determined the character of the Passover: it became the feast commemorating the Exodus (cf. Ex. 12:11–14a[P]; Deut. 16:1, 3).**

Answer for yourself: Now knowing this does this not make you want to know just what lies behind these "Appointed Times" with God that these Egyptians knew and from which the Jews "borrowed"? It sure does for me anyway and the information is available on our Egypt site where we show you how Judaism is but an extension and an adaptation of **Egyptian religion (the earliest Divine Revelation of God to man and the world's first Ethical Monotheism)** when properly understood today: <http://egyptcx.netfirms.com>.

Originally, the Passover was celebrated among the families (Ex. 12:21 [J]) in tents, after the territorial occupation, in houses. After the cultic centralization of King Josiah, the celebration of the Passover was transferred to the central Sanctuary in Jerusalem (Deut. 16:2, 7; II Kings 23:21–23). The requirement that the slaughtering, preparing, and eating of the paschal animals was to take place in the forecourts of the Temple was maintained after the Exile (II Chron. 30:1–5; 35:13–14; Jub. 49:16, 20). Later, because of the large numbers of participants, the paschal animal was killed at the Temple place, but boiled and eaten in the houses of Jerusalem (e.g., Pes. 5:10; 7:12). The transfer of the Passover feast to the Temple entailed the end of the rite of blood; the blood of the paschal animals was, like other sacrificial blood, now poured on the base of the altar (II Chron. 30:16; 35:11).

The reason for the institution of a second Passover on the 14th day of the second month (Num. 9:10–12 [P']), which is wrongly ascribed in II Chronicles 30 to King Hezekiah of Judah, is not a difference in calendar between Judah and Northern Israel (cf. S. Talmon, in: VT, 8 (1958), 48–74) but the possibility that a Jew might be prevented from taking part in the feast on the 14th day of the first month because of uncleanness or a distant journey.

THE FEAST OF THE UNLEAVENED BREAD

Unlike the Passover which was borrowed and adapted by the Israelites from Egyptian Religion, the seven-day Feast of Unleavened Bread, which was celebrated in the month of Abib (Ex. 13:4; 23:15; 34:18), is probably taken over from the Canaanites. Now before you jump and run thinking that all Canaanite Religion is evil try to understand that this is the faith of Abraham. What you don't know as of yet is why Ezra, when rewriting the Jewish Bible when the captive Israelites were released from Persia, so pictured Egypt and Canaanite so negatively in the passages which later became the Jewish Bible. That I am sad to say is a study for another day but you find hints of this on the Egypt site mentioned above. The main custom of the feast of Unleavened Bread is the eating of unleavened bread or mazzot (e.g., Ex. 23: 15; 34:18). The required pilgrimage (Ex. 23:14–15, 17; 34:23; Deut. 16:16), originally to a local sanctuary, later—after the cult centralization of Josiah—to Jerusalem, is secondary to the eating of mazzot.

Originally the feast extended over a week beginning not on the day following the Paschal night but on a "morrow after the Sabbath." The counting of the seven weeks until the "Feast of Weeks" (Pentecost; Lev. 23:11, 15–16). In Deuteronomy 16:9 it is described as the day on which the Israelites "first put the sickle to the standing grain" and the grain harvest is begun. Because of its proximity to the traditional date of the Exodus, the mazzot feast was also connected with the Exodus and thus "historicized" (e.g., Ex. 12:29–34, 37–39 [J]; cf. 12:15–20; 23:15; 34:18 [P]; Deut. 16:3b). A yearly celebration of the march through the Jordan (according to Josh. 3–4) on the Feast of Unleavened Bread (Kraus, Soggin) cannot be derived from the late text Joshua 5:10–

12; and the thesis that therefore the mazzot feast was celebrated in older times as an "election feast" in Gilgal (Wildberger) is contradictory to the fact that the Exodus was also remembered in the celebration of the Passover. Until shortly before the Exile (Deut. 16:7b), the participants in the celebration of the Passover returned home after the celebration at the Temple (the instructions about the mazzot feast in Deut. 16:3ab, 3b, 4a, 8 and 16 are a secondary enlargement [Horst]; even then the Passover and mazzot feasts (as pilgrimages) were still celebrated separately. To fix a common date for the Jews in Babylonia the mazzot feast after 587 B.C.E. was given a fixed date, the 15th to 21st of the first month, and thus connected with the Passover (first mentioned Ezek. 45:21; Lev. 23:5,6; Num. 28:16, 17; Josh. 5:10, 11; Ezra 6:19, 22; II Chron. [30:15, 13 21–22] 35: 17a, 17b; cf. also the Passover papyrus from Elephantine).

PASSOVER IN THE NEW TESTAMENT

The combined Passover—mazzot Feast is also presupposed in the New Testament. The name here refers

- a) to the celebration of the Passover (Matt. 26:18; Mark 14:1; Heb. 11:28);
- b) to the whole feast (Matt. 26:2; Luke 2:41; 22:1; Acts 12:4; especially in John 2:13, 23, et al.; for this name "[feast of] unleavened bread" [Mark 14:1, 12; Luke 22:1, 7; Acts. 12:3; 20:6] is also used), and
- c) as in the Old Testament (e.g., Ex. 12: 21), to the Passover lamb (Mark 14:12, 14, 16; Luke 22:8, 15; John 18–28; II Cor. 5:7).

The connection of the death of Jesus with the Passover is important. According to the synoptic gospels, Jesus was crucified on the 15th day of Nisan, the first day of the feast; the Christians understand the last supper of Jesus as a Passover meal, during which the salvational meaning of Jesus' death is disclosed (Mark 14:22, 24).

Answer for yourself: Why is this a big, big problem?

The gospel of John, on the other hand, dates the death of Jesus to the 14th of Nisan (John 19:14; cf. 18: 28), to the hour of the Passover slaughtering (cf. John 19:14, 31; Mark 15:33–34, 37; cf. Pes. 5:1; Jos. Wars, 6:423), and the meal to the night of the 13th of Nisan. This does not have calendaric (Jaubert), but theological reasons.

Answer for yourself: Is someone trying to "create theology" here when there is none?

Unlike the synoptic gospels, John interprets Jesus as the Passover lamb but the Synoptic Gospels do not! (John 1:29; 19:36; cf. e.g., otherwise I Cor. 5:7; I Pet. 1:19; Rev. 5:6). [Ernst Kutsch]

Answer for yourself: So what did we see that we should not forget?

Namely, as expertly detailed in our Egypt - Christian website, these "Divine Appointed Times" with God were known from the earliest Divine Revelations of God to mankind (Egyptians were Gentiles) that predated Israel and which were kept and observed by these Egyptians which we also soon learn upon dedicated study are the true parents of the Jewish Race. No wonder these "Jewish Children" of Egypt learned of these previously existing "special appointed times with God" and adapted them to their unique situations down through history.



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LOOKING AT THE PASSOVER IN THE NEW TESTAMENT TEXTS

Everybody knows that Passover is very important festival for the Jewish people. In fact the Festival of Passover begins the Festival cycle for the Jewish people and the Hebrew Scriptures. However not many people realize that observance of the Passover was also an important festival for the Gentile Church during the first century, and should still be observed by Christians today.

Answer for yourself: Can you find any Biblical injunction against keeping and observing the Passover for either a Jew or a non-Jew? Is there any passage in either the Old or New Testaments which command the cessation of observance of the Passover? You won't find any. There is no Biblical reason for dispensing with it.

Answer for yourself: Where do we find the regulations and rules for observance of the Passover? We find them in Exodus 12:1-28, Leviticus 23:4-8, Numbers 9:1-14, Deuteronomy 16:1-8. The festival involves making a sacrifice, although this has been laid aside since the Temple was destroyed in 70AD. Without a Temple sacrifices cannot be preformed but they will resume once the Temple is rebuilt. Here is where the problem comes in. Many who have studied the Passover have come to erroneous conclusions concerning the Passover based on these verses alone. Many Christians argue that observance of the Passover is but "Old Testament dead works of the law".

Answer for yourself: Is this true?

Little do the majority of Christians and Pastors realize how much the New Testament emphasizes the Passover, not just in the Gospels, but also in the book of Acts and the letters of Paul.

LOOKING AT THE PASSOVER IN THE GOSPELS

Yeshua (Jesus) was brought up in an observant family that went to Jerusalem every year at Passover.

Luke 2:41 41 Now his parents went to Jerusalem every year at the feast of the passover. (KJV)

It is recorded in the New Testament texts that he was crucified in Jerusalem while the Jews were gathered together for Passover. Let me share something new with most. The New Testament record tells us that Jesus and the Apostles ate the Passover meal with his disciples EARLY....(in advance of the actual date because he knew he would no longer be with them).

Answer for yourself: Are you aware of this fact? The story is given in Matt. 26, Mark 14, Luke 22, telling us how he took the bread and wine to signify his body and blood, and how he was to be betrayed. John 13 also gives us the story, including the betrayal, but focuses on the washing of the disciples feet.

Luke's Gospel tells Yeshua's actual feelings concerning observing the Passover. He did not observe it legalistically, as if he was under compulsion. He said to his disciples

"With desire I have desired to eat this passover with you before I suffer: for I say unto you, I will not any more eat thereof, until it be fulfilled in the kingdom of God". (Luke 22:15-16).

Yeshua desired to eat the Passover, and we should desire it also, and we are commissioned to teach the Nations all that he commanded (Matt. 28:18-20).

THE PASSOVER IN THE EARLY CHURCH

Answer for yourself: When Yeshua celebrated Passover with his disciples, an event that is commonly called the "Last Supper", was this the last Passover for his followers and did Passover cease thus allowing the emergence of Easter? No way!

Notice what we find in Acts chapter 12 which is around thirty years following the death of Jesus.

In **Acts 12:1-4** we are told that there was persecution of the church during ***"the days of unleavened bread"***, and the soldiers intended to bring Peter up to the people ***"after the Passover"*** (Green's Literal Translation - **the KJV erroneously says Easter instead of Passover**). Of course this was done on purpose by the translators in order to try and make it look as if the early church was observing Easter when in fact they were not; they were observing the Passover and Unleavened Bread and later Pentecost (Shavuot). This is the **ONLY** instance in the whole of the New Testament where the Greek word "Pascha" is NOT TRANSLATED AS "PASSOVER" and instead translated as "Easter".

Answer for yourself: Do you think this was done on purpose to cover up to the reader that the early church was following the Jewish "Pattern of Worship" instead of the Roman pattern we have today? Why not translate "Pascha" as Passover as it had been done all 28 times before? Why this one time did they not continue in their normal way of translating "Pascha" as "Passover"? Could it be that they wanted to show that the early church was not following in their Jewish Roots but rather in a Roman custom instead? Was this backwritten to change ***"the faith once given the saints"*** (Jude 1:3)?

Answer for yourself: Why should it mention Passover and the days of Unleavened Bread, unless the Believers continued to celebrate it? These were the Jewish Believers in Jerusalem, and it is certain that they celebrated these festivals.

Let us notice as well Paul's example in Acts 18:21 where he observes the Passover and takes special efforts to do so.

Acts 18:21 21 But bade them farewell, saying, I must by all means keep this feast that cometh in Jerusalem: but I will return again unto you, if God will. And he sailed from Ephesus. (KJV)

Notice his insistence: **"I must by all means"** keep the Biblical Festivals and in this instance it is most likely the Passover. This was at the end of his second journey. It does not say which feast it was, but it probably means the biggest feast of the year, which is Passover.

Answer for yourself: Were you aware that Paul also observed not only Festivals and Sabbaths but "Fasts" as well?

Acts 27:9 9 Now when much time was spent, and when sailing was now dangerous, because the fast was now already past, Paul admonished them, (KJV)

This refers to the biggest fast of the year which is **Yom Kippur**. He was a prisoner at the time, on his way to Rome, and he was able to observe Yom Kippur because it simply meant not eating or drinking.

During Paul's third journey he spent three years at Ephesus (Acts 19:10, 20:31). He wrote his first letter to the Corinthians while he was at Ephesus and told them of his desire to see them, but he would stay at Ephesus until Pentecost. (1 Cor. 16:5-8).

1 Cor 16:5-8 5 Now I will come unto you, when I shall pass through Macedonia: for I do pass through Macedonia. 6 And it may be that I will abide, yea, and winter with you, that ye may bring me on my journey whithersoever I go. 7 For I will not see you now by the way; but I trust to tarry a while with you, if the Lord permit. 8 But I will tarry at Ephesus until Pentecost. (KJV)

So he celebrated Pentecost with the Ephesian Church. So here we find the example that this Gentile Synagogue-Church were keeping the Festival of Shavuot or Pentecost which commemorated the giving of the Torah to the Jewish nation and Moses. Then Paul left for Macedonia and Greece, which means Corinth. He stayed there for three months, and then went back through Macedonia, stopping at Berea and Thessalonica (Acts 20:1-4). He went to Phillipi where he celebrated Passover and the days of Unleavened Bread, then he sailed to Troas (Acts 20:6).

Acts 20:6 6 And we sailed away from Philippi after the days of unleavened bread, and came unto them to Troas in five days; where we abode seven days. (KJV)

Then he was in a hurry to get to Jerusalem in time for Pentecost, so he sailed along the coast of Asia Minor, stopping at a few places along the way but missing out Ephesus where he would be sure to get delayed. (Acts 20:13-16).

Acts 20:13-16 take in Paul: for so had he appointed, minding himself to go afoot. 14 And when he met with us at Assos, we took him in, and came to Mitylene. 15 And we sailed thence, and came the next day over against Chios; and the next day we arrived at Samos, and tarried at Trogyllium; and the next day we came to Miletus. 16 For Paul had determined to sail by Ephesus, because he would not spend the time in Asia: for he hasted, if it were possible for him, to be at Jerusalem the day of Pentecost. (KJV)

Now we have just seen Paul say that *"I must be all means"* and now it is said about him that *"he hasted"* in attempts to keep and observe the Biblical Festivals and Feasts and Fasts. Paul knew the importance of these for him in his worship and his Gentile congregations as well.

So Paul seems to have organized his life around the festivals. Pentecost at Ephesus, Passover at Phillipi the following year, then Pentecost again at Jerusalem.

PAUL'S FIRST LETTER TO CORINTH

Paul wrote his first letter to the Corinthians while he was in Ephesus. In 1 Corinthians Paul talks about his plan to stay in Ephesus until Pentecost. There are seven weeks from Passover to Pentecost, and he says so much about Passover, it seems most likely he might have written the letter during the Festival. Many scholars concur with this assessment.

In **1 Cor. 5:6-8** he says:

Your glorying is not good. Know ye not that a little leaven leaveneth the whole lump? Purge out therefore the old leaven, that ye may be a new lump, as ye are unleavened. For even Christ our passover is sacrificed for us: therefore let us keep the feast, not with old leaven, neither with the leaven of malice and wickedness; but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth.

Paul is giving them a direct command to observe Passover, and he is also telling them what it means using a strong allegory. Paul taught that the Israelites ate unleavened bread before they came out of Egypt because they left in a hurry and there wasn't enough time for the dough to rise. The traditional Jewish teaching about Passover is that leaven means being sin or puffed up with pride. When they came out of Egypt they could not boast of any acts of nobility, since they had no army and they were entirely dependent on the miraculous intervention of God. Getting rid of the leaven means getting rid of our pride or sin in one's life. Paul wrote his letter about 58 AD, before the destruction of the Temple, so the Jews in Jerusalem would still be making sacrifices at this time. Paul goes on to tell them that Christ is their Passover sacrifice, so there is no need for any other sacrifice, but they should still celebrate the Passover.

In **1 Cor. 8:1** he says:

Now as touching things offered unto idols, we know that we all have knowledge. Knowledge puffeth up, but charity edifieth.

This is obviously another reference to Passover, and the need to get rid of the leaven.

In **1 Cor. 10:16** he says:

The cup of blessing which we bless, is it not the communion of the blood of Christ? The bread which we break, is it not the communion of the body of Christ? For we being many are one bread, and one body, for we are all partakers of that one bread.

Answer for yourself: What could "the cup of blessing" and the "bread broken" refer to in the above passage?

This is another obvious reference to the Passover meal that Yeshua had with his disciples before his execution. During the Passover meal there are four cups, the cup of sanctification, the cup of deliverance, the cup of redemption, and the cup of praise. The reference to "the cup of blessing" would have been the third cup, the cup of redemption. Paul refers to it as the "*cup of blessing*" in this passage. Paul also appears to refer to two of the Passover cups in **1 Cor. 1:30 where he says "sanctification and redemption".**

In **1 Cor. 11:23-26** he says:

For I received of the Lord that which also I delivered unto you, that the Lord Jesus the same night in which he was betrayed took bread: and when he had given thanks, he brake it, and said, Take, eat: this is my body, which is broken for you: this do in remembrance of me. After the same manner also he took the cup, when he had supped, saying, This cup is the new testament in my blood: this do ye, as oft as ye drink it, in remembrance of me. For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do shew the Lord's death till he come.

Again another reminder of the Passover meal, and he goes on to say that people should not eat the bread and take the cup of the Lord unworthily, but should understand what it means. It isn't just an occasion to get together, have a meal, and have a good time.

SO WHAT HAVE WE SEEN CONCERNING GENTILES AND THE PASSOVER?

At this point it should be obvious that the Gentiles in the Early Church were observing Passover. We have seen conclusively that not only did Paul keep and observe the Biblical Festivals and Feasts and Fasts but modeled and taught in the synagogues both Jews and Gentiles to "keep the feasts". Paul's

letters were to churches that were made up of both Jews and Gentiles, and it is unimaginable that he would want a Passover just for the Jews, where Gentiles were excluded.

Before closing we need to mention one thing concerning Acts 15 and James' ruling concerning the non-Jew and his being included in the Israel of God. Some call this "grafting" into the vine. Just to emphasize the point, we should turn to Acts 15 where the Gentiles were complaining about circumcision. The Council of Jerusalem met and resolved this question of circumcision by agreeing that the Gentiles would not have to be circumcised, or keep the whole law of Moses, but has to observe certain essential things. **But what few see is that the Jerusalem Church also dealt with how Jews and non-Jews were to fellowship together when they met together for observance of Festivals and Feasts.** Let us look at **Acts 15:20:**

- **Abstain from pollutions of idols.**
- **Abstain from fornication**
- **Abstain from things strangled.**
- **Abstain from blood.**

Most look at these 4 admonitions of a summary statement concerning 4 of the 7 Laws or categories of Laws and Commandments within the Covenant of Noah for the non-Jew. And let me say that this is correct in a way but the real intent of these 4 admonitions, on a deeper level, concern issues involving dietary laws that were of paramount importance if Jews and non-Jews were to have social relationships around the table and Festivals and Feasts. On a deeper level these 4 admonitions refer to dietary laws only. **The emphasis on the dietary laws was to ensure that the Jews and Gentiles would be able to meet together for Passover and all the other festivals that involve food, including the regular weekly Shabbat.** The Gentiles had to observe the essential elements of a Kosher diet, so that they could do their fair share of the work, preparing the food for the communal meals.

So we have seen an abundance of New Testament references about Passover, making complete hogwash of the notion that observance of the Passover (or other Biblical Festivals or Fasts) are but Old Testament dead works of the law which are to be abandoned by Christians. The early church observed them, and the Apostle Paul not only commanded but modeled for his Gentile congregations that they should be observed. **There is nothing in the New Testament that suggests that this festival, or any other festival, should be abandoned.**

Answer for yourself: If we are going to repent and return to the Biblical festivals, in accordance with the practices of the Early Jewish and Gentile Synagogue-Churches whose examples we have just seen both in Israel and Asia, Minor, then what do we do about the Christian festivals such as Christmas and Easter? The answer is simple - we cease and desist observing them and we sanctify ourselves from them since they have no Biblical basis and are derived from paganism.



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CAN WE FIND ATONEMENT IN THE PASSOVER?

Earlier in my life an evangelical Christian I was taught to draw a comparison between the Passover Lamb and Jesus. My teachers insisted that the former foreshadows the latter. This same idea is advanced in the New Testament, particularly in the book of John where Jesus is portrayed as the fulfillment of the Passover lamb.

Through my years of study as I combed through volumes of materials to help better understand Passover and the Day of Atonement I was brought to have questions about where exactly in the Passover do we find the forgiveness of sins that was taught by the church as pictured by the death of Jesus. My research verified for me that instead of looking at the Passover for atonement of sin one must look to the Day of Atonement, and only then we find atonement for unintentional sins and sins of the first Tablet of the Law. Remembering that Jesus is taught to be the Passover Lamb for the life of me I cannot make any connection with this representation and the forgiveness of sin. Such is a major problem for the thinking Christian.

- **Answer for yourself:** How valid is the premise that the Passover sacrifice foreshadows the life and ministry of Jesus?
- **Answer for yourself:** What is the Passover holiday really about?

LOOKING AT THE PASSOVER

The Bible relates that when the Jewish people were preparing themselves for their momentous exodus from Egypt, God commanded them to slaughter a year-old sheep or goat on the 14th day of the first month (Nissan) and publicly place its blood on the outside doorposts of their homes. Because missionaries insist that this blood was the antitype of the blood of Jesus at Calvary, it behooves us to question the soundness of this claim.

The Torah never states or even implies that the Passover sheep or goat atones for sin. This notion that the Paschal lamb is a representation of a crucified savior or atonement for sin is as foreign to the teachings of the Jewish Scriptures and the Torah as is the notion of the man in the moon. Such identifications of crucified saviors and atonement can be found but not in Judaism; one has to look at Gentile Sun Worship and their crucified Sun Gods and Sun-Godmen to find such teachings. The hidden truth that most never see when studying the Exodus was the judgment of Egypt's false gods by the true and living God. Every one of the plagues upon Egypt was a Divine Judgment against their false gods and the Lamb was no exception. The death and desecration of the Lamb in Egypt was a dramatic statement against the false gods of Egypt by Moses who himself was heading up a tremendous rebellion against idolatry in Egypt. One only needs to read good books on this topic to understand the reason for such plagues in the first place. There was no atonement in such an action by Moses and the rest of the "mixed multitude."

A careful and dedicated study aimed at verifying the truth rather than vindicating one's present actions reveals that the Torah had alluded to the Paschal Lamb long before the exodus from Egypt had occurred. Centuries earlier, the Almighty tested Abraham's faith when God commanded him to sacrifice his beloved son Isaac. As the two ascended Mount Moriah together, Isaac turned to his father and asked, ***"Here is fire and the wood, but where is the lamb for the offering? Abraham then replied, "God will see to a lamb for an***

offering, my son." The question that immediately comes to mind is: What happened to that lamb that Abraham promised? A few verses later we find that **it was a ram, not a lamb that was sacrificed!**

Answer for yourself: Where was the lamb to which Abraham was prophetically referring?

The answer of course is that our father Abraham was referring to the Paschal Lamb. Just as God tested Abraham's faith to show his worthiness to be the father of the Chosen People, the young Jewish nation also had to have their faith tested to show their worthiness to participate in the exodus from Egypt, receive the Torah at Mount Sinai, and become the progenitors of the covenant people who would forever be known as "a light to the nations."

In the pagan Egyptian society; where the Jewish People were enslaved, the lamb was considered a sacred god, similar to how the cow is deified and worshipped in India today. In ancient Egypt, molesting a lamb in any way was considered a crime punishable by death. That is why when Egypt was overcome with the third plague of lice, Moses refused Pharaoh's initial offer that the Jews bring their sacrifice to God while remaining in Egypt. He explained that if the Israelites were to kill these animals before the Egyptians, they could be stoned. Therefore, the Almighty used this to test the faithfulness of the Jewish people by commanding them to not only kill Egypt's secret god, but to publicly place the lamb's blood on their doorposts for all to see. Thus, only those Israelites who, like Abraham, demonstrated that their fear of God exceeded their fear of the Egyptians, will be deemed worthy to have their homes passed over during the tenth and final plague.

Answer for yourself: Did you read anywhere for yourself that forgiveness of sins is connected to the Passover ceremony? No.

Answer for yourself: Acknowledging that forgiveness of sin and atonement is connected with the Day of Atonement/Yom Kippur, then how do we account for the fact that the death of Jesus is supposed to atone for sin according to Christianity when his death was at the wrong time of the year at the wrong Biblical Festival no less? **There is no atonement connected with Passover and if Jesus' death is to even be remotely considered as a form of atonement by Christianity then if they are true to "types and shadow" fulfillments then Jesus should have died at Yom Kippur. He did not!**

For Christians who consistently say that Jesus "fulfilled" the Biblical Festivals it would do them good to study the Biblical Festivals from a Jewish view and try to understand them the way the Jewish scholars and people understood them. In so doing they would see that atonement is connected with the Fall Biblical Festivals and not the Spring Festivals. Atonement is connected with the High Holy Day of Yom Kippur and was NEVER connected with the Passover. If one is true to "types and shadows" and tries to apply such an analogy to Jesus then understand in the most critical of all analogies [atonement] you are out of step with the Festivals themselves and forcing your pre-formed theology into time frames where God's message to us is completely different.

It would do us well right now to understand in summary from Gods' mo'eds [appointed times] and Biblical Festivals. Here in summary fashion is the message in the Biblical Festivals that Moses and the Jewish people have always understood.

UNDERSTANDING THE BIBLICAL FESTIVALS CORRECTLY

God makes His salvation available through faith and this foundational concept is pictured in the physical salvation of Israel from Egypt. Faith is not just a "mental assent" but an alive response to a religious beliefs. Saving faith is not dead but alive and responds. The key is responding in "obedience." This response can be called appropriately "works" for such actions as one's fruit of one's faith accompany such beliefs for if the Israelites had not **responded accurately & obediently** to their faith in God and failed to apply the blood to their door then they would likewise had died. So we learn that faith that responds in obedience "saves."

What we need to notice is that this "saving faith" was seen at the Passover. Salvation of God delivers the believer from death and this salvation is "imputed" to us yet the reality of its fullness yet awaits us. You might say we have an "earnest" of our salvation today but not the whole ball of wax; at least not yet. Passover serves as the starting place for one's faith in God and His saving Word. It is one's obedient faith to the Words of God that produces this "saving faith" and the Passover was the perfect example for demonstration of one's faith in the God of Israel and in so doing then God's judgment of sin "passes over the believer" due to his obedient faith. Of course for us such obedience [Israel responded in saving faith by applying the blood of a lamb to their doorposts] is seen in obeying the various Commandments of God involved in our unique Covenants with God; both for the Jewish people and the non-Jews as well.

Once we are saved by our faith in God with obedience unto Him at our personal Passover one comes to the next Festival of YHWH where we learn of the purpose of the Festival of Unleavened Bread. The Festival of Unleavened Bread follows "faith in God and his Word" where obedience really comes to the forefront. It is time to get the "leaven" (picture of sin in the Bible) or sin out of our lives. Since sin is the transgression of the Law then getting this "breaking of God's Commandments" out of lives means that we must grow in our understanding of God's Torah and Laws which frame our respective Covenants; both Jewish and non-Jewish [for the Christian the Covenant and Laws of Noah]. This is a sanctification whereby we make ourselves through repentance and obedience to the Word of God acceptable vessels for God's Spirit to inhabit.

Once we grow as worthy vessels for God's spirit to inhabit through repentance and a heightened obedience then God's Spirit comes to such a one in the fulfillment of Pentecost. We have just personally experienced our own Passover where God's judgment passes over us because of our faith in Him and obedience to His word. As our obedience grows then God comes to dwell within us to the degree that we are worthy vessels. As we find in Israel we find in our own lives. These first three Festivals are called the Spring Festivals and they are observed during the first rainy season in Israel.

It helps to understand that Israel had two rainy seasons a year separated by a long dry period. We find the same example in our lives. We all get excited when we come to God, turn from sin, and are filled with His Spirit. But over time the day to day drudgery of life wears us down. We like Israel experience our own dry period as symbolized by a life-time of temptation and drudgery. We are confronted daily of living lives that overcome or lives that fail. Once we are saved, cleansed, and filled with God's Spirit, we are equipped to live out our lives where we must deal with the good and the bad as we encounter them in life. Sometimes life is hard as seen in the dry season following Pentecost; yet we have the Spirit of HaShem to comfort and sustain us throughout the middle and autumn years of our lives.

After the dry season of Israel and our lives we come to the next Festival which is Rosh HaShannah which symbolizes our death at the end of our life. Rosh HaShannah is the resurrection and judgment. It is appointed for man to once die and then the judgment which is also a second part of Rosh HaShannah. After the resurrection at Rosh HaShannah and the judgment and reward for believers as well as non-believers, then one awaits final atonement at Yom Kippur. The only thing lacking is the eternal dwelling of the Spirit of God with mankind at the Festival of Tabernacles. This is the eternal Sabbath where God and man are one. This is only a summary to say the least of what the Biblical Festivals reveal...the Plan of Salvation of God.

And if you noticed, this plan is very understandable to the Jew and non-Jew without trying to "force" Yeshua to fulfill passages that yet remain unfulfilled.

It is these Biblical Festivals, correctly understood as given above, which will further enable the Jew and the non-Jew to become one in expectation of the coming of the Messiah.

As you see the cycle of observance of the Biblical Festivals, called a "mo'ed," in Hebrew, literally means a "rehearsal." What God intends is that all His Children, both Jew and non-Jew, keep and observe these rehearsals in order that they learn God's true plan of salvation and in so doing make their calling and election certain in order that they be the "bride" and not find themselves excluded. God repeated His salvation message to His people year after year in order that no one get it wrong. With Rome's help...we did!

Matt 22:9-14 9 Go ye therefore into the highways, and as many as ye shall find, **bid to the marriage.** 10 So those servants went out into the highways, and gathered together all as many as they found, both bad and good: and the wedding was furnished with guests. 11 And when the king came in to see the guests, he saw there a man which **had not on a wedding garment:** 12 And he saith unto him, Friend, how camest thou in hither not having a wedding garment? And he was speechless. 13 Then said the king to the servants, **Bind him hand and foot, and take him away, and cast him into outer darkness; there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.** 14 **For many are called, but few are chosen.** (KJV)

2 Pet 1:10 10 ***Wherefore the rather, brethren, give diligence to make your calling and election sure: for if ye do these things, ye shall never fall: (KJV)***

Answer for yourself: Were you aware that the sacrificial system and blood atonement as understood by the Rabbis and the Jewish people **ONLY provided atonement for the sins of ignorance of the First Tablet of the Law [sins between man and God] and intentional sins were not atoned for in the least?**

Answer for yourself: Were you aware that the sacrificial system and blood atonement as understood by the Rabbis and the Jewish people **DID NOT provide atonement for the sins of the Second Tablet of the Law [sins between man and man] and that these sins were NEVER atoned for in the least through Temple blood offerings?**

Answer for yourself: What are Christians to do once they come to the realization that even if atonement was connected to Jesus' death, the "lamb" and the sacrifice of a lamb at Passover, or even at Yom Kippur, then what are we to do once we come to the understanding that **such blood and lamb atonement never atoned for intentional sins or the sins of the Second Tablet of the Law?**

Answer for yourself: It is possible, just possible that Jesus was right in teaching repentance and return to obedience to the Commandments of God as a form of atonement? Have we missed the true message of Eternal Life and atonement as taught by Jesus, the Rabbis, and the Jewish people and accepted a false atonement instead? It is just possible that Rome, because of their hatred of Jews, gave us their own brand of Sun Worship in their own book called the New Testament and their version of Sun God atonement and we not know?

It is time to study our Hebrew Roots of Christianity to uncover the truth and the answers to these questions.



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IS THERE A RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN JESUS AND THE AFIKOMAN IN THE PASSOVER?

I have heard Christians claim that although Jews don't realize it, at the seder we single out the middle matza because it represents the Messiah (the three matzot together representing the Trinity), we break the middle matza because it signifies his death by crucifixion, and we then hide the part of the middle matza (called the afikoman) to signify his burial. Finally we "resurrect" the middle matza, just as Jesus is said to have rose from the grave.

Answer for yourself: What is the truth of this claim?

Such a premise rests on an analogy between the use of the three matzot and the Trinity doctrine, and if anyone has done their personal study on the origin of the Trinity they found that such pagan ideas were based on historical and theological ignorance. There are intrinsic flaws in this analogy, which dispel the illusion which is sought. Let me enumerate just a few.

Jesus is alleged to be the ultimate paschal lamb. Christians maintain that the afikoman (one part of the broken middle matza) was instituted by early Jewish Christians to commemorate that claim through a unique set of symbolisms which include the three matzot of the rabbinic seder. However, a careful scrutiny of such claims shows that there is no analogy between the afikoman and Jesus. It is the whole middle matzah that the Christians claim symbolizes Jesus. They then allege that the afikoman, half of the matzah, is hidden to signify his burial and that in essence we "resurrect" the afikoman, just as, according to their claim, Jesus rose from the grave.

Such a claim is unequivocally false. The afikoman refers, not to the whole middle matzah, but to one portion of it, after it has been divided in two. Without the two pieces of the middle matzah being visibly reunited and then once more becoming part of the "unity," there can be no analogy with Christian trinitarian and messianic claims concerning Jesus. Yet, once removed from the stack of three matzot, the

piece set aside for the afikoman never returns neither to the "unity" nor to the other part of the middle matzah. Thus, the middle part of the "unity" that the missionaries emphasize as symbolically significant is never restored to its full complement. Only part of it is retrieved at the conclusion of the seder. This retrieved piece cannot represent the allegedly wholly risen Jesus. The claim that the afikoman, a portion of the middle matzah, symbolizes Jesus as the paschal lamb contradicts the Gospel of John. John declares that the body of Jesus, corresponding to the missionaries' middle matzah, remained unbroken. John places great emphasis on the allegation that Jesus' bones were not broken so that he could fulfill the commandment that not one bone of the paschal lamb should be broken (John 19:36, cf. Exodus 12:46).¹⁹ In addition, the New Testament claims that Jesus rose bodily from the tomb (Luke 24:39, John 20:27). Thus, this broken middle matzah could not symbolize Jesus as the paschal lamb. For such an analogy to occur, the complete matzah would have to remain unbroken.

According to such Christianization of the Jewish Passover, the matzah that is broken in half, wrapped, and put aside until the end of the seder represents the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus. Hence, it is alleged, the

broken matzah reintroduced into the seder service is called aphikomen, "the coming one." This notion, in actuality, symbolically negates the claim that Jesus underwent a complete bodily resurrection. The afikoman is only a portion of the broken matzah; it is the whole middle matzah that would have to symbolize the risen Jesus. **Furthermore, the connection of the word afikoman with the reintroduced piece of matzah is first used in the medieval period. In addition, the use of three matzot instead of two also dates to a late period many hundreds of years after the death of Jesus.** There is no way the Christian's explanation can have any truth to it.

Answer for yourself: But does the truth matter or does one's theology prevail?

Shalom.

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DID THE EARLY GENTILE CHURCH KEEP THE PASSOVER FOR OVER TWO CENTURIES?

Answer for yourself: Is there any New Testament passages or historical evidence that will prove that the New Testament Church observed the Passover long after the time of the death of Jesus as recorded in the New Testament?

Answer for yourself: Can we prove that the New Testament church kept the Passover ten years after the death of Jesus as recorded in the New Testament? Well let us look carefully at the Book of Acts to see if we can find any clues.

Act 12:4 And when he had apprehended him, he put [him] in prison, and delivered [him] to four quaternions of soldiers to keep him; intending after Easter to bring him forth to the people.

Answer for yourself: Were you aware that the New Testament translators, out of all the times they used they translated the Greek word "pascha" as "Passover", decided to use instead of its tradition meaning "Passover" the word "Easter" ONLY in this passage in Acts 12:4?

Answer for yourself: Why were they not consistent in translating the word "Pascha" as "Passover" as they have in ALL OTHER INSTANCES OF THE WORD when found in the New Testament?

Answer for yourself: Are they trying to cover up the fact that the early church observed Passover instead of Easter which was a pagan fertility festival?

The word "Easter" is a purposeful mistranslation and deception and it not accurate to the text and the intended meaning let alone history. The original Greek word used in the Greek texts of the New Testament is "pascha" which is indeed "Passover" as shown below:

Thayer's Greek Lexicon:

3957 pascha-

- the paschal sacrifice (which was accustomed to be offered for the people's deliverance of old from Egypt)
- the paschal lamb, that is, the lamb the Israelites were accustomed to kill and eat on the 14th day of the month of Nisan (the first month of their year) in memory of the day on which their fathers, preparing to depart from Egypt, were bidden by God to slay and eat a lamb, and to sprinkle their door posts with its blood, that the destroying angel, seeing the blood, might pass over their dwellings;
- the paschal supper
- the paschal feast, the feast of the Passover, extending from the 14th to the 20th day of the month Nisan

GENTILES OBSERVING PASSOVER

Now we shall see what Paul taught the Gentiles regarding the Passover feast with it's new symbols of the

unleavened bread and the wine.

1 Cor 11:23 For I have received of the Lord that which also I delivered unto you, That the Lord Jesus the [same] night in which he was betrayed took bread: 24 And when he had given thanks, he brake [it], and said, Take, eat: this is my body, which is broken for you: this do in remembrance of me. 25 After the same manner also [he took] the cup, when he had supped, saying, This cup is the new testament in my blood: this do ye, as oft as ye drink [it], in remembrance of me. 26 For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do shew the Lord's death till he come.

Without question the reference his to the night before the crucifixion refers to the "last supper" which in Judaism was the "last supper" where one could eat leavened bread. Thus the reference to the "sop" dipped we find in the other Gospels. This is the dinner before the Passover Lamb would be offered in the Temple the following day. Paul taught the Gentile Christians in Corinth to keep Passover. Paul spent much of his time in and around the Gentile city of Ephesus in Asia Minor (modern Turkey). Evidently the churches in Asia Minor continued to keep Passover while most of the other "Christian" churches adopted the pagan festival of Easter.

Polycarp was appointed by the Apostles to oversee the Christian church in Smyrna near Ephesus. The early Catholic historian Eusebius wrote about Polycarp...

"While Anicetus was at the head of the church of Rome [AD 154], Irenaeus relates that Polycarp ... had a conference with Anicetus on a question concerning the day of the pascal feast [Passover] But Polycarp also was not only instructed by apostles, and acquainted with many that had seen Christ, but was also appointed by apostles in Asia & was the bishop of the church of Smyrna [Revelations 2:8] He also was in Rome in the time of Anicetus and caused many to turn away from the ... heretics to the Church of God, proclaiming that he had received from the apostles this one and only system of truth" Ecclesiastical History, book IV, chapter 14, in the Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers, vol.1

What is of major importance for us is that during his time in Rome, Polycarp discussed the celebration of a pagan festival which was the forerunner of present day Easter celebrations - in the place of the Passover feast.

Here's what Eusebius wrote about this meeting....

"Neither could Anicetus persuade Polycarp not to observe what he had always observed [the Passover] with John the disciple of our Lord, and the other apostles with whom he had associated" book V, chapter 24

Answer for yourself: Did you notice that Polycarp, a non-Jew and Bishop of the Church of Smyrna around 150 A.D. (today known as Izmir), a city on the west coast of Turkey, would not stop observing the Passover and would not observe the pagan festival we call Easter today?

Within 35 years the Passover controversy reared it's ugly head again. Victor, the bishop of Rome, attempted to excommunicate every church that still kept the Passover feast. Eusebius continues on, now regarding this event....

"But the bishops of Asia, led by Polycrates [a later bishop who succeeded Polycarp], decided to hold to the old custom handed down to them. He himself, in a letter which he addressed to Victor and the church of Rome, set forth in the following words the tradition which had come down to him: 'We observe the exact day; neither adding, not taking away. For in Asia also great lights have fallen asleep, which shall rise again on the day of the Lord's coming, when he shall come with glory from

heaven, and shall seek out all the saints. Among these are Philip, one of the twelve apostles ... moreover, John, who was both a witness and a teacher, who reclined upon the bosom of the Lord ... and Polycarp in Smyrna, who was a bishop and martyr.... All these observed the fourteenth day ... the passover according to the Gospel, deviating in no respect, but following the rule of faith. And I also, Polycrates ... do according to the tradition of my relatives.... My relatives always observed the day when the people put away the leaven [in preparation for the Feast of Unleavened Bread]'" book V, chapter 24

Answer for yourself: When did Polycrates, the Bishop of Ephesus, Asia, Minor, write this letter? It is estimated around 196 A.D. which should take our breath away when we realize that now we have two testimonies of the efforts being made by Gentile Church leaders to maintain to "the faith once given the saints" in refusing to change the traditions handed down by the Apostles to the world that required non-Jews as well as Jewish believers to keep and observe the Passover and not switch to the pagan fertility customs called "Astarte" or "Easter"!

Thus we have historical evidence that for 200 years Gentiles in the true church of God kept the Passover feast even after the pagan feasts has been introduced to Christendom.

PERSECUTION OF THE SMYRNA CHURCH

It was prophesied that the Smyrna church would be persecuted....

Rev 2:8 And unto the angel of the church in Smyrna write; These things saith the first and the last, which was dead, and is alive; 9 I know thy works, and tribulation, and poverty, (but thou art rich) and [I know] the blasphemy of them which say they are Jews, and are not, but [are] the synagogue of Satan. 10 Fear none of those things which thou shalt suffer: behold, the devil shall cast [some] of you into prison, that ye may be tried; and ye shall have tribulation ten days: be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life.

This "synagogue of Satan" composed of people who claimed to be Christians (spiritual Jews) but in fact belonged to the apostate church which began even before Constantine!

PASSOVER IN THE MILLENNIAL KINGDOM

Let's study some Bible proof that the Passover will be observed during the millennial Kingdom.

Mat 26:29 But I say unto you, I will not drink henceforth of this fruit of the vine, until that day when I drink it new with you in my Father's kingdom.

Luke 22:15 And he said unto them, With desire I have desired to eat this passover with you before I suffer:

Luke 22:16 For I say unto you, I will not any more eat thereof, until it be fulfilled in the kingdom of God.

Meanwhile the New Testament church is commanded to keep the Passover now in this age....

did the first century church keep the passover over 2 centuries?

*1 Cor 5:8 **Therefore let us keep the feast, not with old leaven, neither with the leaven of malice and wickedness; but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth. (KJV)***

*1 Cor 11:25 After the same manner also [he took] the cup, when he had supped, saying, This cup is the new testament in my blood: **this do ye**, as oft as ye drink [it], in remembrance of me.*

*1 Cor 11:26 For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, **ye do shew** the Lord's death till he come.*

Here we see examples for us that should teach us that not only did the disciples but the Gentile followers "Jesus" and "the Christ" in Corinth in Asia, Minor, over twenty years after the death of Jesus, were observing the Passover at the admonition of Paul to "keep the feast" with unleavened bread which identifies for us that he was referring to "the Pesach" or "the Passover". Thus the Christian church was expected to keep the Passover feast as part of their worship of God as both history and the texts of the New Testament reveal. The apostles kept the Passover, and certain Christians today are keeping this feast as well and NOT the pagan festival of Easter. Such is pure worship which is not tainted with idolatry and paganism. Shalom.



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THE RISE OF CONSTANTINE

The Roman Emperor Constantine was born around 280 AD as Flavius Valerius Constantinus to an important Roman family in the province of Moesia, which is now Serbia, formerly a part of Yugoslavia. His mother, Helena, was the daughter of an innkeeper and His father, Constantius, was appointed Caesar of Gaul (France) and Britain in 293 AD by Emperor Diocletian.

At that time the Roman Empire, being so vast, was divided among sub-rulers chosen for political reasons by the supreme Emperor. Governors, called Plutarchs, controlled provinces Caesars controlled larger regions and Augustuses controlled eastern or western empires, whereas the supreme Emperor controlled all of the empire. Within this structure there were Consuls, who derived imperial power from the Senate's consent and sometimes became usurpers or Caesars in waiting for the Emperor's throne.

In addition, Caesars and Augustuses could have relative power based on seniority, but inevitably the power and loyalty of their respective armies would decide their actual dominion.

While a young man Constantine was kept a virtual hostage at the court of Galerius, the Augustus of the eastern empire. Constantine escaped in 305 AD and joined his father, Constantius in Gaul. The next year his father died and immediately his father's army hailed Constantine as Caesar of Gaul and Britain. For five years he was content with ruling this region, but then Diocletian abdicated his throne, which allowed subtle rivalries to erupt into open warfare. Caesar Maxentius acclaimed himself supreme emperor. Then Constantine invaded Italy and headed straight for Rome. Maxentius with his army went out of the city to meet Constantine for battle at the now famous Milvian Bridge. It was here in 310 AD that Constantine won his greatest victory, pushing the enemy into the Tiber River. In the battle, Maxentius drowned and Constantine entered Rome as the unchallenged Augustus of the western empire.

Constantine accredited a vision he had in a dream for his victory at the Milvian Bridge. He claimed he saw a symbol in the sky and a banner which read, "Under This Sign Conquer". Contrary to popular belief, that sign was not the "Christian" cross as we think of today. Constantine gave it the cryptic title of Labarum. According to some accounts of the symbol which he commissioned to be made and put on a spear-like standard, and which was put on all his army's helmets, it looked something like a P with an X overlaid (X). Later, Christian apologists contended this sign was a Greek letter Chi over a Greek letter Rho and was a reference to the first two letters of the Greek Christos. This was to argue that Constantine had a form of religious conversion to Christianity at the point of this vision. However, the Labarum was never known to have a Christian meaning before Constantine and no account from Constantine declares it to be a standard for Messiah. R. Koch says the Labarum symbol "probably developed from an ancient oriental representation of the rising sun, in which the ball of the sun [the "P" sign] is shown over a cross [the "X" sign] representing its rays." This explanation is consistent with the fact that Constantine was a sun-worshipper.

In very ancient paganism the Labarum symbol was called the "sun-wheel". It consisted of an "O" with an "X" inside it, touching all sides of the "O", and an "I" within the "X", also touching the "O". Later the "O", which

stood for the sun, came to rest on the top or side of the "I", forming the "P" symbol. This is traceable to the Egyptian ankh which was a symbol of fertility and life, and the Gothic runes which in fortune-telling stood for gift (X) and giant (P). In rune spell-casting the "X" was supposed to protect "one against the poison cup" and the "P" was supposed to "induce madness". The Labarum was also used in astrology, born out of Babylonian paganism, to signify the "sextile" or 60 degree position of the planets in relation to the Zodiac. When the "X" was put next to the "P", forming the pharmaceutical "Rx" symbol, it meant a constellation was in a "state of retrogradation." By Constantine's time this superstition and symbolism was very well known among the masses of the empire. Constantine could have very well perceived these meanings and attempted to associate both the sun-god and rune symbolism as one mighty talisman of good fortune for his army.

The Greek alphabetical letters "X" and "P" were not used by Roman generals in battle, because Greek was considered the technical language of the day, not the language of warfare or common symbolism. **Besides, there is no cause to expect that the Chi "X" and Rho "P" looking Labarum referred to the first two letters of Christos. There is no evidence that such a use of these Greek letters would cause anyone to suppose such a meaning at that time.** Further, the pagan symbolism of the Labarum was already ingrained in the common psyche. Since Constantine was a master politician he could have tried to convince clergymen privately that the Labarum had some Christological meaning, **but the masses of the day knew the pagan origins of the sign. To associate Messiah with such a known pagan symbol would have been abominable.** If that really was the case, then the institutional church of that time was culpable for accepting Constantine's sign of pagan homage as its own symbol.

We do know Constantine's Labarum had a picture of him hanging from it, and we can properly acknowledge that whatever Constantine saw had and has no scriptural authority or precedent as a sign of the true L-RD's favor or power. Yet, to Constantine it was a talisman which gave him confidence and authority. Since, in his confessed view, it was given to him in a vision by God, and by raising it he won the strategic battle and thus became emperor of Rome.

From that time on, Constantine became kindly affectioned toward Christianity, but it was an affection which came with many strings attached, much to the seemingly willing blindness of the institutional church. Constantine issued the **Edict of Milan in 313 AD. This edict granted Christians the right to openly practice their religion, to a degree. For this edict was followed by further edicts which would constrain and restrict certain practices and doctrines in opposition to Jewish practices, whether or not they were performed by Christians or Jews. Christian antisemitism was born!**

Constantine became the ruler of the church. By his own authority he called church councils, installed and deposed bishops (imprisoning or banishing the disobedient), supplied payments to bishoprics which were taken by extortion from pagan temples, and imposed religious edicts under penalty of Roman law. No longer would the church as a whole fear punishment for being Christian, but under Constantine the seeds were sown for the individual to fear very much to be the kind of Christian which the emperor (or Pope) dictated. **And what of the Jews? There was little they could hope for in Constantine. His edicts, still available for study today, display a vindictive and hateful estimation of the Jewish people.** Later we will look at one of them.

Constantine never stopped using the caesarean title Pontifex Maximus, Great Father. This title was used to designate the Emperor as a god; the earthly vicar of spiritual power; the head of all pagan religion. It is this title, Pontiff, which was kept by the Pope of the Roman Church as he gained ascendancy to imperial authority. So it is that Constantine was the bridge from the Roman Empire to the Roman Church. **One might even say Constantine was the first Pope of Rome, in that he carried the same claimed authority in the church as the Pope is considered to have today.**

Constantine eventually built the city of Byzantium, now called Istanbul, into a glorious monument of his power.

He made it the capital of the empire and named it New Rome, but it came to be called Constantinople: the city of Constantine. This was the beginning of the greatness of the Eastern, or Byzantine, Empire within which the Eastern Orthodox Church grew. Constantine was the effective progenitor of both the Roman (Western) and Orthodox (Eastern) Churches.

The majority of the institutional church followed the dictates of Constantine without question.

Answer for yourself: But was this loyalty and reverence deserved?

Answer for yourself: Was Constantine a true follower of Yeshua (Jesus)?

Answer for yourself: What was the result of his administration?

Answer for yourself: The answers coming to these questions will help us to know whether or not the things which Constantine imposed as being "Christian" were truly pleasing to God, and, if they were not, what shall be our response?

[Let us continue our study in the next article of this series.](#)



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THE RISE OF CONSTANTINE #2

Constantine followed the ways of past pagan Roman emperors. After the vision and victory at Milvian Bridge and entering Rome he proceeded to set up an image of himself holding the Labarum. The inscription on the statue read: "By virtue of this salutary sign, which is the true symbol of valor, I have preserved and liberated your city from the yoke of tyranny." There is nothing in this inscription that even suggests giving glory to God for his accomplishments. **More troubling is the very idea of setting up an image of oneself, no matter the empirical custom.** Setting up a self-image is following in the footsteps of such reprobates as Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon and Antiochus Epiphanes of Assyria, while forecasting such hideous monsters as Hitler, etc.

Once in Rome Constantine proceeded to cleanse the empire of possible competitors. He had his father-in-law and fellow caesar Maximian executed and after him others of the same family. The cause, according to Constantine, was that their treasonable intentions had been "miraculously revealed by God through visions to his servant (Constantine)."

After Constantine had held the Western Empire for a while he moved against Licinius, his brother-in-law, the Augustus of the Eastern Empire. By intrigue he took him prisoner and executed Licinius because he "employed himself in machinations against his superior (Constantine)." It seems Licinius had committed the crime of forbidding "women to receive instruction from bishops, or even visit the churches with men" and he had directed "the appointment of females to be teachers of their own sex, and devised other means for effecting ruin of the churches." **Evidently it became very dangerous not to be the kind of Christian Constantine wanted.** Once Licinius was dead Constantine adopted the title of "Victor" and from that point became the sole and supreme ruler of the entire Roman Empire.

Constantine minted coins featuring his likeness, with eyes upraised, laid over a blazing sun. He also minted other coins which featured the image of Apollo, the sun-god, on one side and the letters **IHS** on the other. **Though he came against certain pagan temples, he never stopped giving public and personal homage to Apollo or Mithra, the sun-god, Invictus Sol, the Invincible Sun. Having been told by some bishops that Jesus is the "Sun of Righteousness" according to Malachi 4, he considered Jesus as another name for Apollo or Mithra. So Constantine accepted the notion that belief in Jesus was just a higher consciousness within his present pagan belief structure. To him God simply showed in Messiah a fuller manifestation of the sun-god.** This is not far-fetched when considering the fact some scholars contend "Jesus" is a pagan originated name derived from the name of the god "Zeus". Jesus' original Hebrew and most accurate name is Yeshua (Joshua) which is Yasu in the Greek, but only in Hebrew does it mean Salvation. Constantine even accepted the homage that came from one Christian orator who asserted in the emperor's presence that Constantine would share the "Empire of Heaven" equally with Messiah in the world to come. This is more evidence of the pagan esteem with which Constantine viewed Yeshua.

Constantine was thoroughly a cruel Roman Emperor instead of a righteous servant of God as evidenced by the fact he had his own son Crispus killed in a fit of jealous rage. By all accounts Crispus was full of courage and kindness. He was born to Constantine's first wife, Minervina. Crispus, from the age of seventeen, had been a leader in all his father's wars which garnered him the prestige and adoration of Constantine's army, his court and all the people. The popularity of Crispus unnecessarily worried Constantine until the young man was

confined as a prisoner to his father's court. Soon Constantine began to bring hints against Crispus of suspicions that he was involved in conspiracy. Paid informers were brought forward to falsely accuse Crispus. Thus he was brought to execution along with all and any who took his side, including Constantine's sister, Constantia, and her eleven year old son, despite her prayers and tears.

It is said that Constantine grew sorrowful over this cruelty to his son and blamed the whole incident on his second wife, Fausta, to whom he had been married for twenty years. Helena, Constantine's mother, also accused Fausta of adultery with a slave. Constantine then had Fausta killed privately, having her suffocated in a hot boiling bath. The historian Philostorgius declares Fausta was innocent and says Constantine murdered two wives, and that the three sons who succeeded him were by an adulteress.

After Constantine died his will was brought forth and read among all the members of his household. It declared that his brothers and nephews had attempted to poison him, and it directed that his death should be avenged on them immediately. Upon hearing this the soldiers in residence attacked the offending parties, murdering them in cold blood. From beyond the grave, Constantine was able to wreak havoc.

Historians concede that Constantine was ruthless, cruel, willful, voluptuous, self-conceited, voracious, and gluttonous. It has been said, "his credulity and superstition, which arose probably from ignorance of even the first principles of science, were the only checks upon his evil propensities." Constantine asserted that "sovereigns were instruments . . . to slay their subjects at pleasure, as the laws of nature do, and wield the sword and fire, and every kind of vengeance, against their foes . . . and whatever God allowed to be successful bore the stamp of His approval, inasmuch as it would not have been permitted unless it were right." **In other words, Constantine believed "might makes right".**

There is no need to labor at finding the moral inferences drawn from Constantines actions. He was plainly ambitious, murderous, and pagan in mind. Whatever experience he had at Milvian Bridge did not transcend his evil behavior. There is no doubt that he believed the "Great God", as he called Him, had given him the victory and the throne of Rome. However, this faith was not a "conversion" of the heart, as is obvious by Constantine's life.

The correspondences of Constantine spoke of God in general terms, as sovereign. The edicts and letters recognized and appealed to God's authority in a stately and official sort of way, but they bestowed little personal warmth and affection for God or Yeshua. He rarely ever mentions Jesus. Even a pagan could agree with Constantine's deference to divinity by simply thinking of his own god instead of the biblical God, YHWH. The title "God" is useless unless associated with the name of the deity. One cannot take for granted that when Constantine spoke of "God" he was speaking of the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. How do we even know he wasn't, in his own mind, addressing the sun-god? He, being very politically shrewd, could have figured out how he could please the entire populace concerning his piety. All that he would need to do is give official homage to a nameless "Great God", with which everyone, Jewish person, Christian, or pagan could identify. They would only need to fill in the blanks in their mind. This is the same deceptive scheme used in modern presidential politics today!

While some may attempt to argue, on the basis of his generous acts toward the church, that Constantine was a Christian (according to a very liberal amoral standard), there is little public proof that Constantine was a true follower of Yeshua in the same way as were the early Jewish believers, whose hearts and actions were totally transformed into righteousness by their faith. But Constantine won the favor of the institutional church, and this is what made him a saint in the eyes of the bishops.

Constantine was judged to be a Christian on different grounds than that of scripture.

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THE RISE OF CONSTANTINE #3

Diocletian, the emperor who preceded Constantine, wore out the church with confiscations of property, executions of priests and bishops, and the burning of writings. We know little of Diocletian's court manner, but concerning the church, he was a tyrant of the first magnitude. When Constantine took power the persecution of the church ceased almost instantaneously. While that respite was most welcome, the church could hardly have expected what came next. Constantine, of his own initiative, began to reimburse the church for its losses. He sent large payments to bishops, making many wealthy overnight. He restored stolen fortunes and lands. He rebuilt fallen church buildings and had great new edifices built, including the famous Church of the Holy Sepulchre in Jerusalem.

These generosities of Constantine were based largely upon a sense of gratitude toward the "Supreme Divinity" of the church, whom he acknowledged as the agency of his conquering victory, and whom he associated with the pagan Unconquered Sun (Invincible Sun, Invictus Sol). The bishops who met with him regularly did not quickly enlighten Constantine on his religious confusion. Perhaps they were "starstruck" with Constantine's favor toward them, not willing to risk the possibility of renewed persecutions. As A.H.M. Jones writes, "It was safe not to provoke the Emperor and meanwhile receive the subsidies and immunities which he showered upon the church. It would be a bold man who offered unsolicited advice to a Roman emperor, and none of the bishops seems to have felt called upon to instruct Constantine, much less rebuke him for his errors." It seems obvious the institutional church was ready, willing, and able to cut an unspoken deal with the new emperor. So when the money began to flow, the church became overwhelmed with its good fortune and offered up its integrity on the altar of Roman favor.

As the church's new guardian and benefactor, Constantine received the absolute unquestioning favor and loyalty of the church. He accomplished, by the power of the purse, what no other emperor could do by force. He gained imperial supremacy over the church. In a move of political genius, he bought the church and thereby vanquished what was potentially the emperor's most thorny opposition.

The very first imperial church council was called in Rome. The empire under Constantine was barely six months old when he was petitioned by African bishops concerning a division which had developed. During the past persecutions many church leaders had been martyred for not turning over scriptures to the authorities, others were more shrewd and denied having scriptures or turned in heretical essays as substitutions; thus they were saved. Once the persecutions ceased there arose a controversy over accusations against those who had not been willing to be martyred. This was called the Donatist Controversy, named after one of the instigators. When the area bishops could not quell the dispute, they appealed to Constantine, who at first turned the matter over to Hosius, a Spanish bishop attached to his court. But not content with Hosius' opinion in the case, Constantine called together the Bishop of Rome and eighteen other Italian bishops on October 2, 313 A.D. This was at the suggestion of the Bishop of Rome. So from that time Constantine accepted the premise that ecclesiastical issues should henceforth be decided by councils of bishops. Constantine also preferred the Bishop of Rome as the supreme bishop, or Pope, but in actual practise it was Constantine, himself, who acted as supreme bishop, beginning with this, his first Council of Rome.

At Arles on August 1, 314, thirty-three bishops met and confirmed the Council of Rome verdict which stated in

part, *"...And since there are many who seem to fight against the law of the church and think they ought to be admitted...let them not be admitted at all, unless, as we stated above, they prove their case by the public records."* This edict made church business and discipline a recorded part of general society and civil law. Therefore, soon after the "Christian emperor" was enthroned the church allowed itself to be compromised with statehood. Notice also that this edict declares there is a "law of the church". This was promulgated by those who had denied any validity to the Law of Moses, which is authoritative scriptural Law.

Answer for yourself: Where does this "law of the church" come from? If this is holy law how can this law of the church be settled in public court? What is this, if not the inventing of an earthly kingdom in the form of a theocracy! Where in the New Testament is this action authorized? It was Paul who said that all matters of church discipline were to be performed separate from the civil authorities (1 Cor 6:1). By calling imperial councils of clergy and enforcing their decisions as legal decrees upon the church, Constantine was forming a new kingdom, a replacement of hated Israel, a celestial Rome, an earthly government with divine power which only the Messiah was to have the right to do. Where did Constantine get the power to change "times and laws" (Dan 7:25)?

Dan 7:25 25 And he shall speak great words against the most High, and shall wear out the saints of the most High, and think to change times and laws: and they shall be given into his hand until a time and times and the dividing of time. (KJV)

I can only conclude that the collusion of Constantine with the church was one which the Lord God did not authorize, but which came in through a spirit and power akin to ant-Messiah. This was a devilish plot, which worked!

At the close of the council Constantine ordered the Bishop of Rome (Pope) to proclaim the results of the council, *"since you held the governorship of the greater diocese."* Because he concluded this churchman, considered of the highest position, would give it the greatest weight. The resulting publication of the Bishop of Rome might be viewed as the first "encyclical", though it seems there was no theory yet of his inherent right to sanction all the dogma and law of the church. But, without doubt and obvious to all was the prestige and influence of his position above any other bishop in the Western Empire.

Constantine, by establishing the authority of the Bishop of Rome, used his example to create other great church regions, laying the foundation for a bishopric system throughout the empire. He stated that the Bishop of Alexandria should have authority over all the bishops of Egypt, Libya and Pentapolis and the bishops of other capitals of the empire should exercise similar authority in their regions. In effect, Constantine authored and authorized the system of archbishops over bishops.

When Constantine eventually moved the empire's capital to Constantinople in the east, he began to exert his considerable force in guiding the eastern portion of the church. From that time the prestige of the empire was in the east. The western half became less important and her emperors to come were inferior to the eastern Augustuses. This promoted the prominence and power of the Bishop of Rome, especially in comparison to the west's weak and unpopular emperors. The Eastern Orthodox Church remained relatively subjugated to eastern statehood. The western Roman Church became the driving force of the western power.

It was Constantine who set the pace, living his pompous, militaristic and public life in Rome, then later living his patrician, paranoid, and private life in Constantinople. It was Constantine who defined the place and power of the Bishop of Rome, creating the institution of Pope. It was Constantine who made church business state business. It was Constantine who imposed rigid organization of the church, fully subjugating and institutionalizing it. It was Constantine who, by the authority which he usurped from God and from scripture, changed the Law of God. It began at the Council at Rome, but it was finalized

at the Council of Nicea.



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THE RISE OF CONSTANTINE & THE COUNCIL OF NICAEEA...THE LOSS OF THE FAITH OF JESUS

The Council of Nicaea 325 AD, summoned by the Emperor Constantine, the Great, was the first ecumenical council to be assembled, primarily to deal with the Arian controversy which threatened the unity of the Church. A study of this event is important because it shows how, with the accession of Constantine to power, in addition to gaining resources and freedom to propagate their religion, the early Gentile Christians compromised some of the most basic tenets of their faith, many of which served to alienate Christianity from its Jewish origins. In other words it was the foundation for the creation of a "New Religion"; one never intended by God not taught by Yeshua. In what follows, we examine the emergence of Constantine through to the Council of Nicaea and its ramifications, so that in our review of events we may take in our stride the drastic effects the faith enunciated at Nicaea had on the future development of the Church.

CONSTANTINE BECOMES EMPEROR

By 312 AD, Constantine had been at war with Maxentius for six years, and was eager for something to lend his cause extra support. Lactantius, a Christian observer who produced accounts of the event a few years later in his book On the death of the Persecutors claimed that Constantine saw a Chi-Rho monogram in a vision on the eve of the battle of the Milvian bridge, accompanied by the words: 'Hoc signo victor eris! [By this sign, you shall be the victor].

Whether this vision was actual or dictated by anxiety remains questionable. In any case, he had crosses painted on his army's shields and won the battle, becoming the Emperor of Rome. This inspired his conversion to Christianity (though not baptized then). In Milan 313 AD, he issued an Edict of Toleration to all religions. But believing his battleground success to be won with divine providence, he sympathized more with the Christians, who hitherto had suffered sporadic persecution. The Emperor lavished huge sums of money to build Basilicas and other Churches for them, coupled with preferential treatments of Christian candidates for administrative posts. In this way, Constantine closed one era and opened another.

CONSTANTINE...CONVERTED YET STILL PAGAN????

Constantine's motives are beyond reconstruction but it is clear he still needed to bind the Empire - East and West - together and exercise influence over the whole of the Mediterranean. What Christians fail to realize that his conversion had not divorced him from his pagan past. The Emperor was happy with the collection of heavenly patrons. He believed reverence for deity to be indispensable for the tranquillity of the commonwealth and regarded the Christian God as just another heavenly patron, not incompatible with others although perhaps more powerful. He maintained ties with the Sol Invictus cult (Sun Worship) even after his conversion. It was not until he was on his death bed that he was finally baptized, just in case. The Sol Invictus cult worshipped the sun God, but was also acceptable to the

followers of Orpheus, the priest of the Sun, Mithras, or the Sun God Apollo. The response was for Imperial Christianity through Constantine to begin representing Jesus/Yeshua in the guise of Apollo to maintain favor the Gentile who already had such pagan beliefs.

The response from the Jews was total rejection of such concepts to a Jewish Rabbi which intended to fashion the divine through cultus images, thereby sowing the seeds of division between Christians and Jews

Now here was an opportunity for Christians, some of whom still bore the marks of persecution, who could still vividly recall the days of suffering, to be conducted into the imperial chambers and be showered with gifts, and to dine with the Emperor in the same palace from whence was issued decrees of persecution. Little wonder then that all but two (Theonas of Marmarica and Secundus of Ptolemais) of the staunchest supporters of Arianism signed the new Creed. The two 'dissidents' were exiled to Illyricum. Little did they know that their actions were to put the Church in chains, albeit in chains of gold. When one studies for himself the Arian Controversy he cannot help but be struck by the irony of the matter in that Arius espoused beliefs totally in line with concepts held by the earlier Jews concerning their Messiah [Ebionites]...and he lost the theological struggle with Rome! Arius and the Jews lost and the concept of the Messiah is irrevocably changed forever by Constantine!

Some scholars have argued that the crucial terms of the Creed were not commonly understood by all signatories. 'Of one substance' (**homousious**) was ambiguous in that to some it meant a personal identity, while to others a much wider generic identity. Whether or not this was a fortuity enabling Constantine to secure the signature of almost every bishop, it is clear that many of the delegates were uneasy about the decision they had made. They had signed the Creed under pressure from Constantine and from fear of being banished. Eusebius of Caesarea, was previously one of the most die-hard Arians, but strangely, following the Council session, he was willing to accept the Creed. In a letter home, however, he indicated the extent of the compromise that had taken place against the fundamental principles of his knowledge of Jesus that had been passed down to his day. Relating this A.H.M. Jones writes:

"How profoundly distressing these changes were to Eusebius of Caesarea can be seen from a letter which he hastened to write to his Church. It is a pathetic document, equivocal up to the point of dishonesty."

Some of the other delegates such as Maris of Chalcedron, Theogonis of Nicaea and Eusebius of Nicomedia were deeply unhappy about the outcome. They wrote to the Emperor saying:

"We committed an impious act, O Prince, by subscribing to a blasphemy from fear of you."

Eusebius of Caesarea became a friend of Constantine and was keen to make good use of his patronage. He later wrote the Life of Constantine in which he greatly flattered the Emperor. In his own book, The History Of The Church, he built up the line from the Apostolic fathers to the 4th century, and devoted an entire chapter (one of ten in the book) to the deliverance of Christianity from persecution by the Christian Emperor. In his book on Constantine he gave expression to a theology of the place of the Emperor in the Christian Empire which according to some modern historians, seemed rather a betrayal of the essential nature of the Gospel. Commenting on the role of Constantine, A.N. Whitehead wrote:

"When the Western world accepted Christianity, Caesar conquered; and the received text of western theology was edited by his lawyers [WHAT AS TO BECOME THE NEW TESTAMENT].... In the official formulation of the religion [WHAT WAS TO BECOME THE NEW TESTAMENT], it has assumed the trivial form of the mere attribution to the Jews and that they cherished a misconception about their own Messiah but the deeper idolatry, of fashioning God in the of patterns held by the Egyptian, Persian and Roman imperial rulers was retained. The Church gave unto God, the attributes which belonged exclusively to Caesar. "

This was to have profound implications on the future philosophy of the Church. Ian Wilson summarizes the situation by suggesting that:

'Not a few people felt that something of the original Jesus and the spirit of his teaching had been fatally compromised.'

THE ARIAN CONTROVERSY

In the Christian world at the time there was doctrinal pluralism vis a vis the nature and role of Jesus. In particular, there were strong views on either side of the Arian controversy, which was splitting the Church and threatened the unity of the Empire. Arianism was originated by Arius who had been a student of the celebrated Christian philosopher, Lucian of Antioch. Arius put forward a theory which negated the eternity and full divinity of Jesus, just as the Jewish-Christian groups such as the Ebionites had stated, who by the way, were the first followers of Yeshua and believers in his Messiahship. He was prepared to say that 'the Son had a beginning' that 'prior to his generation he did not exist and that there was when he was not, so that consequently he is called God in name only.' In other words Arius saw Jesus as Divine but definitely not Deity. The most that can be said, and correctly so I might add, is that Jesus was God only in an allegorical sense in that he was "Godly." This again is whom the Messiah was always understood to be by the Jews; human and not a God. Arius was correct and remains correct regardless if Rome accepted or overruled his understanding of the Jewish Messiah.

On the other side of the controversy were scholars such as, Athanasius, of Alexandria who felt that Jesus, would have been too divine to need to eat, drink or require any other bodily function. Athanasius would win this debate when backed by Constantine and the Power of Rome. Jesus became God and has this idolatry and blasphemy has been perpetuated for over 1700 years at present. Since for Constantine who was already an idolatry one more "God" was not a problem; for after all, he considered himself and his father Gods also. Arius was excommunicated from the Church for his views but there was growing support for Arianism which culminated in the Council of Nicaea 325 AD. Instead of the majority belief concerning the Messiah at that time as espoused by Arius and others winning out it would lose to the Imperial Power of Constantine and Rome. The truth about the Messiah was lost and as you saw above the existing documents altered to reflect that change and it remains so today as we have it handed down to us in the New Testament. One only need refer to the depiction of Jesus in the Gospel of John where Jesus is God and ask himself how a Jew (supposedly John) could ever had believed that God was a man!

THE COUNCIL OF NICAEA

The Council was to have taken place at Ancyra, but on the orders of Constantine who had his residence at Nicaea the venue was changed so that he could personally control the proceedings. The Synod took place between June 19th and August 25th. The Emperor summoned all Church leaders with the aim of reaching a consensus over the status of Jesus.

The number of bishops who attended is not known. The traditional figure is 318, which goes back to the late writings of Athanasius of Alexandria; possibly a symbolic figure based on the number of Abraham's servants [Genesis 14.14]. The correct figure is still probably around 300. In the version of events presented in the New Catholic Encyclopedia, almost all were from the Eastern half of the Empire; more than 100 from Asia Minor, about 30 from Syria- Phoenecia and less than 20 from Palestine and Egypt.

Constantine regarded the religious question exclusively from the angle of political expedience. His interest was to secure peace rather than any theological verdict. He had already adopted the Sol Invictus as the state deity, so if Jesus could somehow be deified he would be more easily compatible with Sol Invictus. As the parties were in conflict, the task of deciding the fate of Jesus was deferred unto Constantine who was theologically incompetent and was inclined to making decisions on inadequate grounds. To him the deification of a man would not have seemed important. He had his father Constantius deified on his death and expected to be granted the same honor on his demise.

He ruled in favor of Jesus' deification, and demanded that the delegates should sign acceptance to what became known as the Nicene Creed. This Creed is the first dogmatic definition of the Church and has served as a backbone of Christian orthodoxy through the ages. It defined the relations of Jesus to the Father within the Godhead as homoousion tot patri (of one substance with the Father) designed specifically to exclude Arianism. Eusebius of Caesarea writings makes it explicit that the Emperor himself proposed this term. The delegates that gave assent to the Creedal statement were to be invited to stay on at Nicaea as Constantine's guests for his 20th Anniversary celebrations, while those who rejected the Creed would be banished. Sounds fair to me...does it not you?

AFTER SHOCKS....THEY RUMBLE YET TODAY

The repercussions of the Nicene creed are immeasurable as Ian Wilson writes:

'Merely to enumerate the ways in which the original concepts of Jesus and his teachings were adulterated as result of Constantine's actions and the consequences of the Council of Nicaea would take a book in itself.'

Rome became the official center of Christian orthodoxy, Trinity the accepted doctrine and deviation from this view was now considered not as a different opinion, but as punishable heresy.

Next came the deification of Mary. Even though, in Mark 6:3, mention is made of Jesus' brothers and sisters, Hilary of Poitiers and Didymus the Blind of Alexandria bestowed the title of 'Ever Virgin' upon Mary. The logical consequence of this was the Council of Ephesus in Asia Minor in summer of 431 AD which became known as the third ecumenical council, where, in spite of resistance from Nestorius, then Bishop of Constantinople, a formula of faith was agreed upon which acknowledged Mary as the Theotokos (Mother of God). In 1854, Pope Pius IX made it a Catholic article of faith to proclaim Mary as incapable of sin.

After Nicaea, the fate of the Jews took a distinct turn for the worse. Following the deification of Jesus, they were considered as having murdered God! Constantine's tolerance no longer extended to the Jews who were stripped of many of their rights as Roman citizens. With astonishing rapidity Christians forgot the days of penury and persecution. The Church greeted Constantine's orders as not only permissible but praiseworthy. Meanwhile Christians with slightly different views, considered "unorthodox",

were also denied the freedom that was granted to pagans. They had their literature burnt, property confiscated and turned over to “orthodox-pro Constantinian” Christians, and were terrorized by the Church. Within a generation, hardly a trace of their existence remained. Some agnostics managed to conceal documents and hence earlier this century, the Nag Hammadi haul of scrolls along with the Dead Sea Scrolls was discovered intact. This, however, provides only a partial picture of the theological thought of the time. The memory of the Jewish prophet whose name the new religion had taken, was to be lost forever, and with it the very context in which the message was intended.

OTHER COMPROMISES EXIST

There had been earlier instances of compromise. After Constantine's edict of tolerance, Christians, with their new found freedom and scope and association with Constantine, were willing to compromise themselves to maintain that position. In 321 AD, Constantine in honor of the Sun God, enacted that on the venerable day of the Sun, the law courts and all workshops were to be closed, so Christianity, which had previously observed the Sabbath on Saturday, took on Sunday as its day of rest. Today Christianity breaks the 4th Commandment weekly and does not even knowing it sadly thinking Jesus changed the Sabbath to Sunday....in honor of the worship of the Sun. Rome did this! Similarly, Jesus' birthday used to observed on January 6th (as it still is in parts of Eastern Europe.) However, for both Sol Invictus and Mithraism, the religious day or Natalis Invictus was celebrated on the midwinter solstice, December 25th, so the Western Church adopted this day also. The aureole of light crowning the sun god's head became the Christian halo.

One only has to look at our Ministry's websites to see the horrible events that transpired to the truth concerning the Jewish Messiah in the wake of Constantine's Nicean Council and later implementations by himself and others that followed in his stead.

WHAT ARE WE TO THINK KNOWING THIS?

With so much of the original faith given away, Baigent, Leigh and Lincoln write:

"Christian doctrine as promulgated by Rome at the time, had much in common with the cult of Sol Invictus anyway; and thus it was able to flourish unmolested under the sun cult's umbrella of tolerance. Christianity as we know it, is in many respects actually closer to those pagan systems of belief than its to its own Judean origin."

The distorted formula of faith promulgated at Nicaea laid the ground work for the classical development of Christian Trinitarian theology, disseminating far and wide the seeds of ignorance and error.

In closing if you want to do further research into these areas whereby you can see for yourself how the faith of Yeshua was altered and changed into “a faith about Yeshua” then besides this ministry's websites this short book list should be beneficial:

1. The Encyclopedia of Religion. (Macmillan 1987); vol. 4 p.125
2. New Catholic Encyclopedia. (Mc-Graw Hill 1979); vol. 10, p. 432-433
3. Constantine and the Conversion of Europe. Penguin Books, A.H.M. Jones; p. 137
4. The Early Christian Church. P.G. Davis, p. 176
5. Jesus: The Evidence. (Pan Books), Ian Wilson
6. The Messianic Legacy. (Corgi 1986), M. Baigent, R. Leigh & H. Lincoln



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CONSTANTINE: HOW THE WEST WAS WON... OR...HOW THE EAST WAS LOST

As demonstrated in previous teachings, there is a undercurrent of tension in the New Testament between two mission; Paul's and Jesus' church in Jerusalem. For those of you who are new to this newsletter, you should obtain the first newsletters in this series in order for what I am about to share to make good sense. Contact us at Bet Emet Ministries, 902 Cardigan, Garland, Texas, 75040, or E-Mail us at bennoah1@airmail.net.

BEGINNINGS OF THE TWO MISSIONS

In and around 48 A.D., the Pauline mission consisted of some six or seven churches: the established church at Antioch in North Syria, and (on Luke's authority, Acts 13f.) a little string of newly founded churches in Cyprus, Pisidia and Galatia (South and Central Turkey). The Galatian churches, to whom Paul was writing, were at towns called Iconium, Derbe and Lystra. At this time the Pauline mission probably numbered about three hundred members.

It is not so easy to picture the growth of the Jerusalem mission. There was plainly a large Jewish Christian church in Jerusalem, and we hear of churches in Lydda and Joppa, towns in Judaea, in Galilee, and further afield in Caesarea, Damascus and Alexandria. Luke gives us some optimistic figures - 3,000 on the day of Pentecost alone, later 5,000, 'many tens of thousands' (Acts 21:20). Perhaps: but not, I think, many tens of thousands. It suffices to say that the church got off to a strong start in its home area.

Luke's account in Acts is the only report we have of the church's early history, and it takes us only as far as Paul's arrival in Rome, about 60 A.D. After that we have a long gap: Eusebius, Bishop of Caesarea in the fourth century, and a bootlicker of the Emperor Constantine, wrote a history of the Church which includes many letters and excerpts of earlier writings, and we have to do our best to piece things together, especially in the early period, where his information is naturally thinnest. Eusebius relates a revealing story of a controversy which took place about 190 A.D. in Christendom. The churches were divided over the details of the fasting and celebration of what we would call Holy Week (Passover Week), and an attempt was made to settle the matter by the leading bishops.

Eusebius had read the letters which survived to his day from these various leaders (Ecclesiastical History 5.23). Now a part of the fascination of this account is that it shows us the scope of the church at this date.

On the one side (fast till Saturday, feast on Passover Day) were the main body of churches: the bishops of Caesarea and Jerusalem in Palestine, Victor, Bishop of Rome (who tried to throw his weight about), the bishops of Pontus (North Turkey), Gaul (including Irenaeus, Bishop of Lyons, who saw a compromise through), Osroene (South-east Turkey), Corinth and 'great numbers of others'. On the other side (fast till 13th Nisan, feast on 14th, when the Passover lamb was sacrificed, on whichever day of the week it fell), were the bishops of 'the whole of Asia' (probably the rest of Turkey), led by Polycrates, Bishop of Ephesus. The interest lies partly in the areas which are not mentioned. The 'Catholics' are represented by the churches of France, Italy

(Rome), Greece (Corinth), outlying parts of Turkey (Pontus and Osroene), and the two Palestinian dioceses; the Asians probably cover the rest of Turkey. In other words the Paulinists are represented, but not the Petrines! The churches influenced by Paul are listed but those influenced by the original Apostles, James, Peter, and the Jerusalem Church are lacking!

Answer for yourself: But where are the great dioceses of Syria and Egypt...of Antioch, Damascus, Alexandria, and points east?

They are missing; and if they had written among 'the great numbers of others', we may be sure that Eusebius would have cited them. The likely conclusion is that they were not part of Western/Pauline Christendom, as Victor and Polycrates understood it: the Eastern Churches were considered by the powers in Rome to be heretical, Nasoreans/Ebionites, as Irenaeus would have described them. In other words, the Western churches considered the Eastern churches heretics, while the Eastern churches considered the Western churches heretics. Ironically the Eastern Church were closer to the original Jesus Movement than any of the others!

Answer for yourself: Who are we to follow today?

PAUL OR PETER....WHO WILL BE YOUR INFLUENCE?

To us, today attempting a more neutral stance, the churches mentioned by these Western church authorities and involved were the churches of the old Pauline mission, now the majority church recognizing only Pauline orthodoxy. The churches of Palestine, Syria and Egypt were the descendants of the Jerusalem mission, with a now outmoded Petrine theology (the legacy of Jesus' church in Jerusalem). The only dioceses Eusebius mentions in this vast area are in the Greek (non-Jewish) cities of Caesarea and Jerusalem (let us not forget that Jerusalem was forbidden to Jews after the War in 70 so in this time they were devoid of an strong Jewish influence). In the third century the Paulines would win over most of the Christians of these provinces, reducing those who held to the legacy of James and Peter the status of religious deviants!!!!

Answer for yourself: But is this the proper way to look at the situation?

SO WHAT THE WEST WON...WHAT DOES THAN MEAN TO ME?

So the Paulines triumphed in the end; and that is why Christians generally do not keep the kosher rules, or sabbath today; the Biblical Feasts and Festivals, or share their money properly in the tithe, or cease working on Sabbaths and High Sabbaths, or follow sexual laws in the Torah; or think that Jesus was possessed by a Spirit from his baptism till his crucifixion as the ORIGINAL CHRISTIANS BELIEVED!

Instead, as Western Christians today, we think it nothing to eat unclean food which God calls an abomination, to have a church calendar filled with pagan holidays to pagan deities to which Jesus' name has been affixed, we have substituted the day of sun worship for the Sabbath, we are continually robbing God in the tithe because mistakenly believing we are no longer under the Law or God's commandments we feel we have the right to do with God's money whatever we desire, and have patterned a Christology surrounding the Messiah not after a Jewish Christology, but one better fashioned for pagan gods who co-habited with women and had superbabies like Hercules. Western Christianity's' creed is the Pauline creed and their New Testament is the Pauline Epistles (2/3 of the whole New Testament is Pauline) and the three Pauline influenced Gospels, Mark, Luke and John, and the Pauline influenced Acts; supplemented by 'bridge' writings such as a Jewish influenced

Matthew, James and the Apocalypse. It would be interesting to know the detail of how the Paulines won and those of Jesus' church lost.

THE WINNING OF THE WEST BY THE PAULINES

The visit of Peter to Antioch along with the men from James that came to inspect the Pauline church (Gal. 2:11-14, [see my previous newsletters on the Antioch Incident] was a disaster for Paul. Even Barnabas was carried away by their hypocrisy' [at least in Paul's opinion], and now that the chips were down, all the Jewish members along with the men sent from the Jerusalem Church sided with Peter against Paul and literally moved the church next door and excommunicated Paul and those Gentiles who would not repent and choose to remain with him. If Paul had defied Peter as his "spin doctoring" in his letters later reveal, the Jerusalem church would have disowned him totally; they would have split his Cypriot and Galatian churches as they had his Antiochene mother-church (Gal. 2:1-11), taking the Jewish members with them, and leaving the Gentiles to fend for themselves. Paul, as a credit to himself, swallowed the bitter alternative, but with a bad grace and with less than a Christ-like manner as he would later write sarcastically in Galatians "I withstood Cephas to the face". But that is not really the case when you read between the lines and align the events of the New Testament chronologically. **The Acts 15 council was called because of Paul and the Antioch incident where he was teaching the Gentiles to forsake Moses and abolish the food laws like eating meats sacrificed to idols which render them idolators according to the Laws of Noah and Moses both.** No wonder the Acts 15 council had to be called by James following the report of the proceedings under Paul's leadership in Antioch where the Torah was being seriously compromised for both the Jew (Peter for example) and the Gentile by Paul. It was reaffirmed by James in Acts 15 at the council following the Antioch Incident, as it should always have been, that Paul's Gentile converts must have kosher meat (not unclean meats or meats sacrificed to idols) for their Saturday supper, and keep quiet about working on sabbath and sanctify that day according to the 4th Commandment. They were lucky not to be forced into circumcision but as you know the Laws of Noah given to the non-Jew never required that of the Gentile. **A chastened Barnabas went back to Cyprus carrying letters from the Jerusalem Church (Acts 16) to impose this re-newed discipline for the Gentiles (which is nothing more than the adherence for Gentiles to the Noahide Laws with the opportunity to choose to obey other commandments within the Laws of Moses as instructed in Isaiah 56 to "choose things that please God") as instructed by James as the Acts Council of Acts 15 following the Antioch Problem, and Paul, setting out on a second mission, had to submit to the indignity of being supervised by a Jerusalem Christian, Silas, in order to make sure he would not deviate again from the prescribed Torah.** When they came to Paul's mission church at Derbe, Paul was forced to have his half Gentile convert Timothy circumcised (Acts 16. 1-3). Such could not be pleasing for Paul considering what he had taught before.

Luke says that the Holy Ghost forbade Paul to speak the word in Asia, or Bithynia (North-west Turkey), but called him in a vision over to Macedonia (North Greece-West).

Answer for yourself: This is recorded for us, but does it not seem strange, that God has already corrected Paul in the Acts 15 Council, and sent him out with letters to strengthen the obedience of the churches to these mandates of the Laws of Noah, yet; the Holy Spirit seems to have the idea that the further any new Pauline churches were from Jerusalem, the better chance they would stand of not being interfered with by zealous Petrine which were a constant correction for Paul?

As it was, the uneasy partnership of Paul and Silas soon broke up. Paul went down to Corinth while Silas remained in Macedonia, and when Silas joined him, it was not for long; he disappears from the account in Acts, and in Paul's letters. It is clear, however, that he had wrought a good deal of mischief in the Macedonian churches. The Thessalonian mission, for example, had lasted only a few weeks, but had included Silas' encouragement to the converts to give up work, and to believe that the day of the Lord had already come; Paul had had to speak about these matters at the time: 'as we charged you' (I Thess. 4.11), 'when I was still with you' (II Thess. 2.5; 3. 10), and to write two letters - with Silas' reluctant agreement - to put things straight. It is likely

that Silas went back to Jerusalem in 51 and had further Petrine evangelists sent to Corinth; who caused all the trouble underlying our two Corinthian letters.

Paul settled in Ephesus, in Asia, from 52 to 55, and it was in these years that his mission was under the strongest pressure from the Petrines from Jerusalem, and that the future of the Christian religion was settled.

The Ephesian mission was a success. Paul wrote, 'A wide door for effective work has opened to me, and there are many adversaries [referring to the Petrines and the Jerusalem church]' (I Cor. 16.9); and he stayed in the place three years (Acts 20.31), longer than any other of his missions. But the adversaries - the Petrines - got the upper hand in the end, and Paul left the city in a virtual breakdown (II Cor. 1:8, 'we were so utterly, unbearably crushed that we despaired of life itself'). An anonymous pastor wrote later, in Paul's name, drawing on well-known memories, 'all who are in Asia turned away from me' (II Tim. 1.15).

Luke, keen to keep any division in the church quiet to his Gentile readers, describes Paul's journey to Jerusalem in 57 'when he met us at Assos [north of Ephesus], we took him on board . . . we came to Miletus [south of Ephesus]. For Paul had decided to sail past Ephesus (see above to where his work was in the end almost totally destroyed by those who taught a corrective Gospel from Jerusalem..the Petrines), so that he might not have to spend time in Asia' (Acts 20:13-16). Any wonder why?

Paul began the journey as a passenger, but he appears to have bought the boat during the journey (remember he took up a rather large sum of money over about 10 years for the famine in Jerusalem)! And he is in a great hurry, so he sails past Ephesus; but in the next verses he has time to send from Miletus to Ephesus to summon his Ephesian elders to come to him for a farewell sermon, which must have taken an extra week! It is to be remembered that Paul always appointed elders in the churches he establishes. It is a fair assumption that the leaders, appointed by Paul, were in his "hip pocket" so to speak. It is obvious that Paul was *persona non grata* at his flagship church at Ephesus, and dared not show his face there.

While Paul was at Ephesus, the Petrines stepped up the attack on his other churches. They arrived in Galatia with the slogan, 'Circumcision alone is the passport to heaven', and appealed to the Bible as God's word instead of Paul's gospel. Up till now the Jerusalem approach had been to insist on practical matters, the food and other purity laws, Sabbath and the Jewish festivals: but now they are going, metaphorically, for the jugular.

But something unsuspecting happened. Here for the first time the Pauline line held. Loyalty to Paul combined with distaste for the knife and circumcision; the elders of the little group of churches conferred, and wrote to their apostle; and when they received his angry, but firm reply (our Galatians), they said "No" to the Petrines. The balance of power and doctrine was changing!

In the meantime other Jerusalem delegates arrived in Corinth, and created major dissension in the church there. They contrasted Paul's frail claims to apostleship with those of Peter, their authority. They insisted on Jewish ways (Paul called this that they 'taught words of human wisdom'), on sexual asceticism at certain times of the month according to the Torah, and on the kingdom of God, and a spiritual resurrection, having already arrived in man's spirit when he repents and obeys the commandments. Paul wrote a kindly, fatherly letter (I Corinthians), criticizing these ideas, and also drawing attention to various excesses which disgraced the church. In 54 A.D. he followed this up with a disastrous visit to the church: one of the leading Petrines defied and insulted Paul, and the Corinthian church did not support the apostle. He wrote a depressed letter (II Cor..9;7-8), which in fact turned the tide; and when he had been driven out of Ephesus, he was comforted to learn from his lieutenant Titus that the Corinthians were now standing by him. These two unnamed groups of elders, in rebellion to Torah, both at Corinth and in Galatia in Central Turkey, changed the course of history. Their support of Paul enabled his mission to survive its moment of acute weakness, and to become a world religion; Its fate was sealed. The faith of Jesus, destined to go into all the world, whereby all Gentiles would be taught to observe and obey those things Jesus taught, was now to be slowly replaced by Pauline theology. After this, Petrine Christianity could never have been more than a short-lived sect of Judaism. You might say that the Petrines lost over enforcing circumcision upon the Gentiles when the Laws of Noah never prescribed it for them in the first place.

Paul spent the winter of 56/57 in Corinth, and wrote Romans, a long, contradictory, but enormously impressive statement of his 'gospel'; he did not want the same trouble in the capital of the Roman world, where a church had been founded and was flourishing. Paul intended to stop over there before evangelizing Spain. But this was not to be. In 57 he went to Jerusalem with a large collection which he had been taking up from the Gentile churches for the impoverished Metropolitan church. But hard feelings toward Paul and his abrogation of Torah, from both Jews and Gentiles, had developed a lot since he had been there previously at the Jerusalem Council in 50. The resistance in Galatia and Corinth, with Paul's connivance, showed that he was a reprobate and a heretic. His money was refused, and it was with Jewish Christian collusion that he was attacked in the Temple, nearly lynched, imprisoned and finally sent to Rome to his martyrdom. What people fail to realize is that many of the religious doctrines that Paul taught found him guilty of transgression of the Laws of God and the penalty for being a false prophet according to the Torah was death.

Acts 21:21 21 And they are informed of thee, that thou teachest all the Jews which are among the Gentiles to forsake Moses, saying that they ought not to circumcise their children, neither to walk after the customs. (KJV)

It is funny how we as Christians today have forgotten the Torah and the commandments regarding punishment on those who violate the Torah, but rather, we read and are taught to see in a rather bad light those who desired to punish Paul in obedience to Torah.

Before Paul died he received some happy news. One of his converts, Epaphras, had carried the Pauline message up country in Asia, and had started new churches in the valley of the Lycus river, in Colosse, Laodicea and Hierapolis. Paul was in chains, but he could write still, and his last letters, to the churches at Colosse and Laodicea (our Ephesians), and to Philemon, a leading Christian at Colosse, show both that the Pauline mission is spreading, and that the Petrines are there as well. The battle was hard fought, all along the line.

As Tertullian was to say 150 years later, the blood of the martyrs is the seed of the church (*sanguis martyrurum semen Ecclesiae*); and once Paul was put to death, there was a strong revulsion of feeling in his favor. He had also laid a good foundation of ordaining elders in each church, so that even when the Petrines had the following of a majority of church members, **the ruling committee was normally Pauline due to the appointment of elders by Paul.** Also let us not forget that in house churches, those who were elders were usually the home owner as well. So the Macedonian, Corinthian and Galatian churches formed a block of communities loyal to Paul; and the Roman churches roughly followed, though they ended by having it both ways when they later divided East vs. West. The Pauline and Petrine battle was to continue in Rome and finally split it! It was in Asia, and especially around Ephesus, that the battle was hardest fought. **Of our New Testament documents, Galatians, Ephesians, Colossians, Philemon, the Pastorals, I Peter, the Gospel of John, the three letters of John and the Apocalypse are all written by Paulines or semi-Paulines against the Petrines in Asia Minor. So are the letters of Ignatius (115). It is no wonder why Petrine writing were not included in the canon, when it was the legacy of the Paulinists which would determine which writings were "inspired" or "not inspired." Thus, the New Testament we carry today has little within it as coming from Jesus' church, but rather an over abundance of Pauline materials. Even the arrangement of the New Testament attest to that, for we begin with a Jewish Gospel and end up with a Gentile oriented Gospel in Luke, Acts starts out as a Jewish Jesus Movement and ends with Gentile Christiantzation of the world, and finally, the first doctrinal book of the Bible from Paul is called Romans, thereby assuring Gentile authority.** This is some explanation of the line-up of bishops in 190: Polycrates of Ephesus is the spokesman for Pauline churches in Asia, but ironically, they have inherited Jerusalem liturgical practices which are suspect to the rest of Pauline Christendom.

The Jerusalem mission reached the height of its power in the 50s. Its own leader „James, was martyred, like Paul, in 62, and it received a heavy blow in the second half of the decade. From 66 to 70 the Jewish people rebelled against Rome, and in 70 Jerusalem was taken with great loss of life. This included many Christians, whose 'dead bodies lay in the streets of the great city where their Lord was crucified' (Rev. 1:18). The

leadership which survived had to move, for Jerusalem became a city forbidden to Jews; and the financial troubles are likely to have been exacerbated. But the fight went on, and the Pastorals and the writings of John both display a bitterness of feeling which we never had to that extent in Paul, and which shows the two wings of the church losing charity to one another, and moving towards excommunication and heresy-hunting. It was reminiscent of the North vs. the South in our Civil War.

We can trace the progress of the battle from the comments on the various Asian churches, first in Paul in the 50s, then in the Apocalypse in the 80s, and then in Ignatius, with hints from elsewhere. Paul was driven out of Ephesus, but there are still Pauline elders there whom he calls to Miletus in Acts 20. Revelation gives the church high marks: *'I know your works, your toil and your patient endurance, and how you cannot bear evil men but have tested those [Petrines] who call themselves apostles but are not . . .'* (Rev. 2:2).

Take time to read Gal. 2:1-10 at this time, and see the sarcasm emanating from Paul toward the Jerusalem Apostles because of his mission being questioned by them and because his Apostleship was never recognized by them as on the same level of authority as theirs. After reading Gal. 2:1-10 you will see to what I am referring so clearly, possibly for the first time in your life. But some of the sparkle has gone out of church life: *'I have this against you, that you have abandoned the love you had at first'* (7.4). The writings of John, which Irenaeus says came from Ephesus, show a divided church between Paulinists and Petrines: indeed some members have left the church - *'they went out from us, but they were not of us'* (1 John 2:19). Nevertheless, the Pauline mission was gaining the upper hand, and it could produce one of the church's great theologians in St John, author of Gospel and Epistles (but not the Apostle John, nor the Beloved Disciple). Ignatius treats it as the capital of the church in Asia, writing untruthfully that the sainted Paul mentions it in every letter; and that is how we find things when Polycrates wrote his letter to Victor in 190.

We may contrast the situation in up-country Laodicea. Epaphras founded the church about 60, and Paul wrote to it soon afterwards. The letter is preserved as our Ephesians, but the name is missing in the oldest manuscripts, and about 150 a deviant Christian called Marcion referred to it as written to Laodicea. It shows clearly that, Paul does not know the church members, which would not be the case at Ephesus, where he ran the church for three years. So it is likely that the church went over to the Petrines (see above why Paul did not want to go back there in route to Jerusalem), and did not value Paul's letter; and a Pauline Christian took it to Ephesus. The Laodicean church is described to be the worst of the seven churches in Asia addressed in the Apocalypse: *'I know your works: you are neither cold nor hot. . . because you are lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will spew you out of my mouth'* (Rev. 3:15f).

What is important for us to know, is that when Ignatius (a Paulinist) passed through Asia on his way to the lions at Rome, the faithful Pauline churches sent delegates to greet and encourage him. The churches included Philadelphia, not far away; but Laodicea (a Petrine church) was not one of them, and he may actually have passed through the town.

The churches which come best out of the letters in Rev. 2-3 are Ephesus, Smyrna and Philadelphia; and these, with the smaller churches of Magnesia and Tralles, are the Pauline churches which supported Ignatius - especially Smyrna, with its famous, long-lived bishop, Polycarp, who was martyred forty years later. The Petrines took over some of the valley churches; but the Paulines held the line along the coast and ultimately drove the Jerusalem loyalists out as heretics - Ebionites or Gnostics.

We should never lose sympathy with the Jerusalem Christians; they lost the great battle, but not for want of devotion or energy. They took the label of "Cephas", the Petrines, because Peter had been Jesus' leading disciple; but the real leader of the Jerusalem church in the vital period from 40 to 60 was James, Jesus' brother. He must have been a man of great spiritual force. He was not even a disciple in Jesus' lifetime, but he established himself as the church's leader in Jerusalem. He stood out for principle, where Peter was weak-kneed; the Law was God's Law, and must be obeyed, however inconvenient. He was famous for his ascetic life, and he made good relations with the Pharisees in Judaism. He saw the church efficiently

organized with envoys ('apostles') to go round and see that standards were maintained among Gentile believers. He received the crown of martyrdom. As a 'loser' to the Paulinists, he has been rather forgotten in church life; but someone who has not been forgotten is his mother Mary. We may think that the praises heaped on her have been somewhat exaggerated, and perhaps she never became Queen of Heaven or Co-Redeemer of mankind. But she is not undeserving of the highest earthly honors: with two such sons, she must have been a formidable woman.

The last we hear of Peter in the Bible is at his Antioch visit in 48: after that he disappears into legend. He probably never went near Rome, for there is no suggestion of his having been there either in Acts or in Paul's letter to the Romans. The Petrines were the losing side, but the Paulines could not do without Peter's name; for they needed to show that they were successors to Jesus' original disciples in spite of their rejection of much of what Jesus and his church taught. So Peter is a sort of stumbling hero, even in the Pauline Gospels of Mark and Luke and John. In the last he is always outshone by the Pauline hero, the Beloved Disciple, though even there he has his place. But Matthew was (Christology apart) a Petrine, and it is in Matthew's Gospel that Peter is given the keys of the kingdom. The Roman church wisely adopted Matthew's Gospel as its title deed, and elected Peter posthumously as its first Pope; for the church of Rome has, from the beginning, been enthusiastic not only for the kingdom, but also for the power and the glory. It is such a pursuit that influenced the choosing of documents which were later gathered into a collection of writings and given Catholic Gentile authority called the New Testament. Even today, the Paulinists New Testament has won out over the Petrine Torah and Tanakh.



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HISTORICAL EVIDENCE THAT GENTILES KEPT THE PASSOVER IN THE EARLY CHURCH...IN SPITE OF CONSTANTINE #6

In the previous article we have seen a summary sketch of Constantine and his antisemitic policies regarding the early Gentile Church. One only has to read his "Easter Letter" to see how Constantine viewed the Jews and the faith of the Jewish Jesus. Now let us close our study on Constantine by looking at history and trying to picture for ourselves just what was going on regarding the Holy Days and Festivals and the worship of the non-Jew in spite of Constantine's efforts to stop all Jewish worship as applied to the non-Jew.

In the year 321 A.D., Emperor Constantine used imperial power to impose Sunday as a day of worship for all men. Here is an excerpt from the Codex Justinianus, III.,

"Constantine to Elpidius. All judges, city-people and craftsmen shall rest on the venerable day of the sun. But countrymen may without hindrance attend to agriculture, since it often happens that this is the most suitable day for sowing grain and planting vines, so that the opportunity afforded by divine providence may not be lost, for the right season is in short duration." (March 7, 321).

To make sure the message was heard loud and clear another edict followed, which stated that no man was allowed to Judaize under penalty of death. *What does it mean to Judaize if not that faithful men of God resisted Constantine's edicts and persisted in the doctrines which were once and for all delivered to the saints.* Rome literally waged war on God's commandments. The above decree clearly shows that Sunday or the day of the sun had already occupied a venerable place in Rome, the center of sun worship. It had a great religious meaning for the people of Rome. This edict had been one of the Roman Church's means of removing "all obstacles lying in the way of the Gentiles." That decision, as you well know, would have a universal influence on all the churches that came via Gentile Europe. *"They had not executed My judgments, but had despised My statutes, profaned My Sabbaths, and their eyes were fixed on their fathers' idols, says YHWH."* Among traditional "believers", it is no more a question of what the Bible says, but what is decreed and instituted by so-called "Church Fathers".

Two church historians, J. Danielou & Henri Marrou, who are themselves Catholics, have this to say, "Ignatius' polemic against the observance of the Sabbath shows that at Antioch, at the beginning of the second century, believers were continuing to observe it." Those believers have known those who knew Yahshua; they knew the blessed Apostles; and God's Apostles taught them.

Answer for yourself: How come the Apostles and non-Jews in the second century can be shown to be observers of the Sabbath and you are told not to keep the Sabbath but Constantine's "Sun" day? Who is lying?

Answer for yourself: Does salvation mean so much to you that you are willing to do everything in your power to use your time to find the TRUTH, and live in the TRUTH, even if you have to give up everything that you own on this earth? All roads lead to Rome, but there is only one narrow, bumpy, and difficult, yet straight road that leads to the Kingdom of Yahweh and sadly Gentile Christianity is not on it.

HISTORY...WILL WE EVER LEARN FROM IT? BUT YOU HAVE TO KNOW IT FIRST

One of the first signs of that church's struggle for power over the rest of the true assemblies is found in the book of Eusebius, The History of the Church. Keep in mind, Eusebius was a Catholic priest born in 260 A.D. He reported on a "controversy of great significance".

Answer for yourself: What is this controversy of which Eusebius speaks which occurred in the third century, 230 years after Jesus' death? It is about the Passover festival. **The believers of Asia had been keeping Passover according to APOSTOLIC TRADITION and not EASTER! They kept the festival on the 14th day of the first month (Nisan), at evening.** But in Rome and some other places under the Roman Church's supervision, it wasn't customary to keeping the date of the feast according to the Bible's fixed-time.

The Church of Rome, where a monarchical episcopate in the authority of a one man despot was the established form of government, sought to convince the already feeble churches of Asia to change their way of doing business and accept the Roman Church's newly instituted tradition. Pretending to be endowed with direct authority from God, Victor, the bishop of Rome made a violent move against those few believers of Asia Minor. They strongly refused to comply with the Roman Church's demand.

Eusebius recorded the following letter, which he said **he copied from the original letter written by the Asian bishops themselves.** And that confession is very important. I urge you to read and seriously think about its content.

"We for our part keep the DAY scrupulously, without addition or subtraction. For in Asia great luminaries sleep who will rise again on the day of Messiah's advent, when He is coming with glory from heaven and shall search out all His saints -- such as Philip, one of the twelve apostles, who sleeps in Hierapolis with his two daughters, who remained unmarried to the end of their days, while his other daughter lived in the blessed Spirit and rests in Ephesus. Again there is John, who leant back on the Master's breast, and who became a sacrificing priest ... a martyr, and a teacher; he too sleeps in Ephesus. Then in Smyrna there is Polycarp, bishop and martyr; and Thraseas, the bishop and martyr from Eumenia, who sleeps in Smyrna. Need I mention Sagaris, bishop and martyr, who sleeps in Laodicea, or blessed Papirius, or Melito the eunuch, who lived entirely in the Holy Spirit, and who lies in Sardis waiting for the visitation from heaven when he shall rise from the dead? All of these KEPT THE FOURTEENTH DAY OF THE MONTH AS THE BEGINNING OF THE PASCHAL FESTIVAL, in accordance with the Gospel, not deviating in the least but following the rule of Faith. Last of all I too, Polycrates, the least of you all, act according to the tradition of my family, some members of which I have actually followed; for seven of them were bishops and I am the eighth, and my family have always kept the day when the people put away the leaven. So I, my friends, after spending sixty five years in the Master's service and conversing with Christians from all parts of the world, and going carefully through all the Scripture, I am not scared of threats. Better people than I have said: 'We must obey God rather than men' ".

Answer for yourself: Now this is before Constantine and what did we read? The non-Jews were observing and keeping the Passover and not Easter as we are led to believe. Remember that I showed you that Rome would later change the translation of "pascha" in Acts 12 to "Easter" instead of "Passover" in trying to impose and

replace the Passover with the Easter Sun Worship festival to which they attached Jesus name much later.

Answer for yourself: Can you see clearly that the early Gentiles who had links with the Apostles no less were observing the Passover and not Easter?

One can clearly see, here, a new institution trying to change the way of an old institution. But the faithful disciples refused to.

Answer for yourself: Have we bowed to the Roman Church instead of God and His Word?

Answer for yourself: Will you obey Yahweh, "after carefully going through all Scripture" or do you prefer to stick to the roman tradition? This was not the only controversy in which the Roman Church showed her teeth. That church was not only against some of the apostolic teachings, but even some of the heresies they earlier rejected they later on accepted and *dogmatized*.

EVIDENCE THAT EVEN IN THE 7TH CENTURY THE NON-JEWS WERE STILL OBSERVING THE PASSOVER AND REFUSED TO OBSERVE EASTER

Let us come to learn about a great man and scholar who few know today; his name is Bede or Baeda. The scholarliness of this highly regarded church historian needs no introduction. In his book Ecclesiastical History of the English People and the Church, this monk testifies that up to the 7th century there were still believers who refused to give up their way of keeping Passover in exchange for the Roman Church's Easter. Read their startling testimony, as recorded by this faithful catholic priest, on pages 180-189. It came from the lips of their opponents, represented by Abbot Wilfrid, "who had gone to Rome to study the doctrine of the Church": *"Far be it from us, argued Wilfrid, to charge John with stupidity, because he literally observed the Law of Moses at a time when the Church [the true Church of the Apostles and not the Roman Church] followed many Jewish practices, and the Apostles were not able immediately to ABROGATE the observances of the Law once given by God ...John following the custom of the Law, used to begin the Feast of Easter [this is the Passover] on the evening of the fourteenth of the first month, not caring whether it fell on the Sabbath or on any other day."*

This is among the best historical proofs we can have regarding Irishmen and Scots keeping the Passover Feast Day, yearly, on a different date than that of the Roman or Italian Catholic tradition because, they asserted, this was how they received it from those who themselves had received the tradition from, probably, the Apostles themselves. The Catholic Priest agreed and confirmed the undeniable truth of the Apostle's foundation (teaching and practice), but --amazingly-- the Catholic theologian, Wifrid, believes that John continued to do what Yeshua used to do because the early and only true Assembly *"couldn't immediately abrogate the Law once given by God"*.

Answer for yourself: Who would want to in the first place? What kind of men would and have we followed them in their hatred of the Jews so far that we have lost the true worship of God? Can this historical study show us just how far we have strayed from the truth and how far we have deviated from the "Pattern of Worship" once given the Saints?

He who reads with intelligence surely knows that nowhere in the Bible has it ever been given to the Apostles, or any man for that matter, the right to add or retract from God's words or commands. Secondly, the position of the Gentile Church was, then, that these commandments pertained to Jews only, which attitude they passed unto those who followed their theology, by force or by choice. This is the lie that you and I have inherited and bought into hook line and sinker. Replacement Religion is not what God gave the non-Jew and in fact God makes sure in Isa. 56 to state just the opposite but the hatred of the Jews by Rome would deny the Word of God

and end up changing it by forging our Bibles and who knows today without a lot of study? Hardly anyone. Take note that in Isa. 56 God makes a strong case by first stating:

Isa 56:3 Neither let the son of the stranger, that hath joined himself to the LORD, speak, saying, The LORD hath utterly separated me from his people: neither let the eunuch say, Behold, I am a dry tree. (KJV)

God takes special pains to say: **"Don't say that you are separated from my people the Jews" and goes on to make it clear that this includes His Holy Sabbaths and Biblical Feasts and Festivals like the Passover, etc.**

But Rome and Constantine will do just the opposite

This dear one is the grafting of the non-Jew into the Israel of God whereby the examples given earlier in this website are later followed by non-Jews in the New Testament as well.

History is full of irrefutable evidences of TRUE believers' strong continuity in the biblical and apostolic observance of the Feast of Passover as well as all the other Biblical Festivals; that is until Constantine when these observances had to go "underground" in order to exist and the worshippers not be murdered by Church leaders who were supposedly followers of Jesus. What a joke!

"In the first place, it is certain that Christian communities, in the strict sense of the terms, continued to observe Jewish feasts, but we know that in Judaism, at that time, there was a great diversity of calendars, so the Christian communities reflected these divergences. It seems, moreover, that the majority of Christian feasts were transformations of certain Jewish feasts. One thing is certain, **the celebration of the 14 of Nisan, the day of the Jewish Pasch, by the believers of Asia. The observance extended to groups in Palestine, Syria and Rome. Those who kept it were called the Quarto- decimans.**"

In the rest of the document, the writers continue to show that another group focusing on Sunday [the Sunday of resurrection], later on, rivaled with the first. And "It is this group which finally prevailed over that of the Quartodecimans."

"... The Judeo-Christians continued to celebrate the Jewish feasts, a custom which probably remained." The truth is they were simply following in the footsteps of Jesus and the Apostles.

What stronger evidences can any sincere believer ask for?

At the death of Apostle John, the last pillar of truth, those other believers with itching ears that were already listening to other teachings, began to promote Sunday in remembrance of the resurrection. This leads to the most drastically outrageous ordinance in that new church ecclesiastical calendar by the Harlot Church of Rome.

And though when confronted with such evidence of the corruption of the true faith of Jesus as it was spread among the Gentiles in the Great Commission and at the same time being shown how this "Pattern of Worship" and faith was later altered many Christians still turn a deaf ear. They prefer to hold on to their forefathers' tradition and religious culture. You must avoid such attitude at all cost. Such repentance in the light of such truths that Bet Emet is bringing you is the ONLY true Worship we can be certain of in light of the deceptions of Rome and the forging of much of our Christian Bibles.

Shalom

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THE SUBSTITUTION OF "EASTER" FOR THE "PASSEVER": A HISTORICAL EVALUATION

Easter has been described as the most important and significant festival of the Christian Church. It is a time when Christendom remembers the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. It is piously observed throughout the world by Protestants, Roman Catholics and the majority of Christian sects. One would expect that such a universally accepted institution would trace its origin to the Holy Scriptures. Amazingly the observance of Easter cannot and does not trace its origin to the Hebrew Scriptures as you might expect and will quickly come to see in this article. Indeed, it would be reasonable to assume that the Church's most important festival would have been inaugurated by divine decree but again it does not. Amazingly the Bible doesn't even mention the word Easter except for the one "purposely mistranslated verse" in Acts 12 when the real word is "Passover". We can find no reference in the New Testament where Jesus ever asked his disciples to celebrate his resurrection, and the Apostles neither kept Easter nor commanded their fellow Christians to observe Easter. That should make you wonder why we do and we will see in this article how the Passover was replaced by Easter by early Gentile Church antisemites.

Let's have a look at the history of this festival and we'll just see how far our present Easter celebration has digressed from the true celebration that that first century Jews like Jesus observed which was the Passover.

The New Testament teaches that the supposed occasion for what would later become the observance of "Easter" was what was called the "Last Supper" on the evening before Jesus' crucifixion. The disciples were gathered together to eat the Passover meal on the evening of the fourteenth day of Nisan.

The New Testament depicts that Jesus and his disciples at the Passover "early" as the lambs would not be separated out and sacrificed until the next day. So we find Jesus and the disciples eating the Passover without a lamb the night before the sacrifice of the Temple lambs. So we find Jesus and the disciples eating the Passover with unleavened bread and bitter herbs. As you most likely now the Passover as we have been taught was instituted as a perpetual memorial of the night that the Lord passed over the houses of the Children of Israel in Egypt and delivered them from slavery. But this is but one small of the story as we find that before the historical Exodus that God and His Gentile children were observing the day of what would later be called "the Passover"!

Answer for yourself: Were you aware that Abraham kept the Passover long before Moses and Mt. Sinai?

What we fail to realize is that the Passover was a special "appointed time of God with man" which was an "earthly" type or representation of man's salvation which foreshadowed the larger spiritual salvation of God which extends beyond our physical death. More on that later but let us begin with what we are familiar with; namely, the admonition to observe and keep the Passover "forever" which was given to a mixed multitude of Jews and Gentiles as found in the Hebrew Scriptures.

EXODUS 12:14 And this day shall be unto you for a memorial; and ye shall keep it a feast to the LORD throughout your generations; ye shall keep it a feast by an ordinance for ever.

THE SUBSTITUTION OF "EASTER" FOR "THE PASSOVER" BY ROMAN DECREE

Ample historical evidence proves that for many centuries a large number of Christian churches who followed "the Christ" kept "the Lord's Supper" on the date of Passover.

Answer for yourself: Just what was this "Lord's Supper" we read about in the history books? Was it like our Christian communion today or possibly could this be a term for "the Passover" and we not recognize it today due to our church tradition and poor teaching?

Some of those who observed the Passover in the early Christian centuries were the seven churches mentioned in the Revelation. Soon after all the twelve disciples died, some churches including the church in Rome began to keep the Sunday after passover as their day on which the Lord's Supper should be held each year. This came into being because it was the habit in those churches to fast before the Passover. It did not seem appropriate that they should end their fast on the anniversary of the eve of Christ's death as did the other churches. Some chose rather to hold the feast on Sunday which they believed to be more suited to the breaking of the fast. But Jesus did not command us to fast before the Passover. The New Testament makes it plain that Jesus commanded us to commemorate his death & not his resurrection.

Answer for yourself: What does this mean to me today? Simply therefore that the Church of Rome was in error in changing the day of observance of "the Lord's Supper" to the Sunday after the Passover instead of on the 14th of Nisan (which is the Passover).

Let us remember Saul who, rather than fully obey the Lord's command, spared the best of the Amalekite's livestock to offer as a sacrifice to the Lord. Good intentions? Maybe but it cost him his throne. God said to him, *"For rebellion is as the sin of witchcraft, and stubbornness is as iniquity and idolatry. Because thou hast rejected the word of the LORD, he hath also rejected thee from being king."* 1 Samuel 15:23.

Answer for yourself: Did all the Gentile followers of Jesus and "the Christ" obey Rome and stopped observing the Passover and changed their worship to the Sunday after the Passover? Not on your life! Those churches who kept Passover on the 14th of Nisan (Quartodecimani as they were known) were, over time, finally forced to comply with the practice of the church of Rome by the decree of the Council of Nicea 325 and by the authority of a letter written by the Roman Emperor Constantine.

Thus what the New Testament terms "The Lord's Supper" was thus removed from it's Old Testament origins. This was the deliberate intention of the Emperor Constantine who detested every association with the Jews. In a letter to the churches Constantine wrote, *"Concerning the most holy day of Passover, it was decreed by common consent to be expedient, that this festival should be celebrated on the same day by all,..... Let us then have nothing to in common with the most hostile rabble of the Jews."* In the Britain during the 8th century, the name "Easter" was adopted for the paschal season and its link with Passover was further obscured. "Eostur" was the heathen festival of the goddess of spring which was traditionally celebrated at this time.

And so Easter came into being with all its pagan trappings. Eggs, Rabbits, Easter buns etc., are all derived from spring festivals and the worship of heathen deities. Refer to any good encyclopedia and study for yourself the pagan origins of Easter festivities.

Answer for yourself: Is this the way that God has commanded that we worship Him on His "appointed times" and "holy days"?

Ezek 11:12 12 And ye shall know that I am the LORD: for ye have not walked in my statutes, neither executed my judgments, but have done after the manners of the heathen that are round about you. (KJV)

A HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE OF PASSOVER AND THE GENTILE CHRISTIANS

Now give consideration to the view that the Passover was, in the first century and later, being observed annually on the 14th of Nisan by the majority of Gentile Christianity. That would change with Constantine at the Council of Nicea in 325 A.D. however. Now for a big, big question.

Answer for yourself: Is it just possible that Paul's reference to the Lord's Supper could be a veiled reference to the Passover? Now understand the importance of such a thought if it can be proved correct. I believe it can upon close examination of what comes next.

Answer for yourself: How many times does Paul mention "the Lord's Supper" in the New Testament? He mentions it only once in I. Cor. 11:20-21:

1 Cor 11:20-21 20 When ye come together therefore into one place, this is not to eat the Lord's supper. 21 For in eating every one taketh before other his own supper: and one is hungry, and another is drunken. (KJV)

This does not tell us much but there is much to see when we put the puzzle all together. Let's see if the only mention of the Lord's Supper by Paul can be connected to the date of the Christian Passover, ie. the 14th Nisan.

We need to begin with Paul's letter to the Corinthian Church. In 1 Cor 16:8 we see that Paul's first letter to the Corinthians was in fact written shortly after the Passover around the time of the Feast of Unleavened Bread. (1 Cor 16:8)

1 Cor 16:8 8 But I will tarry at Ephesus until Pentecost (50 days after Passover) (KJV)

Answer for yourself: Does this timing ("tarry at Ephesus until Pentecost") have anything to do with the Passover? I believe it does and this "timing" certainly accounts for Paul's use of Passover imagery in Corinthians 5:7-8,

1 Cor 5:7-8 7 Purge out therefore the old leaven, that ye may be a new lump, as ye are unleavened. For even Christ our passover is sacrificed for us: 8 Therefore let us keep the feast, not with old leaven, neither with the leaven of malice and wickedness; but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth. (KJV)

Answer for yourself: Did you notice Paul's repeated reference to "leaven" and "unleavened bread" in the above verse? Do you find it rather strange that Paul would be using Jewish symbols in his writings to Gentiles in Asia, Minor, unless they also were familiar with such symbols, symbols connected to the Passover no less?

Notice also Paul's reference to the exodus from Egypt in I Cor. 10:1-10,

1 Cor 10:1-10 1 Moreover, brethren, I would not that ye should be ignorant, how that all our fathers

were under the cloud, and all passed through the sea; 2 And were all baptized unto Moses in the cloud and in the sea; 3 And did all eat the same spiritual meat; 4 And did all drink the same spiritual drink: for they drank of that spiritual Rock that followed them: and that Rock was Christ. 5 But with many of them God was not well pleased: for they were overthrown in the wilderness. 6 Now these things were our examples, to the intent we should not lust after evil things, as they also lusted. 7 Neither be ye idolaters, as were some of them; as it is written, The people sat down to eat and drink, and rose up to play. 8 Neither let us commit fornication, as some of them committed, and fell in one day three and twenty thousand. 9 Neither let us tempt Christ, as some of them also tempted, and were destroyed of serpents. 10 Neither murmur ye, as some of them also murmured, and were destroyed of the destroyer. (KJV)

Notice also that Paul makes a connection between the sacrament and the altar sacrifices in 10:16-22.

1 Cor 10:16-22 16 The cup of blessing which we bless, is it not the communion of the blood of Christ? The bread which we break, is it not the communion of the body of Christ? 17 For we being many are one bread, and one body: for we are all partakers of that one bread. 18 Behold Israel after the flesh: are not they which eat of the sacrifices partakers of the altar? 19 What say I then? that the idol is any thing, or that which is offered in sacrifice to idols is any thing? 20 But I say, that the things which the Gentiles sacrifice, they sacrifice to devils, and not to God: and I would not that ye should have fellowship with devils. 21 Ye cannot drink the cup of the Lord, and the cup of devils: ye cannot be partakers of the Lord's table, and of the table of devils. 22 Do we provoke the Lord to jealousy? are we stronger than he? (KJV)

It would also account for Paul's timely concern about the flippant manner in which the Lord's Supper was being kept. (1 Cor 11:17-30) which he undoubtedly had knowledge of by recent reports (1 Cor 1:11).

1 Cor 11:17-30 17 Now in this that I declare unto you I praise you not, that ye come together not for the better, but for the worse. 18 For first of all, when ye come together in the church, I hear that there be divisions among you; and I partly believe it. 19 For there must be also heresies among you, that they which are approved may be made manifest among you. 20 When ye come together therefore into one place, this is not to eat the Lord's supper. 21 For in eating every one taketh before other his own supper: and one is hungry, and another is drunken. 22 What? have ye not houses to eat and to drink in? or despise ye the church of God, and shame them that have not? What shall I say to you? shall I praise you in this? I praise you not. 23 For I have received of the Lord that which also I delivered unto you, That the Lord Jesus the same night in which he was betrayed took bread: 24 And when he had given thanks, he brake it, and said, Take, eat: this is my body, which is broken for you: this do in remembrance of me. 25 After the same manner also he took the cup, when he had supped, saying, This cup is the new testament in my blood: this do ye, as oft as ye drink it, in remembrance of me. 26 For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do shew the Lord's death till he come. 27 Wherefore whosoever shall eat this bread, and drink this cup of the Lord, unworthily, shall be guilty of the body and blood of the Lord. 28 But let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of that bread, and drink of that cup. 29 For he that eateth and drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinketh damnation to himself, not discerning the Lord's body. 30 For this cause many are weak and sickly among you, and many sleep. (KJV)

Answer for yourself: Now for the big question. So it is possible that we have misunderstood what Paul meant when mentioning "the Lord's Supper"? Do the multiple veiled references Paul made to the Passover by mentioning "keeping the feast with unleavened bread of sincerity and truth, the mentioning of the night before

the Passover sacrifice, the mentioning of the "bread" and the "cup" before the Passover at the dinner, the mentioning of the Exodus and the sacrifice at the altar, and the mentioning of the time period before Pentecost lead us to look and redefine what Paul called "the Lord's Supper" in this same context? Was then Paul referring to the Lords' Supper as a synonym for the Passover? Was "the Lords' Supper" possibly being a veiled reference to the Passover observance? Was Paul's rebuke of the Corinthians about being drunk made because many Gentiles were attending and observing this holy day of Passover drunk?

Many scholars, as well as myself once seeing all this evidence, believe that this only reference to the Lord's Supper in the New Testament, one by Paul, refers to an event which took place on the 14th of Nisan near to or in Corinth which is the Passover Festival! **If this is the case then the phrase "come together in one place" 1 Cor 11:20 would refer to the gathering together of several "house churches" of that area to one venue in order to keep the Passover feast.** To argue against this and say that coming together simply meant "going to church" denies the evidence presented which casts another light upon the historical meaning of "the Lord's Supper" as used by Paul in this Passover milieu. Surely you cannot believe the coming together "drunk" referred to attending the synagogue on Shabbath mornings but rather an evening congregating for the Passover.

Answer for yourself: So what do we see here? It is evident to any "thinking believer" that Paul, when speaking of what we have traditionally thought was our "Christian Communion" where we partake of grape juice and the "wafer/cracker/host" is not what Paul was speaking about at all; but rather Paul was speaking of the Gentiles partaking of and observing the Passover with the Jews. I have shown you repeatedly on this site that the **non-Jew observed the Passover with the Jews in the Old Testament** as well as **Abraham's example of observing the Passover long before Moses and Mt. Sinai which goes unnoticed by most.** We today think the Passover, one of God's Appointed Times with mankind, began first with Moses but historically it did not. The Passover and its significance in God's Salvation plan for mankind and its true meaning has been with man since the beginning of Gods' revelation.

THE BIBLICAL FESTIVALS BEGAN IN GENESIS CHAPTER ONE....YOU GOT TO BE KIDDING? NO!

Gen 1:14 And God said, Let there be lights in the firmament of the heaven to divide the day from the night; and let them be for signs, and for seasons, and for days, and years: (KJV)

There is a very important word in Genesis 1:14 which is overlooked by almost 2.5 billion Christians today and that word is "seasons". Let us look at this word in the Hebrew:

Strong's Concordance:

4150 mowed` (mo-ade'); or moed` (mo-ade'); or (feminine) mow`adah (2 Chronicles 8:13) (mo-aw-daw'); from 3259; properly, **an appointment**, i.e. **a fixed time or season**; **specifically, a festival**; conventionally a year; by implication, **an assembly (as convened for a definite purpose)**; technically the **congregation**; by extension, **the place of meeting**; also a signal (as appointed beforehand): KJV-- **appointed (sign, time)**, (place of, solemn) **assembly, congregation, (set, solemn) feast**, (appointed, due) season, solemn (-ity), **synagogue, (set) time (appointed).**

Ok, set down and catch your breath for what you just read has the ability to change your life in less than 5 minutes when the revelation of what you just read hits you in the face. Before there were any Jews or sons of Judah, the son of Jacob from whom the Tribe of Judah and the Jews would emerge later in history, we find **God setting aside "fixed times for festivals" whereby mankind (Gentiles) would respond and "congregate with God in a place of meeting for a definite purpose at these special appointed times where man could feast with God"!** Now for the deep thinker these "seasons" are connected with the spring equinox, the summer solstice, the autumn equinox and the winter solstice. My studies in Egypt and Egyptian religious beliefs have proved to me beyond any doubt that the Ancient Egyptian monotheists understood God's

simple salvation message as taught in these "seasons" and this explains the righteousness of the Egyptian civilization and the existence of the "negative confessions" as a form of their own "Torah". As Christians today and followers of "the Christ" we have lost so much today and miss completely the beauty of God's "appointed times" and settle for "holidays" of Rome's making while [the true Biblical Feasts and Festivals which communicate Gods' salvation true message](#) go unnoticed and unobserved by the vast majority of Christians.

But that was not always the case as I will show you now.

EXTRA-BIBLICAL REFERENCES TO GENTILE CHRISTIANS KEEPING AND OBSERVING THE PASSOVER

POLYCARP

Around 80 A.D. a man named Polycarp became a Christian. He was a godly man who served as a bishop of Smyrna. He was well acquainted with the apostle John and with some of the other disciples.

According to Eusebius, Irenaeus (in his third book against the heresies) said of Polycarp, *"And Polycarp, a man who had been instructed by the apostles, and had familiar intercourse with many that had seen Christ, and had also been appointed bishop by the apostles in Asia, in the church of Smyrna, whom we have also seen in our youth, for he lived a long time, and to a very advanced age, when, after a glorious and most distinguished martyrdom, he departed this life. He always taught what he had learned from the apostles, what the church had handed down, and what is the only true doctrine. All the churches bear witness to these things, and those that have been the successors of Polycarp, to the present time, a witness of the truth much more worthy of credit, and much more certain than either Valentine or Marcion, or the rest of those perverse teachers. The same Polycarp, coming to Rome under the episcopate of Anicetus, turned many from the aforesaid heretics to the church of God, proclaiming the one and only true faith, that he had received from the Apostles, that, viz.. which was delivered by the church."*

Now we have to pay close attention to what is said next. The following passage from Eusebius refers to a discussion that took place between Anicetus the Bishop of Rome and Polycarp on the observance of the Passover during Polycarp's visit to Rome sometime around 160 A.D.

"For neither could Anicetus persuade Polycarp not to observe it, because he had always observed it (Passover) with John the disciple of our Lord, and the rest of the apostles, with whom he associated; and neither did Polycarp persuade Anicetus to observe, who said that he was bound to maintain the practice of the presbyters before him."

Sixtus, the sixth bishop of Rome is cited by Eusebius ("Eusebius' Ecclesiastical History" Chapter 24) as being the earliest of the bishops of Rome who did not keep Passover in its Christian context. The bishops of Rome were however, at peace with those in Rome and nearby who did, and maintained the practice of sending out portions of bread to be used in the Lord's Supper by those who kept Passover at this time.

The adoption of the celebration of "Easter Sunday," as we now know it, was the source of considerable contention when it was implemented in the second century AD. Advocating the celebration of the Sunday following the Passover (Easter) were Bishops Anticetus (ca. AD 154) and Victor (AD 189-199) of Rome. Trying to preserve the traditional Passover date of Nisan 14 (called the "Quartodeciman Passover") were Polycrates, Bishop of Ephesus and representative of the Asian churches, and Polycarp, close friend of the Apostle John before his death.

The motivation for changing the day of celebration was a strong anti-Jewish sentiment brewing in the Roman Empire, especially in Rome itself. This powerful animosity toward anything Jewish strongly moved Christians to sever their ties with traditional Jewish customs in order to demonstrate to the Roman Empire their detachment from their Jewish roots. Something as simple as changing a day of celebration would have a profound impact of proving the division of the two sects.

According to Eusebius, Irenaeus, Bishop of Lyon (from ca. A.D. 176), acted as mediator in the conflict between Victor and Polycrates. We find the probable time for the origin of Easter celebrations in a letter from Irenaeus to Victor. In this letter Irenaeus suggests that Bishop Sixtus (ca. AD 116-126) was the first Easter celebrant in Rome at about the time A.D. 116. This is not the only evidence to suggest this time frame as the probable start of Roman Easter celebrations. Bishop Sixtus was Bishop in Rome during the time of Emperor Hadrian (AD 117-138) who adopted a policy of radical anti-Jewish measures. Jewish rites and customs were banned throughout the Empire, which was strong encouragement for Christians to select alternate rites and customs of their own, which would parallel but not duplicate the Jewish originals. Also, it was exactly in this time frame when the Judeo-Christian leadership, with many of the members, were expelled from Jerusalem and replaced with a Gentile clique. This becomes significant in light of Epiphanius' statement that it was then that the Easter controversy arose: *"the controversy arose after the time of the exodus (ca. AD 135) of the bishops of the circumcision and it has continued until our time."* Epiphanius, Adversus Haereses 70,9 PG 42, 355-356.

If, as Epiphanius implies, the controversy was provoked by the introduction after AD 135 of the new Easter Sunday celebration, which a significant number of Passover-keeping Christians rejected, then Sixtus could well have been the main initiator of the new custom, since he was Bishop of Rome. Irenaeus suggests that Easter originated in Rome under Bishop Sixtus, while Epiphanius implies that Easter originated in Jerusalem under the replacement Greek cadre. Both compliment each other and occur at approximately the same time. It seems hard to believe that a replacement band of Gentiles, positioned in Jerusalem due to repressive measures taken by a Gentile emperor, could have had the effect of changing the custom of primarily Jewish Christians. However, if that were coupled--at the same time--with a Christian bishop in the most influential diocese, suggesting this measure to avoid "Judaizing," the effect could be penetrating.

Since it is impossible to determine exactly when the custom of Easter celebrations gained a solid foothold in Christianity, for the purposes of this website we will accept the date of about AD 135 as the introduction of the Easter celebration into Christianity. This is significant only because the changing of a custom takes time, and until a large number of Christians were keeping Easter instead of Passover there would have been no cause for controversy. We do know that by AD 189, however, open altercation was apparent in the Christian world. The dispute between those wishing to maintain the Quartodeciman Passover and those hoping to propel the Church toward Easter instead was centered in Rome.

In about AD 154, Polycarp went to Rome trying to dissuade Anticetus from keeping the pagan, Sunday, Easter festival and persuade him to return to seventh day Sabbath keeping. However, he failed in his efforts and returned home with sad reports for the Eastern churches.

POLYCRATES

Around 180 A.D. Victor, Bishop of Rome, attempted by threats of excommunication to force the churches in Asia not to observe the passover on the 14th Nisan but to conform to the Roman practice of celebrating "passover" on the first Sunday after the true passover (we call that Easter Sunday today).

We can see the importance of the Roman Church in this matter by seeing part of a letter written in about AD 196 by Polycrates to Bishop Victor of Rome: *"I could mention the bishops who are present, whom you required me to summon and I did so."* (Eusebius, HE 5, 24, 8.) It is most revealing to see how Polycrates

obeyed the order of Victor, despite the fact that they were in violent opposition on the very subject about which the council was required. However, ultimately, Polycrates, in company with many churches including the Eastern churches of Asia, refused to bow to the desire of Victor, preferring instead to continue the Passover celebration of the Bible.

Finally, Bishop Victor of Rome sent out letters threatening to excommunicate those churches refusing to follow his mandate, namely, to keep Easter instead of the Passover. This new tool, excommunication, had the desired effect, and many vacillating Christians began observing Easter instead of the Jewish Passover. Nevertheless, Victor finally did excommunicate the entire Asian block of churches because of their refusal to keep Easter.

In his answer to Victor after deliberation by a forum of the bishops of Asia, (these included the well known churches of the Revelation) Polycrates makes mention of the example of many of noted saints and original disciples of Christ. He is quoted as saying, *"For there were seven, my relatives bishops, and I am the eighth; and my relatives always observed the day when the people threw away the leaven. I, therefore, brethren, am now sixty five years in the Lord, who having conferred with the brethren throughout the world, and having studied the whole of the sacred Scriptures, am not at all alarmed at those things which I am threatened, to intimidate me. For they who are greater than I, have said, 'we ought to obey God rather than men'".* Victor then proceeded to take action against all the bishops represented by Polycrates calling them heretics and publishing letters of excommunication. However many churches were sympathetic to the Asian churches' cause and made strong protests to Victor. The conversation between Anicetus and Polycarp (mentioned above) was quoted by Irenaeus in the defence of the Asian churches led by Polycrates. Victor was powerless to enforce his excommunication order.

Understanding the origins of the annual Easter feast, we can now move on to see the connection between Easter and weekly Sunday-keeping (Easter-Sunday).

In numerous patristic testimonies the weekly Sunday and the annual Easter Sunday are treated as basically the same feast, commemorating the same event of the resurrection. Origen explicitly unites the two: *"The resurrection of the Lord is celebrated not only once a year but constantly every eight days."* Origen, Homilia In Isaiam 5,2, GCS 8,265,1. Eusebius similarly states: *"While the Jews faithful to Moses, sacrificed the Passover lamb once a year... we men of the New Covenant celebrate every Sunday our Passover."* (Eusebius, De Solemnitate Paschali 7,12, PG 24, 701A.) Pope Innocent I, in a letter to Bishop Decentius of Gubbio, confirms the unity existing between the two feasts: *"We celebrate Sunday because of the venerable resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ, not only at Easter but in actuality by the single weekly cycle."* (Innocent I, Epistolae Paschales, PG 26, 1389.) Today, Italians still refer to Sunday as "PASQUETTA, "which means "little Easter."

Because there is such a clear connection between the pagan Easter festival and weekly Sunday-keeping, it is well to understand the driving force behind the change from Passover to Easter because there we hope to find the motivation for the change from widespread Sabbath-keeping to widespread Sunday-keeping.

Remember that the primary motivating factor in the change from the Passover to Easter was anti-Judaism. The desire to avoid "Judaizing" was intense and essentially overwhelming in the early centuries. So, we can look to this same motivation in connection with Sunday-keeping.

EMPEROR CONSTANTINE

The controversy was still current at the time of Constantine, Emperor of Rome, in the fourth century. When

Constantine called his first "World Council of Churches" in Nicea 312 A.D., the date of the passover was second place on the agenda of issues to deal with. However, discussion centered around the date of the celebration of the resurrection of Christ. The church of Rome and those under its influence celebrated the resurrection on the Sunday following Passover. The Quartodecimani, as they were called, commemorated the death of Christ on its anniversary. Constantine ruled against the observance of Passover on the 14th of Nisan, neither by consensus, nor by the power of the Holy Spirit, but because of the shame of its association with the Jews. ([Read Constantine's letter to the churches. Eusebius' Ecclesiastical History](#))

Constantine was in error on two accounts.

- Jesus, as depicted in the New Testament, never commanded his disciples to celebrate his resurrection.
- Jesus, as depicted in the New Testament, did command his disciples to commemorate his death. The question was not which day is more suitable but rather which celebration is scriptural. Constantine had no right to "change times and laws". (Dan 7:25)

That being the case the last nails in the coffin that buried the Gentiles observing the Passover as well as the Sabbath were driven into the casket by Constantine's antisemitism. The anti-Judaic motivation for the repudiation of the Jewish Passover could not be more strongly expressed than in the Nicene conciliar letter of Constantine:

"It appeared an unworthy thing that in the celebration of this most holy feast we should follow the practice of the Jews, who have impiously defiled their hands with enormous sin, and are, therefore, deservedly afflicted with blindness of soul. Let us then have nothing in common with the detestable Jewish crowd: for we have received from our Saviour a different way. . . Strive and pray continually that the purity of your souls may not seem in anything to be sullied by fellowship with the customs of these most wicked men (the Jews). . . All should unite in desiring that which sound reason appears to demand, and in avoiding all participation in the perjured conduct of the Jews." (Eusebius, LIFE OF CONSTANTINE 3,18-19, NPNF 2nd, I, pp. 524-525.)

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At the point the change was taking place, it is clear that an intense desire to avoid association with the hated Jews was the prime mover. The move from Passover to Easter--and from Sabbath to Sunday--was reactionary first, with the theological rationalizations following later. Although many theological arguments were presented during the change, they were constantly evolving in type and in importance. Settled and accepted theological rationalizations followed the reactionary change from Sabbath-observance to Sunday-observance. Even today, Sunday-keepers rationalize their belief in many ways. There is no single clear-cut argument that "proves" that Sunday-keeping is God's will. This theological uncertainty is a product of the centuries of evolving theological rationale for a change that was primarily reactionary in nature.

The contention that arose then was the same contention that always plagues God's people: pragmatism vs. principle. Some in the church always wish to take a reactionary course--leaving "principle" to be rationalized later. These people will always find adversaries in those who would put principle first and decide a course based upon it. So it was with the rise of Sunday-observance. Men in power, wishing to avoid conflict and persecution, chose a pagan day because it made the most pragmatic sense to them, given the sentiment of the day. Many resisted, based upon principle, the principle of God's word. Yet some were threatened into submission. It became a common practice to keep both Sabbath and Sunday in order to placate both the authorities and one's own conscience. In fact, Sozomen, a church historian of the fifth century, tells us that many "were assembling together on the Sabbath as well as on the first day of the week, which custom is never observed at Rome or at Alexandria." (Sozomen, *Ecclesiastical History*, book 7, chapter 19, in *A Library of Nicene And Post-Nicene Fathers*, second series, vol. 2.)

It is very significant to realize that most Christians still kept the Sabbath even as late as the fifth century AD. Socrates tells us: "Although almost all churches throughout the world celebrate the sacred mysteries on the Sabbath every week, yet the Christians of Alexandria and at Rome, on account of some ancient tradition, have ceased to do this." (Socrates, *Ecclesiastical History*, book 5, chapter 22.) It is astounding to read that, although the Christians in Alexandria and Rome had ceased Sabbath-keeping, most of the Christian community around the world was still keeping Sabbath as late as the date of this writing (about AD 439). Of course, we now know that the "ancient tradition" written about was the reactionary change (primarily in Rome) resulting from the conflicts in the second century.

CONCLUSION

The change from Sabbath to Sunday paralleled the change from Passover to Easter and seems to have happened at approximately the same time, and for the same reason. There is no doubt that the growing acceptance of Easter in place of the Passover greatly contributed to the acceptance of Sunday-observance in place of Sabbath-observance. It is clear that the motivation for both was the same and that the ultimate theological rationalization for both was the same (celebration in honor of the resurrection). It is probable that if the Passover could not have been changed to Easter, then the Sabbath could not have been changed to Sunday, as the former was certainly the easier of the two to implement. Once it was acceptable to consider detachment from Jewish rites because of severe external pressure, anything Jewish came under attack. Thus, the Sabbath fell into disrepute because of its "Jewish" origins, and Victor's new weapon, excommunication, persuaded many.

Even so, we find that the majority of Christians, those outside Rome and Alexandria, resisted these heretical and unprincipled changes. This is well summarized by Lyman Coleman, in his book, *Ancient Christianity Exemplified*, chapter 26, sec. 2, p. 527: *"Down even to the fifth century the observance of the Jewish Sabbath was continued in the Christian church, but with a rigor and solemnity gradually diminishing until it was wholly discontinued."*

The adoption of the Easter celebration paved the way for a widespread modification of Christian practices and rites. Yet these changes did not find their way throughout the Christian Church until well into the fifth century. Thus, Sunday-keepers would do well to recognize the true origins of their practice, since history clearly shows that the practice of Sunday-keeping does not originate in the Scripture, in any command of Christ, in any change initiated by any Apostle, or even in the practice of the vast majority of Christians prior to the fifth century. Instead, the practice of Christian Sunday-keeping traces its origin in the timid and compromising fear of pagan/Roman persecution found primarily in the antisemitism of the Roman church.

Answer for yourself: Well there you have the facts of history that few every find out. Now that you know will you in the Spirit of Truth re-examine why you observe Easter and Sunday when the "Pattern Of Worship" given the non-Jew before as well as after the times of Jesus included one's observance and worship of God in the Passover as well as the Sabbath?



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LOOKING AT THE CONFLICTING ACCOUNTS CONCERNING JESUS AND THE PASSOVER IN THE NEW TESTAMENT #1

We all want the truth or at least we say we do. I can remember it well when teaching a new-beginners class at my former church when I would always ask these new members "Do you want the truth?" and "What will you do when you get it"? Little did I know then that I was really speaking to myself as my studies would progress over the months and years to where I would eventually find myself at a crossroads in my life where I would have to resign my position at the church because I would finally get the courage to face the fact that "I did not have it either in the Christian church". I would have to make a hard decision: "truth and God's acceptance" or "man's acceptance and praises and little if any truth". Eventually I mustered up the courage to choose "truth" as I hope you will even when it goes against the "status quo".

The portrayal of the Passion of Jesus, a film by Mel Gibson who is certainly not an authority on Biblical history let alone the religions of Judaism the religion of Rome as well, concerns one of the most difficult subjects in the history of Jewish-Christian relations. Mel Gibson who has denied the existence of antisemitism in the film, states that based his script on the Gospels. The question that Mel Gibson never asked is: "How reliable are these gospels accounts to extrabiblical history? Neither did he ask: "Could these Gospels be written with an agenda and distorted when compared to existing facts of history and the Jewish faith"? One thing is for certain however, that is whenever and however it is told, the Passion sets the Jew Jesus, his Jewish disciples, other Jewish leaders, a larger Jewish community of considerable diversity, a Roman governor, Roman soldiers, and God in a complex web of relationships. Because Christianity and Rabbinic Judaism developed into separate faith communities, each claiming to be the authentic continuation of biblical Israel, the Passion story has also borne the weight of conveying Christian understandings of how such a separation came about. Such passion narratives and plays depict the crucifixion, trials, and some go so far as to depict the resurrection of Jesus Christ. These plays are created according to accounts of the passion found in the four gospels, Matthew, Mark, Luke and John. Historically, passion plays have blamed Jews for the death of Jesus Christ. The killing of God is deicide. ***"His blood be on us and on our children."*** (Matthew 27:25) insinuates that Jews are responsible for the death of Jesus Christ and bear collective guilt. Deicide, and the idea of Jewish collective guilt, have led to mass amounts of hatred and abuse towards Jews and are considered underlying causes of the Holocaust. Tragically, portrayals of the Passion over many generations have led to the virulent condemnation of Jewish communities, with Christians lashing out to punish those they had learned to call "Christ-killers." This sad history demands a special vigilance from any who portray the Passion today. It would well for people, like Mel Gibson, who makes these "passions" to better know the facts of not only Biblical Judaism, the Laws of the Jews, let alone the truths behind comparative religions and their "sun gods" and these stories of "crucified sungods" and the political-religious agendas of sun-worshipping Rome down through the early centuries before any comments are made about a "crucified Christ". So few know the truth about these issues simply because they do not possess the facts and knowledge necessary to separate "fantasy", "fiction" for "truth". Bet Emet Ministries ruthlessly seeks only the truth and it is this hard-nosed uncompromising quest to know God and His truth that allows us to bring you the facts in this matter. Let me say in closing this introduction to the articles in this series, and many will not understand this, that until you study for yourself rather deeply and for a long time, areas of study like Gnosticism and its many forms, Biblical Judaism, sun-worship, comparative religions,

Constantine and his influence on the developing and emerging New Testament, Roman sun-worship, and the host of textual problems involving the writing, authorship, changes, canonization, and pure inventions involving these New Testament passages that make up the Roman Christian Bible then you will never be competent in discerning the truth and differences between a possible historical crucifixion of a man called "Jesus Christ" and the "Passion of the Christ and Sophia". This will take time to reconstruct 2000 or more years of "competitive theologies" that today has congealed into one which we call "the gospel of Jesus Christ" and which is the backbone of Roman Christianity (both Eastern and Western).

WHO KILLED JESUS AND DOES THE NEW TESTAMENT DEPICT THIS EVENT ACCURATELY WHEN COMPARED TO EXTRABIBLICAL MATERIALS?

It must be said at the beginning that all that follows is based upon the assumption that the depiction of Jesus in the New Testament is a historical reality. If our beliefs about Jesus Christ today are to be valued then the events that comprise pieces and bits of our "Jesus picture" must be open to scrutiny and historical validation. This is not as hard as it might seem once one begins to study these areas for himself. It is to this issue that I now turn my attention as I have received numerous E-mails asking my opinion on this issue regarding Mel Gibson's "Passion of the Christ". I have in response decided to address this issue that concerns so many of our readership at Bet Emet Ministries.

The release of the film "The Passion", which dramatically shows the events that lead to the death of Jesus of Nazareth, raises the question who was responsible for the death of the New Testament Jesus. Many come away from this movie certain that the "blood thirsty" Jewish nation is responsible and never doubting in the least the New Testament accounts of these events or doubting the accuracy of what they are reading when compared to extra-Biblical information which is available to day to the interested seeker for such truth.

Hardly anyone doubts that the New Testament and its depiction of the first-century Jesus. The New Testament shares with us that this Jesus was born a Jew and lived as a Jew, was tried as a Jew and killed as a Jew. The big, big problem is that too few readers of these New Testament accounts possess a workable and competent knowledge of Biblical Judaism and Roman history in order to know that the accounts they read in the New Testament are highly fictionalized. The accounts handed down of his death cause problems in a number of details which I will mention as we go through this article.

WHEN WAS THE PASSOVER HELD...DO THE GOSPELS DIFFER?

Well yes they do and that is where our problems start actually. As we study we will see that there are actually numerous fictional stories in the Gospels, (i.e. stories of occurrences which defy historical possibility), e.g. the Jews going to Pilate on their sabbath day (Matt 27:62) - something quite impossible since Sabbath requirements limited how far they could travel on the Sabbath. But this is only a slight problem; there are others with greater consequences.

The Passover in itself had a very significant festival for the Jews, but even more so for the disciples, as there is an obvious and significant parallel between the sacrifice of Passover and the sacrifice of Christ. We should expect that the apostles would remember whether or not the Last Supper occurred before the Passover or on the first day, and whether or not Christ died on the first or second day. Even more so if this document is to be believed "inspired, infallible, and inerrant" as it is taught to be!

In Matthew 26:17ff, the author records that the disciples made preparation for the Passover meal and ate it that evening (the beginning of the first day of the Passover). This would have been the 15th day of Nissan. The month of Nissan occurs during our March and April. According to Matthew, that night Jesus was betrayed to the Sanhedrin, the trial before Pontius Pilate occurred the next morning, and the crucifixion followed. This

same pattern is also clearly set out in Mark and Luke, leaving us only to consider the Apostle John's account. But there is a problem that many never see.

John, in Chapter 12, records the triumphal entry. Chapter 13 of John's Gospel is a bit hard to follow chronologically, but the basic events are described. John refers to the evening meal, Judas, and the betrayal. Here there is no direct reference indicating that this meal was the Passover; but nor does he say it was not. In John 18:28 there is a reference to the Passover as a future expectation, but this may be referring to other Passover meals, since the event lasted seven days.

The Gospels give conflicting accounts about the celebration of the Passover. **John says that Jesus was crucified on the eve of the Passover when the lambs were being slaughtered in the Temple (John 19:14). The three Synoptic Gospels (Matthew, Mark, Luke) put the crucifixion on the day of Passover.**

Answer for yourself: How can that be? Is one of these gospel writers writing with an agenda to make it appear that the death of this Jesus was a "fulfillment" of prophecy in making his death coincide with the time when the lambs were being slaughtered in the Temple? How come the other 3 gospel writers disagreed with him? This will be explained as we study further in this article.

When examining the four crucifixion accounts as they are presented in the New Testament, it is difficult to point to a single event upon which all four Gospel writers agree. As stated above even the date of the crucifixion is an issue of contention among the four Gospels.

A perfunctory examination of New Testament texts reveals that **all three Synoptic Gospels and writers of the Books of Matthew (Matthew 26:20-30), Mark (Mark 14:17-25), and Luke (Luke 22:14-23) all agree that the Last Supper was actually a Passover Seder.** The word synoptic comes from two Greek words that mean "the same view." Matthew, Mark, and Luke are referred to as the synoptic Gospels because these three Gospels tell a similar story, and there is a strong literary relationship among them. Bearing in mind that Jesus was crucified on the very next day following the Last Supper, that would mean that according to all three synoptic Gospels Jesus was crucified on the first day of Passover, or the 15th day of the Jewish month of Nissan (for example, if tonight were a Passover Seder, then tomorrow would be the first day of Passover. This is true only in the land of Israel. In diaspora, however, it might be the second day of Passover because there is a custom to hold two Seders outside of Israel. Suggesting, however, that the Last Supper might have been in second Seder would create a 48-hour problem instead of a 24-hour problem.

The author of the Book of John, however, completely contradicts the first three Gospels, and maintains that Jesus was crucified on the eve of Passover, or the 14th day of Nissan. The Book of John reads, *"Now it was the day of preparation for the Passover . . . Then he handed him over to them to be crucified."* (19:14-16). **In John, Jesus on the cross is portrayed as the Passover Lamb himself, removed from the cross at about the time the Passover lambs are being slaughtered (19.14 and 31).** Paul comments the same in 1 Corinthians 5:7: *1 Cor 5:7 7 Purge out therefore the old leaven, that ye may be a new lump, as ye are unleavened. For even Christ our passover is sacrificed for us: (KJV)* Yet in the earlier Synoptic traditions Jesus eats the Passover meal with his disciples before his crucifixion.

The implications of this stunning contradiction cannot be overstated because both claims cannot be true. In essence, this is not the sort of inconsistency that can be explained away by Christians insisting that the reason for the varying Gospel accounts is due to different perspectives of the Gospel writers. Jesus was crucified either of the eve of Passover, which is the 14th day of Nissan, as John contends, or on the first day of Passover, which is the 15th day of Nissan, as the Gospels of Matthew, Mark, and Luke maintain. Jesus could not have been crucified on both days.

As a result of this conflict over the crucifixion date, numerous other aspects of John's passion narrative will differ radically with the synoptic Gospels. For instance, **John's description of what transpired during the Last Supper is entirely different from the accounts of Matthew, Mark, and Luke.** John cannot include a

Passover Seder in his version of the Last Supper because according to his reckoning of the date of the crucifixion, the night of the Last Supper fell on the night of the 13th day of Nissan, which was not a holiday. Therefore, in his Last Supper no aspect of the Seder ceremony occurs. In fact, in John's Last Supper, there is neither eating of the matzo (required by God, Moses and Jewish Law) nor drinking of the wine because in John's Gospel the evening before the crucifixion does not occur on the festival of Passover. The law of Moses was still binding at this time, and the New Testament tells us that "Jesus, the Christ", was very careful to do all that the law commanded (Mt. 5:17-18; Jn. 8:29). Since the Passover was a part of the law's requirement, we can assume with certainty that Jesus obviously partook of that feast. The testimony of the Synoptics is clear and decisive that Jesus and his disciples observed the Passover. Jesus had previously promised the disciples that he would *"keep the passover"* (Mt. 26:18), which is the equivalent of *"eat the passover"* (Mk. 14:14). He appointed the place for that event and gave instructions for the preparation (Mk. 14:12ff). The Synoptic texts (Matthew, Mark, and Luke) then harmoniously flow toward the evening of that very day, and depict Jesus as *"eating"* with the disciples (Mt. 26:21; Mk. 14:18).

In the book of John (chapter 13), where the events that occurred the night before the crucifixion are described, we therefore find no mention of anyone drinking wine, or eating matzo and bitter herbs (required by God, Moses and Jewish Law) as we find in Matthew, Mark, and Luke. John's account of the Last Supper only describes Jesus' washing the feet of the disciples.

Answer for yourself: Now can you for a moment picture this Jesus and his messianic Jewish apostles and disciples keeping the Passover seder without obedience to eating the bitter herbs and unleavened bread? Failure to do so would be sin for a Jew and the gospel writer of the Gospel of John has Jesus sinning at the Last Supper. And Judaism teaches that before one could keep and observe a Holy Day or a Biblical Feast or Festival the person has to be "mikvahed" or "immersed" and all "uncleanness" had to be removed before one could enter into these holy "moeds" or "appointed times" with God. And to think that the Gospel of John renders the whole bunch of these Jewish zealots "unclean" in failing to observe the Passover correctly is beyond the scope of most New Testament readers. Without knowing Judaism you simply cannot read the New Testament intelligently and know for certain what you are reading. That is one of the big conclusions I arrived at while in Seminary; sadly they did not teach this to me but I came to this conclusion on my own while reading about a Jewish Jesus while in Seminary. It was after my graduation from Southwestern Theological Seminary that I began an intensive study of Biblical Judaism that would last give or take 5 years. Having done that study I was amazed at how one could come to see the New Testament in a completely new light possessing this Jewish knowledge. Once coming to know "truth from fiction" because I now understood the religion of the Jew, one like this Jesus of Nazareth would have known his Judaism, then the pages of the New Testament were opened for me like never before. Before my face were both "truths" and "lies" mixed together on page after page. But blind to these "lies" are the millions of good people who approach this New Testament without such knowledge. That is why I recommend to my readers everywhere that you do what I did: begin a serious study of Biblical and Rabbinical Judaism and see for yourself what was in the mind of a Jew in the first century.

Phil 2:5 Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus: (KJV)

I think that is a wonderful idea. Find out what was in the mind of a first century Jew and see just what he believed about the God of Israel and what he understood as his responsibilities before God. From here it is only a short jump to coming to understand the parallel requirements of the non-Jew to the God of Israel as well. But understand fully right now that there is an agenda on the pages of the New Testament and few ever know it unless they do the study to see this for themselves as I just showed you above in this one example among hundreds.

Moreover, John begins his 13th chapter by saying, *"Now before the festival of the Passover . . ."* This is a stunning opening statement because according to Matthew, Mark, and Luke that momentous night wasn't "before the festival of Passover, but rather it was the festival of Passover. Also, according to John, when Judas Iscariot mysteriously leaves the Last Supper with the moneybag, the disciples

immediately presume that he is taking money to purchase food for the festive meal (13:29).

Answer for yourself: Why would Judas be purchasing food for the feast if, according to the first three Gospels, they had just eaten it?

Furthermore, John's story describes how, when the Jews were handing Jesus over to Pontius Pilate to be crucified on the morning of the crucifixion, *"They [the Jews] themselves did not enter the headquarters, so as to avoid ritual defilement and to be able to eat the Passover."* (John 18:28). This hints back to what is said earlier in the account by the Gospel writer of John that Jesus and his apostles failing to eat the "matzah" and the "bitter herbs" which would have defiled them and make their observance of the Passover unacceptable. But in this instance the Jews would not enter the home of the Gentile Pontius Pilate because it was a common custom among gentiles to bury their dead in their homes.

Answer for yourself: Why were these Jews, according to John, concerned about not being able to eat the Passover? According to Matthew, Mark, and Luke they had already eaten it because the Passover Seder took place the previous night. This is not a problem for John because John states that Jesus was crucified on the eve of Passover, so that this statement makes perfect sense in his story. In contrast, the synoptic Gospels never mention in their accounts the fear the Jews had of entering the home of Pilate. Such concern would be preposterous because in Matthew, Mark, and Luke's story, the Jews had already eaten the Passover lamb the previous night.

Answer for yourself: What is the question you should have right now? Why would John change the crucifixion date from the 15th day of Nissan to the 14th day? Why was it so important to the author of the fourth Gospel that Jesus be crucified on the eve of Passover rather than the first day of Passover, as the other three Gospels claim?

The simple answer becomes quite clear when we have a good understanding of what message John's Gospel was trying to convey to its reader.

Remembering that the book of John was the last of the four Gospels to be written, the author was trying to appeal to a second century church that had already become predominantly gentile. Bearing this in mind, John had to appeal to these pagans of the Greco-Roman world whom he was addressing. This was accomplished by the writer of the Gospel of John by carefully integrating heathen practices with elements of the Jewish faith. The notion that an animal was to be revered and sacrificed as a god was well known and widely practiced throughout the Roman Empire in mystery religions such as Mithraism, which flourished during the time that the Book of John was being written. This is particularly true of the pagan deity Mithras. Belief in this deity flourished throughout the Roman Empire during the second and third centuries C.E. Similar to Christianity, Mithra was called the "Mediator" (I Timothy 2:5), and one Mithraic hymn begins, *"Thou hast redeemed us too by shedding the eternal blood."* The writer of the Gospel of John was well aware of this and seamlessly fused together the Mithraic sacrifice of the redeeming bull with the Jewish sacrifice of the Paschal lamb.

It is for this reason that ONLY in John's Gospel does John the Baptist proclaim of Jesus, "Behold, the Lamb of God" (1:29, 36). In fact, of the four Gospels, only John ever equates Jesus with the Passover lamb. John's author apparently included this variation to have Jesus executed at the same time that the Passover lambs were slaughtered (the day before the Passover) to agree with John 1:29,36 that Jesus was the sacrificial lamb. Even more startling is the fact that lambs were NOT offered up as sacrifices for sin; only rams and goats were.

Answer for yourself: Then should we not be taught that Jesus is rather the "goat of God" or the "ram of God" instead of the "lamb of God"? Makes you think does it not?

Answer for yourself: If the Gospel writers could manipulate the data with so much ease, how can their accounts

be reliable?

Answer for yourself: If Matthew, Mark, and Luke agreed with the fourth Gospel that the lamb was the antitype of Jesus, as John insisted, and as Christianity teaches today, then why is it that when the synoptic Gospels described the communion at the last supper, **Jesus raised the matzo saying, "This is my body"?** **He should have raised the Paschal lamb.** At mass, priests should be giving their parishioners lamb chops rather than a wafer for communion.

Answer for yourself: Why don't we find the story of the Roman soldier piercing the side of Jesus instead of breaking the legs of the crucified Jesus as was the Roman custom of every crucified criminal in order to hasten their death? Again it is **ONLY in John's narrative** includes the story of the Roman soldiers who pierced the side of Jesus rather than break his legs on the cross (John 19:31-37). **This brief narrative only fits into the theological story line of the fourth Gospel. This is because only the author of the Book of John was eager not to have Jesus' bones broken so as not to violate the prohibition of breaking the bones of the Paschal lamb found in the Book of Exodus (12:46).**

In John, Jesus is portrayed as the sacrificial Passover lamb (John 1:29,36). Therefore the writer of the Gospel of John had to have Jesus crucified not on Passover as the synoptic gospels do but on the eve of Passover (Nissan 14), the traditional day for slaughtering the lamb.

Therefore, we have come to the reason that John places the crucifixion on the 14th day rather than the 15th. Because the Torah commands Israel to slaughter the Paschal lamb on the eve of Passover or on the 14th day of Nissan (Exodus 12:6), John's Jesus is also "slaughtered" (i.e. crucified) on the eve of Passover or the 14th day of Nissan. For the writer of the Gospel of John his "Jesus" has to be the antitype of the Paschal lamb of Egypt but the other gospel writers somehow failed to understand the death of Jesus in this way at all. Sadly today the vast majority of Christianity approaches Jesus as some type of "fulfillment" of the Festivals of Israel but sadly, as I found out when seriously studying this out years ago, it is only through the manipulation of New Testament text after text which betray the historical picture and truth of Biblical Judaism and the events in question, can this New Testament Jesus be made to be a "fulfillment" of the Biblical Feasts of Israel. Even more sadly is this case with the Hebrew Messianic prophecies as well.

Well that is enough for now. Let us continue our study into the reliability of the New Testament's depiction of the "passion of the Christ" and see what other depictions of this "passion of the Christ" in the New Testament which are simply not true. It would do Mel Gibson well to read these articles would it not before he ever made such a flick.

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LOOKING AT THE CONFLICTING ACCOUNTS CONCERNING JESUS AND THE PASSOVER IN THE NEW TESTAMENT #2

"PASSION" DISCREPANCIES ABOUND IN THE NEW TESTAMENT...WHY WERE WE NOT TOLD THE TRUTH?

Again it needs be said that these articles are in response to the sensationalist movie produced by Mel Gibson of late entitled "The Passion of the Christ" and the unhistorical depiction of events in the move as well as in the New Testament. Had good ole Mel been a better student of Biblical, Jewish, and Roman history, Biblical culture, comparative religion, and Biblical languages then his movie would not be filled with historical inaccuracies and lies but sadly he failed to study sufficiently in order to removes these mistakes from his movie. Subsequently millions of Christians will see this move unaware of this many glaring errors that litter both the move and the New Testaments they carry which they sadly believe to be infallible, inerrant, and inspired when such is not the case. Let us recover truth surrounding the accounts of the Passover and the crucifixion of Jesus as depicted in the New Testament if possible. The good news is that it is possible in light of today's modern scholarship to do that very thing.

THE PROBLEMS WITH THE TRIALS OF JESUS

There would have been no "Passover" for Jesus had there not been a trial. Before listing the contradictions regarding the trials of Jesus, it should be stated that the whole episode is quite obviously a fabrication which is easily discerned if anyone possesses any reasonable knowledge of Judaism let alone the ability to departmentalize what they read in the New Testament. According to the Synoptic Gospels and their lack of continuity there were probably two, but perhaps four, occasions when Jesus was interrogated and judgement was passed over him. The Gospels discuss both a Jewish judgment of Jesus where he was judged worth of death (Matthew 26:65-66 and Mark 14:64) as well as a Roman judgment of Jesus where he was judged to be "not guilty" of any crime worthy of death (John 18:38, or at least that is what we are told in the New Testament accounts given us by Rome).

Matt 26:65-66 65 Then the high priest rent his clothes, saying, He hath spoken blasphemy; what further need have we of witnesses? behold, now ye have heard his blasphemy. 66 What think ye? They answered and said, He is guilty of death. (KJV)

Mark 14:63-64 63 Then the high priest rent his clothes, and saith, What need we any further witnesses? 64 Ye have heard the blasphemy: what think ye? And they all condemned him to be guilty of death. (KJV)

Now we look at possibly one of the cruelest men ever born, Pilate, and we are expected to believe the following

verse is historically accurate:

John 18:38 38 Pilate saith unto him, What is truth? And when he had said this, he went out again unto the Jews, and saith unto them, I find in him no fault at all. (KJV)

Answer for yourself: Are these accounts accurate to both Judaism and Roman history? Or are they "fictionalized" to deflect blame for the crucifixion of "the Christ" as handed down by oral traditions which became necessary with Rome's late adoption of Christianity as the state religion as well as their canonization of the New Testament which occurred later in history?

Well you don't know the answers to the above two questions unless you have an extensive knowledge of Judaism and Roman history and most Christians that I know possess neither so let me share this knowledge with you as I am one of many today who possesses it since I derived it from extensive research into these many areas over these last 16 years and up until the present.

THE HIGH PRIEST...AND THE SANHEDRIN

First of all let us look at the High Priest of the Jewish faith in the first century and learn a few things about him and his authority in relation to the Sanhedrin. The term "Sanhedrin" is taken from the Greek 'sunedrion' (council) and is the term used for the highest native governing body of Jewish people during Roman times. It is also known as the senate, council of elders, or, simply, the council. It was composed of chief priests, prominent lay persons, and scribes or professional lawyers, under the presidency of the reigning high priest. The chief priests were ...mainly Sadducees, whereas the scribes were taken mostly from the Pharisees. The Sanhedrin's meeting hall was either on the temple grounds or very near them. The power of the Sanhedrin was dependent upon the authority of the Roman procurator in NT times. For our study it is important to know that the Sanhedrin did not meet on a festival day or on the Sabbath. In Israel the first day of a Biblical Festival is called a "high Sabbath" and we would expect them not to meet yet the New Testament has them meeting. Something is wrong here.

We need to look at a very important restriction, which the Sanhedrin imposed upon itself with regard to the power it possessed over life and death. What we particularly desire to point out here is the limitation as to the place itself, where the sentence of death could be pronounced. There was but one hall in Jerusalem where a capital sentence could be pronounced. This hall was called "Gazith," or the Hall of Hewn Stones. It was situated in one of the courts of the Temple, (Talmud, *Sanhedrin*, Chap. 14). We should not be surprised that the Sanhedrin held its sessions in the buildings of the Temple. A council of elders had already assembled there in the times of the kings and owed its name to the fact that it was built of square and highly polished stones, which were considered very elegant at that time in Jerusalem. The scriptures remark that Solomon ordered in the building of the Temple that only large stones were to be used, and that they were to be cut with great precision, I Kings 5:17. On the polishing of the hewn stone we notice this mentioned in Amos 5:2,11). That it was there, and there ONLY, that a capital sentence could be pronounced, the Jewish traditions are unanimous in declaring. "After leaving the hall of Gazith," says the Talmud, "no sentence of death can be passed against any one soever" (Talmud, Bab., Aboda Zarah, or of Idolatry, Chap. 1, fol. 8, recto). "Capital sentences are not pronounced in all places," adds the commentary of R. Solomon, "but only when the Sanhedrin is assembled in the Hall of Hewn Stones." Here is also the testimony of Maimonides: "There can be no sentence of death unless the Sanhedrin is assembled in its place," (See *Pugio fidei* of Raymond Martin, p. 872, Leipsic edition). This custom of confining the pronouncing of capital sentences exclusively to the hall Gazith was only adopted in the latter times of Jewish national history, about a century before the time period of "the Christ" in the New Testament. In the book of Deuteronomy it is written: *"If there arise a matter too hard for thee in judgment . . . then shalt thou arise, and get thee up into the place which the Lord thy God shall choose . . . and thou shalt observe to do according to all that they inform thee," Deuteronomy 17:8-10*. Exaggerating the import of this commandment, the chiefs of the synagogue who lived a century before Christ persuaded themselves that, in

order to obey punctually this commandment, ***“they had to go to the place which the Lord had chosen”*** every time that ***“a matter too hard in judgment”*** presented itself; and, according to their opinion, could there be a harder matter in judgment than that of pronouncing the sentence of death, and what other place could the Lord have chosen if not the Temple? Starting thus from this narrow and forced interpretation of Scripture, the judges in Israel would no more exercise the right over life and death unless they were assembled in a special hall in the Temple - hence the custom which restricted the trial of capital offenses to the hall Gazith. **It is thus established beyond doubt that the custom of pronouncing the sentence of death in the Hall of Hewn Stones only, had in the time of Christ acquired the force of law, and that any sentence pronounced outside of that place was void. This fact is of importance in light of the fact that the Jews, as depicted by the New Testament, are supposed to have decided that Jesus should die when meeting at the home of Caiaphas, the High Priest and not at this important place in the Temple!**

This body, which met in the hall of hewn stone and was called also 'the great Bet Din' or simply 'the Bet Din in the hall of the hewn stone' and it was invested with the highest religious authority. **No death penalty could be rendered unless the "council" assembled in that part of the Temple called "the hall of hewn stone" and as we see the meeting of Jewish leaders at the house of Caiaphas, the High Priest, violates this mandatory imposed regulation by the Jews themselves.** The hall of hewn stone in which the bet din sat was situated on the southern side of the inner court of the Temple. **The Great Bet Din sat daily, except on the Sabbath and on Feast days, between the morning and evening sacrifices. Again we learn that there could be no meetings according to Jewish law on Sabbaths and Feast days.**

MANY TRIALS

The New Testament leads us to see therefore that there were several meetings where Jesus was "judged" worthy of death and none of these were held in the Temple in the "hall of hwen stone". We see, according to the New Testament gatherings:

- By Jewish leaders at the house of Caiaphas, the High Priest. The writers of the Gospels of Matthew, Mark and Luke say that Jesus was taken directly to the high priest. (Matthew 26:57, Mark 14:53 and Luke 22:54).
- John says that Jesus was taken first to Annas, the father-in-law of the high priest (John 18:13) who, after an indeterminate period of time, sent Jesus to the high priest (John 18:24)
- By Pontius Pilate.
- Luke mentions another interrogation, this time by Herod (Luke 23:7)

Answer for yourself: What is it that we should know about the supposed arrest and trial by Annas and Caiaphas which the New Testament and our lack of knowledge about Judaism prevent us from seeing the above "Jewish Trials" as complete fabrications?

First of all this supposed Jewish gathering at the home of Caiaphas was where elders and scribes were supposedly present. Many Christian commentators tell us that this is the Sanhedrin, where 23 judges were required to convene. That is not accurate. Our knowledge of the Sanhedrin comes from the writings of Josephus and Jewish rabbinical literature. The Sanhedrin, as we mentioned, was the supreme court of the Jewish nation. It is composed of 71 members drawn mainly from priestly families and lay families known for their wealth and racial purity. The high priest under the title of Nasi (prince) presided over the assembly (Craveri, Life of Jesus, p 380; Hinnels, Dictionary of Religions, p 285; Nineham, Saint Mark, p 400). Two major religious parties were influential in the Sanhedrin during the time of Jesus: the Sadducees and the Pharisees.

The Sadducee constituted the majority party in the Sanhedrin. The high priest himself is a Sadducee. As a religious party, the Sadducees existed between 150 BCE and 70 CE. They do not believe in angels, demons or bodily resurrection. The members are mainly wealthy land owners and people from priestly families. **The Sadducees then were people who had a comfortable and good life under the Romans and are the**

group with most to lose from any disturbance in the equilibrium. They were therefore collaborators with the Romans and supporters of the status quo. History tells us that their fears of disequilibrium were well justified; for after the Jewish revolt of 66 to 74 CE, any Jewish privileges granted by the Romans were lost. The Sadducees, as a religious party disappeared after the Jewish War, a direct casualty of that revolt (Hinnels, Dictionary of Religions, p 279; Maccoby, Revolution in Judea, p 71-72; Martin, New Testament Foundations I, p 86-87).

The Pharisees formed an influential minority in the Sanhedrin. As a group they appeared in Jewish history about the same time as the Sadducees. These two groups, however, have unbridgeable theological differences. The Pharisees, like the Christians that were to appear on the scene later, believed in angels, demons and the bodily resurrection. The differences between these two main Jewish parties arose from their attitude toward the oral law. The Pharisees believed that the Torah is to be supplemented by oral tradition that sought to interpret and develop it. The Sadducees, on the other hand, believed that the written law is a closed and final revelation that requires no further interpretation and elaboration. Also unlike the Sadducees, the Pharisees were a dispossessed party seeking neither political power nor material wealth. As such, they were very popular with the lay people of Palestine. It was through the efforts of the Pharisees that the Jewish faith was kept alive in the towns and villages throughout the land. Judaism, as we know it today, is a direct spiritual descendant of the theology of the Pharisees (Hinnels, Dictionary of Religions, p 251; Maccoby, Revolution in Judea, p 72-74; Martin, New Testament Foundations I, p 86).

Very strict rules guide the procedures of the Sanhedrin:

1. **Just as in modern courts of law, the council has a special meeting place called the Gazith (Chamber of Hewn Stone), which is part of the Temple. They do not meet anywhere else.**
2. **Its sessions start at 9am in the morning and close at 4pm in the evening.**
3. **An interval of 24 hours must elapse before the conclusion of the testimony and the rendering of a verdict.**
4. **The Sanhedrin is never convened on Sabbaths, religious holidays and especially the passover which was the most important feast in the Jewish calender. This is clearly stated by the Mishnah (Sanhedrin IV, 1) and Maimonides (Hilkot Sanhedrin XI, 2), "Trials involving capital punishment may not be held on the eve of the Sabbath or a festival."**
5. **The Sanhedrin also does not hold any meeting at night. (Craveri, Life of Jesus, p 380; Maccoby, Revolution in Judea, p 202).**

We will address some of the above pieces of information shortly but with this basic of knowledge the reader is now equipped with the necessary and basic understanding of the Sanhedrin that is necessary if we are to hope to proceed and study the trial of Jesus before the Sanhedrin as recorded in these inherited Gospels by Rome.

Answer for yourself: But even though we read that the Sanhedrin could render decisions regarding "life and death" could it yet do so in the days of Pontius Pilate and the Roman occupation? **No! This make the whole issue of the Jews "judgment" Jesus as worthy of death a mute question as you will see as you continue to read and learn the facts of the matter.**

The Sanhedrin still, however, in the days of the Roman occupation, retained the right to excommunicate, John 9:22, to put in prison, Acts 5:17, 18, and to inflict corporeal punishment, Acts 16:22, **but the principal right of its sovereignty — namely, the right over life and death — it possessed no longer.** The Talmud itself, jealous as it is of the independence of the Jewish nation, is constrained to **admit this fact: A little more than forty years before the destruction of the Temple, the power of pronouncing capital sentences was taken away from the Jews, (Talmud, Jerusalem, Sanhedrin, fol. 24, recto).** These forty years, says the learned Israelite, M. Dérembourg, form a round number, and it designates the **epoch of the procuratorship of Pontius Pilate (18-37 A.D.).** It is hardly possible, however, that the ability to render "life and death" decisions by the Sanhedrin had remained in the Jewish power until that period. It must have ceased since Coponius, 7 A.D. (Essai sur l'histoire et la géographie de la Palestine, d'après les Talmuds et les autres sources

Rabbinique, p. 90, Paris, 1867.) This was a terrible blow to Judea, from which neither the Jews contemporary with Christ nor their descendants have ever recovered. Rabbi Rachmon says: *“When the members of the Sanhedrin found themselves deprived of their right over life and death, a general consternation took possession of them; they covered their heads with ashes and their bodies with sackcloth, exclaiming: ‘Woe unto us, for the scepter has departed from Judah, and the Messiah has not come!’”* (Raymond Martin, *Pugio fidei*, 872; Leipsic edition). They even tried on several occasions to free themselves from the royal decree; and they have always endeavored to persuade themselves that although they had lost the power of carrying a capital sentence into execution, they still preserved the power to pronounce judgment in matters pertaining to religion. To try to do so would be a severe violation of the Roman laws. Josephus, the most eminent of Jewish historians, an eyewitness of this decadence, says expressly: *“After the death of the procurator Festus, when Albinus was about to succeed him, the high priest Ananus considered it a favorable opportunity to assemble the Sanhedrin. He therefore caused James the brother of Jesus, who was called Christ, and several others, to appear before this hastily assembled council, and pronounced upon them the sentence of death by stoning. All the wise men and strict observers of the law who were at Jerusalem expressed their disapprobation of this act. . . . Some even went to Albinus himself, who had departed to Alexandria, to bring this breach of the law under his observation, and to inform him that Ananus had acted illegally in assembling the Sanhedrin without the Roman authority,”* (Josephus, *Ant.*, 20, Chapter 9.1). This incident and the testimony of Josephus prove indisputably that in his eyes, and in those of the wisest and strictest observers of the law in the nation, the power of the Sanhedrin over life and death was gone.

But not all is as it might seem. The rabbis and member of the Sanhedrin “had taken the resolution not to pass capital sentences as long as the land of Israel remained under the government of the Romans, and the lives of the children of Israel were menaced by them.” This motive appears very plausible indeed. “To condemn to death a son of Abraham at a time when Judea is invaded on all sides, and is trembling under the march of the Roman legions, would it not be to insult the ancient blood of the patriarchs? Is not the least of the Israelites, by the very fact that he is a descendant of Abraham, a superior being to the Gentiles? “Let us, therefore, quit the Hall of Hewn Stones, outside of which no one can be condemned to death, and in protestation of which let us show by our voluntary exile and by the silence of justice that Rome, although ruling the world, is nevertheless mistress over neither the lives nor the laws of Judea,” (Lightfoot, in *Evangelium Matthaei, horae hebraicae*, p. 275, 276, Cambridge, 1658). A little known fact of history is the fact that all the nations subdued by the Romans were deprived of their right to pronounce capital sentences.

DAYS AND HOURS ON WHICH THE HOLDING OF COURT WAS FORBIDDEN UNDER PENALTY OF A NULLIFICATION OF JUDGMENTS PRONOUNCED

1. The Court (Sanhedrin) must not be held on the Sabbath, or any holy day. “Court must not be held on the Sabbath, or any holy day,” (Mishnah, Betza, or of the Egg, Chap. 5, No. 2). The solemnity of the days would be a sufficient reason for this prohibition. Maimonides, however, in his commentary on Sanhedrin, Chapter 2, adds: “As it is required to execute the criminal immediately after the passing of the sentence, it would sometimes happen that the kindling of a fire would be necessary, as in the case of one condemned to be burned; and this act would be a violation of the law of the Sabbath, for it is written, Ye shall kindle no fire in your habitations on the Sabbath-day,” Exodus 35:3. Yes the New Testament has Jesus on trial before the Sanhedrin on the Feast day (after 6 pm at night is when the Feast day of Passover began) since "evening and morning" is the first of the day in Israel according to Biblical reckoning of time. The Festival day began at sundown and Jesus was supposedly before the Sanhedrin that night which is part of this "Passover holy day and 'high sabbath'".
2. The Court (Sanhedrin) could not to assemble even on the day preceding the Sabbath, or any

- feast-day.** “They shall not judge on the eve of the Sabbath-day, nor on that of any festival,” Mishnah, Sanhedrin, Chap. 4.1. This precaution was taken to avoid exposing the judges to the violation of the law of the Sabbath, in case the trial could not be concluded the same day on which it was begun, (Talmud, Jerus., Kethuboth, or of Marriage Contracts, fol. 24; Moed-Katon, or of Secondary Festivals, fol. 63). **Yes the New Testament has Jesus on trial before the Sanhedrin on the Feast day (after 6 pm at night) since "evening and morning" is the first of the day in Israel according to Biblical reckoning of time. The Festival day began at sundown and Jesus was supposedly before the Sanhedrin that night.**
3. **The trial of an important case could not to be continued during the night.** “Let it be tried during the day and suspended at night,” (Mishnah, Sanhedrin, Chap. 4.1). Maimonides, commenting on this ordinance, says: “The reason why the trial of a capital offense could not be held at night is because, as oral tradition says, the examination of such a charge is like the diagnosing of a wound — in either case a more thorough and searching examination can be made by daylight,” (Maimonides, Sanhedrin, chap. 3). **Yet the New Testament has Jesus on trial during the night which is a violation of Jewish law.**
4. **No session of the Court (Sanhedrin) could take place before the offering of the morning sacrifice.** “The Sanhedrin sat from the close of the morning sacrifice to the time of the evening sacrifice,” (Talmud, Jerus., Sanhedrin, Chap. 1, fol. 19; Talmud, Bab., Chap. 10, fol. 88). “Since the morning sacrifice was offered at the dawn of day, it was hardly possible for the Sanhedrin to assemble until an hour after that time,” (Mishnah, Tamid, or of the Perpetual Sacrifice, C. 3). **Yet the New Testament has Jesus on trial during the night long before the morning sacrifices which violated again Jewish law.**

Answer for yourself: Does it seem reasonable to you that the Jews who were overly devoted to the Law would violate the Law so drastically especially when their long awaited Messiah was walking among them?

When one opens the New Testament and begins reading about the arrest and trial of Jesus these little known facts are not brought forward by the writers of the New Testament but as you can see **there were Jewish laws forbidding what we are led to believe happened during the arrest and trial of the New Testament Jesus.** It is for us to decide if such men, a group numbering 70, could all be complicit in this total disregard of the Jewish law regarding such matters. I will speak more on this matter before this article is finished.

THE TESTIMONY BEFORE THE SANHEDRIN...YOU BETTER BE CAREFUL AND NOT LIE OR IT WILL COST YOU YOUR LIFE

No testimony before the Sanhedrin was valid unless the witnesses all agreed on the same fact in all its details. **“If one witness contradicts another, the testimony is not accepted,”** (Mishnah, Sanhedrin, C. 5.2). **False witnesses were open to suffer the penalty to which they sought to condemn the person whom they had calumniated if determined they had brought false witness against the accused.** I will mention more about this in a minute.

The New Testament records for us regarding this matter:

Mark 14:55-60 55 And the chief priests and all the council sought for witness against Jesus to put him to death; and found none. 56 For many bare false witness against him, but their witness agreed not together. 57 And there arose certain, and bare false witness against him, saying, 58 We heard him say, I will destroy this temple that is made with hands, and within three days I will build another made without hands. 59 But neither so did their witness agree together. 60 And the high priest stood up in the midst, and asked Jesus, saying, Answerest thou nothing? what is it which these witness against thee? (KJV)

Answer for yourself: Were not these "false witnesses" afraid of getting the death penalty since their stories did

not agree with each other when told separately? You have to know a little about Judaism to answer this question.

It sure sounds to me that they could not pay you enough to be a "false witness" because if your story (in the mouth of two or three witnesses let everything be established) did not agree with the other witnesses then it could cost you your life right on the spot. You would get the same penalty that the "accused" was facing if your testimony did not line up with the other witnesses.

Answer for yourself: Why such a hard penalty against such false witnesses? Simply because Exodus 20 demanded it since it was one of the Ten Commandments of Moses:

Exod 20:16 16 Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbour. (KJV)

Yet the New Testament makes a bold claim that these "false witnesses" could not agree and nothing, I repeat, nothing is said of the criminal charges that had to be immediately brought against these false witnesses since they brought conflicting or non-agreeing testimony against the accused. Nothing is said about them at all. This is all the more important as we see that witnesses gave their testimony alone so the chance of conflicting testimony increased if one was to lie and that could cost you your life. Being a "witness" was a heavy responsibility that no one in their right mind would take lightly as the New Testament seems to imply:

1. **The witnesses to be two in number.** "One witness shall not testify against any person. At the mouth of two witnesses, or three witnesses, shall he that is worthy of death be put to death," Deuteronomy 17:6; Num 35:30.
2. **The witnesses to give their testimony separately, and always in the presence of the accused.** Daniel said to the people (concerning the two old men who testified against Susanna): "Separate them, and I will examine them," (Apocrypha).
3. **Before testifying, the witnesses to promise conscientiously to tell the truth.** The judge shall address each witness as follows: "It is not conjecture, nor anything you may have gathered from public rumor, that we ask of you. Remember that a heavy responsibility rests on you; that it is not a question of money where restitution can be made. If you should cause the accused to be condemned unjustly, his blood — yea, even the blood of his posterity — shall cry for vengeance against you, and God will hold you accountable, even as He did Cain for the blood of his brother Abel," (Mishnah, Sanhedrin, Chap. 4.5).
4. **The judges required to carefully weigh the testimony of each witness.** "And the judges shall make diligent inquisition: and behold if the witness"... (Deuteronomy 19:18). "The following seven questions must be propounded to each witness: Was it during a year of jubilee? Was it in an ordinary year? In what month? On what day of the month? At what hour? In what place? Do you identify this person?" (Mishnah, Sanhedrin, Chap. 5.1).
5. **No testimony valid unless the witnesses all agreed on the same fact in all its details.** "If one witness contradicts another, the testimony is not accepted," (Mishnah, Sanhedrin, C. 5.2). "For instance, if one witness were to testify to having seen an Israelite in the act of worshipping the sun, and another to having seen the same man worship the moon, yet, although each of the two facts proves clearly that the man had committed the horrible crime of idolatry, the discrepancy in the statements of the witnesses invalidates their testimony, and the accused is free," (Maimonides, Sanhedrin, Chap. 20).
6. **False witnesses to suffer the penalty to which they sought to condemn the person whom they had calumniated.** "And the judges shall make diligent inquisition: and, behold, if the witness be a false witness, and hath testified falsely against his brother; then shall ye do unto him as he had thought to have done unto his brother. . . . And thine eye shall not pity; but life shall go for life, eye for eye, tooth for tooth, hand for hand, foot for foot," Deuteronomy 19:18-21. "And they arose against the two elders, for Daniel had convicted them of false witness by their own mouth; and according to the law of Moses, they did unto them in such a sort as they maliciously intended to do their neighbor; and they put them to death," (Apocrypha).

Again when picking up the New Testament and reading the accounts of the examination and trial of Jesus we do so without any background into the judicial proceedings required during such a trial let alone the

responsibilities of a witness with the accompanying liabilities if one were deemed to have lied during one's testimony. Knowing this makes such incredible accounts of these false witnesses less than credible since doing so would have possibly jeopardized their very own lives. One would have to read these accounts of these false witnesses believing that almost 70 men making up this Jewish ruling body had to be in complete collusion and had made prior agreements before hand regarding matter and that seems beyond believability. Even more so the difficulty of gathering these men at night no less would have been a feat of immense difficulty in that day and time. You could not just pick a phone up and call them or "beep" them to come at all hours of the night for this impromptu trial which was called on the spur of the moment. Jerusalem, which had a normal population of about 50,000 at this time, had at least tripled in size because of the influx of pilgrims celebrating the Jewish holiday Passover and travel was difficult at this time as one might imagine and to be able to contact all of these members of the Sanhedrin and arrange their assembly defies imagination. Knowing what we learned that the Sanhedrin was made up of both Sadducees and Pharisees it stretches the imagination beyond the breaking point to believe that such a conspiracy could have been pulled off in the first place since these two different ideological groups did not like each other and agreement hard at best. That would be equivalent of today getting Republicans and Democrats to agree and we know how hard that was since each saw that their "party" was the hope and salvation of Israel to the exclusion of the other.

THE EXAMINATIONS THE ACCUSED BEFORE THE SANHEDRIN

1. The expressions used by the judge and High Priest toward the accused person had to be humane, and even kind. "Joshua said unto Achan . . . give, I pray thee, glory to the Lord God of Israel, and make confession unto Him; and tell me now what thou hast done; hide it not from me," Joshua 7:19. "My very dear daughter, you who are suspected of adultery, could not your guilt be ascribed to the immoderate use of wine? Was it done in consequence of you frequenting the houses of bad neighbors? Perform the ceremonies prescribed for occasions like the present, in the name of the just God of Israel," (Mishnah, Sotah, Chap. 1.4).

2. The accused could not to be condemned on his own confession. "We have it as a fundamental principle of our jurisprudence, that no one can bring an accusation against himself. Should a man make confession of guilt before a legally constituted tribunal, such confession is not to be used against him unless properly attested by two other witnesses. It is, however, well to remark that the death sentence issued against Achan was an exceptional case, brought about by the nature of the circumstances attending it, for our law never condemns on the simple confession of an accused party," (Mishnah, Sanhedrin, Chap. 4.2; Kidushin, or of Dowry and Matrimonial Settlements, Chap. 3.9; Maimonides, Sanhedrin).

The New Testament depicts just the opposite from what Jewish law required of the Chief Priest. Instead of kindness of speech we see violence toward the "accused" who had not one witness confirm any charges made against him before the Sanhedrin.

Matt 26:67 67 Then did they spit in his face, and buffeted him; and others smote him with the palms of their hands, (KJV)

Mark 14:65 65 And some began to spit on him, and to cover his face, and to buffet him, and to say unto him, Prophecy: and the servants did strike him with the palms of their hands. (KJV)

Answer for yourself: What did Jesus confess and could his confession of any sorts be used against him in Jewish law? Is anything Jesus is supposed to have said or was said about him cause for the "death penalty" according to Jewish law? Well the New Testament reveals to us that Jesus confessed that he is exactly what they believe him to be; namely, "the Christ". Let us not forget that these Jews knew God was watching them and they knew quite well that the accused could not to be condemned on his own confession. Yet Jesus made no confession of guilty of any violation of Jewish law according to the New Testament accounts. He only agreed that he was "anointed" and this hardly is a punishable offense as many were "anointed" or "Christs" in his day. Today Christians run around speaking of this "anointing" all the time and this would have been no different in Jesus day. Even declaring oneself "the" long awaited Messiah was not punishable and would have been no

violation of Jewish Law if one had pronounced himself "the Messiah" in the first place. Let us not forget "Christology" and other related ideas regarding "the" Messiah of Israel had not been altered at that time whereby "the Messiah" was considered to be "God" but that would come later at the hands of the Roman "theology mill" of Nicea. But was we are expected to believe happened regarding Jesus own admission and the admission of others around him is highly contrary to Jewish Law. The charge of blasphemy was leveled at Jesus and this was supposed to be connected to Jesus maintaining that he "is the Christ" but yet once claiming to be "the Christ" is not against any law in Judaism and is not considered blasphemy in Judaism either.

Matt 26:63-66 63 But Jesus held his peace. And the high priest answered and said unto him, I adjure thee by the living God, that thou tell us whether thou be the Christ, the Son of God. 64 Jesus saith unto him, Thou hast said: nevertheless I say unto you, Hereafter shall ye see the Son of man sitting on the right hand of power, and coming in the clouds of heaven. 65 Then the high priest rent his clothes, saying, He hath spoken blasphemy; what further need have we of witnesses? behold, now ye have heard his blasphemy. 66 What think ye? They answered and said, He is guilty of death. (KJV)

Mark 14:61-64 61 But he held his peace, and answered nothing. Again the high priest asked him, and said unto him, Art thou the Christ, the Son of the Blessed? 62 And Jesus said, I am: and ye shall see the Son of man sitting on the right hand of power, and coming in the clouds of heaven. 63 Then the high priest rent his clothes, and saith, What need we any further witnesses? 64 Ye have heard the blasphemy: what think ye? And they all condemned him to be guilty of death. (KJV)

In the Gospel of Matthew Jesus makes no confession that he is "the Christ" whatsoever and he is deemed "guilty". In the Gospel of Mark he does answer in the affirmative that he is "the Christ" for which he is charged with being guilty of blasphemy. The Gospel of Luke renders it differently than Mark and Matthew and as we find in Mark above Jesus makes no declaration that he is "the Christ" and only says to this audience that it is they who say he is. So Jesus makes no confession in 2 of the 3 Synoptic gospels and is judged as "guilty" of nothing that violated Jewish Law in the first place. These writers of these gospels sure paint the Jews in a very bad way in these regards but I hope you are smart enough to see that his is a gross stretch of the truth in such renderings.

Luke 22:67-71 67 Art thou the Christ? tell us. And he said unto them, If I tell you, ye will not believe: 68 And if I also ask you, ye will not answer me, nor let me go. 69 Hereafter shall the Son of man sit on the right hand of the power of God. 70 Then said they all, Art thou then the Son of God? And he said unto them, Ye say that I am. 71 And they said, What need we any further witness? for we ourselves have heard of his own mouth. (KJV)

RENDERING THE JUDGMENT IN A SANHEDRIN TRIAL

Let us summarize what we have seen so far. It was against Jewish law for the Sanhedrin to meet outside of the designated Chamber of Hewn Stone in the Temple and would not have been violated under any circumstance. The Sanhedrin had an express rule that it could not meet at night because justice must be carried out in the "light of day." The Sanhedrin would not have met during the eight-day festival for any reason. The Elders of the Sanhedrin would no more strike or spit on an accused person, than would the Supreme Court of the U.S. hearing a case! The Gospel writers accounts of the arrest and trial of Jesus is completely out-of-context and shows remarkable ignorance as to the practices of Jewish Law. It was not blasphemous to declare oneself a "Messiah" or a "Son of God" any more than it would have been to claim to be an angel. The Pharisees of the Sanhedrin would dismiss such a charge at once since blasphemy could only be applied to anyone who claimed to be God Almighty (and as stated the Messiah was not believed to be "God" in Judaism...that would come later with Rome and her sun worship). Jesus'

declaration that he was a Messiah, merely referred to his earthly desire to ascend to the throne of David--an act of sedition against Rome surely, but not one of blasphemy.

- 1. When the trial of a criminal case is to terminate in a sentence of death, it cannot be concluded the same day on which it had begun; but the judges must defer till the next day the voting and the passing of the sentence. “A criminal case resulting in the acquittal of the accused may terminate the same day on which the trial began. But if a sentence of death is to be pronounced, it cannot be concluded before the following day,” (Mishnah, Sanhedrin, Chap. 4.1). This of course is not done in the trial of Jesus as depicted in the New Testament.
- 2. On the night intervening, the judges having retired by twos to their houses, are to reconsider minutely the evidences of the crime, weighing with sincerity of conscience the proofs adduced against the accused, and the arguments made in his defense. “Having postponed the trial to the next day, the judges reassemble by twos and proceed to reexamine the whole case,” (Mishnah, Sanhedrin, Chap. 5.5). This of course is not done in the trial of Jesus as depicted in the New Testament.
- 3. In order to secure a more careful deliberation, the judges are under obligation to abstain during the intervening night from heavy food, wine, and all intoxicating beverages, and from everything that would have a tendency to incapacitate them for correct thinking. “Having reduced the quantity of their food and abstained from wine, they examine the case,” (Mishnah, Sanhedrin, Chap. 5.5). This abstinence was founded also on the verse in Leviticus, where it is said: “Non comedetis super sanguinem — Ye shall not eat upon the blood” 19:26. [One instance among many of the literal and forced interpretations of Scripture by the rabbis. The Latin version of this passage is a literal translation of the Hebrew. — Tr.] No mention is made in the New Testament regarding this situation.
- 4. On their return next day to the hall of justice, each judge, in his turn, votes for or against the accused. “The next day they return to the hall of justice. Then he who absolves pronounces the words ‘I absolve;’ he who condemns, ‘I condemn’,” (Mishnah, Sanhedrin, Chap. 5.5). This of course is not done in the trial of Jesus as depicted in the New Testament.
- 5. Two scribes to record the votes; one those that are favorable to the accused; the other those that are against him. “The members of the Sanhedrin were seated in the form of a semicircle, at each extremity of which a secretary was placed, whose business it was to record the votes. One of these secretaries recorded the votes in favor of the accused, the other those against him,” (Mishnah, Sanhedrin, Chap. 4.3). This of course is not done in the trial of Jesus as depicted in the New Testament.
- 6. To condemn, the number of votes must exceed by two the number of those in favor of his acquittal. “In criminal trials, a majority of one vote is sufficient for an acquittal; but for a condemnation a majority of two is necessary,” (Mishnah, Sanhedrin, 4.1). “The members of the Sanhedrin being seventy-one in number, if thirty-five condemn, the accused is free; let him be discharged immediately. If thirty-six condemn, he is still free,” (Ibid., C. 5.5). This of course is not done in the trial of Jesus as depicted in the New Testament.
- 7. Any sentence of death pronounced outside of the hall Gazith, or of hewn stones, to be null and void. “After leaving the hall Gazith, no sentence of death can be passed upon any one soever,” (Talmud, Bab., Abodah Zarah, or of Idolatry, Chap. 1, fol. 8). “A sentence of death can be pronounced only so long as the Sanhedrin holds its sessions in the appointed place,” (Maimonides, Sanhedrin, Chap. 14). This of course is not done in the trial of Jesus as depicted in the New Testament.

Such are the principal rules and forms of justice which, after the written and oral law, the Bible, and the Mishnah, the Sanhedrin was bound by the strictest obligations to observe in the trial of all criminal cases.

BUT JOHN DISAGREES WITH THE SYNOPTIC WRITERS

Few ever notice that the writer of the Gospel of John and his accounts of the arrest and trial of Jesus disagrees with the Synoptics in that the High Priest Caiaphas interrogates Jesus alone and charges

him with sedition, not blasphemy, as the Synoptic Gospels allege. Caiaphas does not charge Jesus with blasphemy since as stated above claiming to be "the" Messiah is not a violation of Jewish law at all but yet for some reason the writers of the **Synoptic Gospels and their writers don't know this.**

Answer for yourself: Are these really Jews who are ignorant of their own religion writing these documents?

Answer for yourself: And how do you explain that these men are supposed to be followers of this "Messiah" in the first place, his Apostles no less, if they thought doing so and being devoted to him and his follower made them blasphemers as well?

Any real Jew knew that blasphemy of God and His Name was the "unforgivable sin" yet we today pick up our New Testaments not possessing this knowledge and read these accounts never suspecting that we are reading fiction and a total misrepresentation of Biblical Judaism. **If if you are a thinking believer then the evidence is mounting that the writers of this New Testament are trying to paint the Jews in the most unfavorable light and discredit them as God's Holy Nation and Royal Priesthood and absolve Rome of any blame for the death of Jesus although he dies crucified which is a Roman method of death not allowed by Jewish law.**

Answer for yourself: Are you aware that the writers of his New Testament cannot even agree on the charge made against Jesus? Do they sound like eye-witnesses to you are led by the Holy Spirit?

Clearly, the unnamed author of the Gospel of John is not as ignorant of Jewish Law as are the Synoptic authors. What we fail to realize is that if Jesus were charged with sedition, then a gathering of the Sanhedrin would not be necessary, the affair would be preliminarily investigated by the High Priest before turning the matter over to the Roman authorities.

Answer for yourself: Would Caiaphas have wished to involve the Sanhedrin at all if Jesus really only guilty of sedition? Let us remember the later trial of Peter as reported in Acts where we find that the Pharisees sided against the High Priest and voted to release the accused since the charge of blasphemy was not warranted in believing and supporting one to be "the" Messiah of Israel.

Yet under this disguise of "Messiahship" ran a political current that was explosive in nature. It meant the **institution of the Kingdom of Heaven and the overthrow of the Kingdom of Rome.** We can safely conclude reading the evidence within the New Testament that Jesus, as were many Jews, was indeed supportive of the Zealot movement and we should not be surprised to find many Zealots were among his followers and we do. If Jesus were seeking the throne as the evidence suggests, he would have enlisted the aid of the militant Zealots and that is exactly what he seems to have done according to the New Testament. Also his actions as a claimant to the throne of Israel, which surely would have involved a rebellion of some sort for the Romans were not likely to give up authority quietly, made him guilty of sedition against Rome. Jesus is painted in the Gospels as loyalist and revolutionist for the restoration of Israel. His motives were more political than religious if the truth be known and the context of his actions as we find in the more credible portions of the Gospels supports this conclusion.

In closing let us remember what we have learned so far. We have mentioned many requirements of Jewish law that forbid what supposedly takes place concerning the arrest and trial of Jesus on the pages of the New Testament.

Answer for yourself: But were these above laws and rules of procedure scrupulously adhered to in the trial of Jesus? It would not appear so according to the testimony of the New Testament.

Answer for yourself: Do the inaccuracies regarding these conflicting accounts concerning Jesus' arrest and trial when compared to Jewish law render them suspicious of fraud and fiction?

Answer for yourself: What are we to believe when handed accounts of these "trials" concerning Jesus when so

many facts of the Torah and the Law of the Jews are made to be "thrown out the window"?

Most of us can remember from past readings of the New Testament accounts of Jesus and his trials the story of his arrest and presentation before Caiaphas and Annas as well as Pilate and Herod and that these occurred at night and on the Jewish "holy day" of Passover. We have seen how strict the Jews are made to appear regarding their scrupulous adherence to the Law by this very same New Testament and often written in a light to ridicule such strict adherence to these Laws yet now we are asked to believe that they same people who one minute went to exorbitant lengths to obey the law to the "very letter" now have a total disregard for this same law. This is a stretch of unimaginable proportions if you ask me. One person or maybe even two people or a few might be persuaded under the cloak of secrecy and darkness to abandon this law for selfish motives but to paint the whole of these 70 plus leaders of the Jewish nation with such broad strokes of disregard for the Jewish law is a total misrepresentation of the facts of history. **These people were dying daily on crosses for their adherence to this Jewish law and we are expected to believe that we can find not any righteous among their leaders.** I can only speak for me, a "thinking believer", that when I read accounts of Hanna and her seven sons who were literally skinned alive before her face for refusing to eat a "ham sandwich" (unclean foods) and such a love for God and His laws as well as the bloody crucifixions of an estimated 500 Jews a day by Rome who likewise refused to compromise these laws before their Roman oppressors then I wonder about other Jews who are made to appear in our mind "eccentric" in such strict adherence to these Laws. We are expected to believe that these Sadducees and Pharisees are made all of a sudden to throw these laws out the window as if they did not matter at all. Maybe we need to investigate the accounts of "trials of Jesus" more closely to find out if such concerns regarding these New Testament accounts are warranted. That is what we will do in the next articles.



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LOOKING AT THE CONFLICTING ACCOUNTS CONCERNING JESUS AND THE PASSEOVER IN THE NEW TESTAMENT #3

FACT: The scientific analysis of the literature of the New Testament reveals many signs of a heavy ecclesiastical censorship of the historical aspects of the early Christian origins

JESUS' TRIAL AS RECORDED IN THE NEW TESTAMENT-IS IT A HISTORICAL FAKE?

In this article let us continue to examine and give due consideration of the episode of Jesus' arrest, and the legal action which was brought against him by the Jewish authorities. **The analysis of texts will emphasize the differences between the synoptic group (Gospels according to Matthew, Mark and Lucas) and the fourth Gospel (according to John).**

Answer for yourself: What do these differences consist of?

First of all we notice that the three synoptic Gospels agree on the existence of a Jewish trial, and also on the charges, witnesses, and the final sentence: a death sentence for the crime of blasphemy, since Jesus declared himself "son of God", in public. Concerning this matter we may already raise some objections; in fact a German author, Dr. Weddig Fricke, has written a whole book, full of critical remarks, showing the **impossibility, according to ancient Jewish law, of bringing a legal action under the conditions described by the synoptic Gospels.** I only slightly addressed this issue in the previous article when contrasting the charges against Jesus: blasphemy for declaring himself "Messiah" or "the Christ" vs. "sedition" in wanting the Kingdom of God to replace the Kingdom of Rome. Let us look at some of his most significant assertions as a quick review:

- **Legal actions could not be brought in a private house, but only in the proper place: in the temple area called the "Beth Din", the seat of the Great Sanhedrin, for capital offenses.**
- **Legal actions can not be brought at night-time,**
- **Legal actions could not be brought on the eve of a holiday,**
- **A sentence could not be pronounced on the basis of an extorted confession,**
- **Death sentences could only be pronounced at least 24 hours after the interrogation...**

In addition to all of these important objections, we must consider that **having declared oneself "son of God" was **not** a crime of blasphemy nor was it at all a capital offense. The fact simply is that the expression "son of God" was very common and could be used to represent all human beings: all the Jews, according to the Torah, were sons of God; in another case the title might be used to**

characterize a devoted man or somebody who had been initiated into a condition of holiness and had taken particular vows (like those called "Nazirites"). There are many Hebrew expressions like "son of the truth", meaning a particularly honest man, "son of the light", meaning someone who is spiritually enlightened, "son of the darkness", meaning a hardened sinner, etc. The writers of the New Testament in writing to non-Jews lacking this knowledge make a "big deal" out of this "son of god" appellation when in fact there is little to it to raise any consternation among those who heard the term in the first century.

These and many other considerations seriously cast doubt on the hypothesis that the synoptic authors (who we know today were definitely not the apostles but others whom are more than likely non-Jew whom the early Catholic Church ascribed the names of the Apostles), presenting their version of the trial, testified to a historical truth and did not rather render a personal theological interpretation with the specific goal of supporting particular doctrinaire, ideological and (why not?) political assumptions.

A definitive blow to the historical credibility of the synoptic presentation (the writers of the Gospel of Matthew, Mark, and Luke) is dealt by the version we encounter in the Fourth Gospel; let us look at the differences:

The synoptics say Christ was arrested by a not well-identified crowd of people who had been sent there by the High Priest, and they do not reveal the identity of the one of Jesus' disciples who offered physical resistance. On the contrary the fourth Gospel tells of a cohort of soldiers and of a tribune, thus giving us precise information on there having been present a Roman military force of 600 men, and it clearly says that resistance was offered by Peter who, on that occasion, had his sword drawn, and cut off the ear of one of the High Priest's guards. From these circumstances we can easily understand that military action had been explicitly initiated by Pilate. Otherwise 600 Roman soldiers would never have moved in the depth of the night, just to arrest an unusual preacher, whose only crime was having declared himself "son of God".

The synoptics say that as soon as Jesus was arrested, he was immediately brought to the High Priest Caiaphas' private house. The fourth Gospel, on the other hand, says he was brought to the house of Annas, the High Priest's father-in-law.

Answer for yourself: Which was it? Why the confusion? If God is behind the writing of these New Testament gospels when why cannot He get it right?

The synoptics relate that a legal action was brought against Jesus in Caiaphas' house in regard of which he maintained an obstinate silence, and did not agree to answer any questions, but only gave a short affirmation when asked whether or not he was the "son of God". At this juncture the trial one might have expected that the trial should have come to a rapid end and the death sentence pronounced. The Fourth Gospel, on the contrary, does not mention any Jewish legal action; instead of being silent Jesus is said to have answered the questions the people asked him and even to have participated in a discussion but, since there was no regular legal action brought against him, no death sentence should have been pronounced against him, of course. The whole thing looks like a scene from a waiting room, before Jesus was consigned to Pilate's care; and we can deduce from this that the entire action was not conceived and initiated by the Jews, but rather by the Romans, possibly with the connivance of the Jewish authorities (Sadducees who strongly opposed the Pharisees).

THE DEATH SENTENCE: A JEWISH OR A ROMAN RESPONSIBILITY?

Answer for yourself: What have we emphasized so far?

- First of all that the Synoptic writers (the Gospels of Matthew, Mark, and Luke) seem to be resolved to represent all the actions taken against Jesus (his arrest, trial, and sentencing) as definitely the will of the Jews as a whole! This is antisemitism at its height. Nevertheless, having described a clearly impossible trial and an irregular sentence when no charge or violation of the

Jewish law had taken place, and having exerted strong censorship on important issues (sedition), which the fourth Gospel speaks about with no reluctance, they arouse the reasonable suspicion that their version purposely changes the meaning of events, in order to have them conform to some preconceived notions: for example, the Jews must appear to be guilty of hostility against Jesus, and the Romans exonerated.

- **The second thing we have emphasized is the indication that all the action against Jesus was conceived and instigated primarily by the Romans but made to look as if the work of "the Jews"**

We can consider the way blasphemers were usually treated by the Jews:

Answer for yourself: Were they arrested by Roman soldiers?

Answer for yourself: Were they consigned to Pilate, so that he might try them according to Roman Law?

Answer for yourself: Were they whipped by the Romans and then crucified?

Not any of these things! Recorded extra-Biblical records reveal to the readers that blasphemers, recognized as such after a regular Jewish trial, were stoned to death by the Jews, and the Romans cared not at all about these affairs. That means that the Synoptic accounts of the involvement of Pilate for the charge of "blasphemy" is entirely fiction! Had this really occurred in the first place then Jesus would have faced stoning and not crucifixion. For those of you who have studied our "Sun Worship Site" have seen the necessity for "crucifixion" since all the "sun-gods" were crucified in the Heavens before the foundation of the world. This plays well into the hands and pens of Rome who have completely transformed the Jewish Messiah on the pages of the New Testament into a solar god-man and the verdict of the Council of Nicea establishes that beyond any doubt and it is so sad that the vast majority of Christians never know what really happened there and end up so gullible as to believe everything that they read on the pages of their New Testaments having never checked out such critical religious doctrines as if Jesus really is God in the flesh and if so when did this happen and when was this recognized as it surely was not by his Jewish followers. But I am getting sidetracked so let us return to the issue at hand.

Answer for yourself: Have you ever compared the Jewish trial of Jesus with the Roman trial of Jesus and done so in-depth?

If we compare the descriptions of the trials, the Jewish one and the Roman one, as presented in the four Gospels, we can find another significant indication. Pay attention to what the computer analysis emphasized when the description of the Jewish trial according to Matthew (the irregular legal action brought in the house of the High Priest) was compared with the description of the Roman trial, according to Mark (the legal action that was brought in front of Pilate):

J = JEWISH TRIAL, MATTHEW (Mt 26, 62-64)

R = ROMAN TRIAL, MARK (Mk 14, 4-5, 2)

- **J1 - And the high priest arose, and said unto him,**
- **R1 - And Pilate asked him again, saying,**
- **J2 - Answerest thou nothing?**
- **R2 - Answerest thou nothing?**
- **J3 - What is it which these witness against thee?**
- **R3 - Behold how many things they witness against thee.**
- **J4 - But Jesus held his peace,**
- **R4 - But Jesus yet answered nothing,**
- **J5 - And the high priest answered and said unto him**
- **R5 - And Pilate asked him**

- **J6 - ...tell us whether thou be the Christ...**
- **R6 - Art thou the King of the Jews?**
- **J7 - Jesus saith unto him, Thou hast said...**
- **R7 - And he answering said unto them, Thou sayest it...**

Answer for yourself: Do you see any unique parallels between the trial of Jesus before the Jews and the Romans? Are they the same and we never noticed it?

There can be no doubt about it: **the Jewish trial appears just like a copy of the Roman one, with exactly the same words pronounced;** although the Fourth Gospel mentions no legal action in the house of the High Priest, as we have already noted.

Answer for yourself: Was the trial at the High Priest a complete figment of imagination in order to blame the Jews and deflect the blame from Rome for the crucifixion of Jesus as depicted from Oral Tradition and later the New Testament? Did we not see already that the charge of "blasphemy" would not hold up and there would have been no need in Jewish law for a trial at all if one considered himself "the" Messiah? And did we not see that Rome did not concern themselves with "blasphemy" and would have not given the High Priest or the Jews the time of day over such matters? Is that why the later writer of the Gospel of John had to change the charge in order to involve Rome since it was Rome who crucified Jesus of the New Testament?

Answer for yourself: Don't you think that by now Mel Gibson should have read for himself just a few good books on these issues before making a completely erroneous and historically inaccurate movie that has reinforced the false attitudes of millions of Christians that the Jews were behind the killing of "the Christ"?

In short, the Synoptic authors reveal their need to depict the Jews as those who wanted Jesus' death, not the Romans, which is why they invented the existence of a previous legal action in the house of the High Priest before the later one in the presence of Pilate.

All these observations give us decisive elements of interpretation: **the starting point of the synoptic tradition is the explicit need to turn the Romans' responsibility into that of the Jews, perhaps because admitting the Romans' responsibility would have had unacceptable political implications.**

THE SON OF GOD: ALIAS....JESOUS BARABBAS

Let us consider once again the reason the Synoptic authors cite and advance the death sentence to be meted out to Jesus: **his having declared himself "son of God";** this formulation, at this point, is not free from the suspicion of being **but a mere pretext contrived in order to turn the Romans' responsibility for the sentence into a Jewish one.** Here too we can identify an important sort of censorship used by the authors; for the reluctance of those who never explained certain questions (and maintained a sort of conspiracy of silence) to do so becomes very significant. Practically, we now must wonder **what terms the High Priest would have employed in the Aramaic idiom that was spoken in Palestine at that time to ask Jesus whether he was the "son of God",** in order to trap him and charge him with blasphemy (according to the synoptic version, of course).

Now then, everybody knows that **the name of God could absolutely not be pronounced by the Jews,** as to do so was, and still is, a substantial sacrilege. Nobody, but the High Priest on the Day of Atonement could pronounce the name Yahweh; therefore, every time there was the necessity of addressing God or referring to Him, the **Jews substituted terms like Adonai, Eloah, Supreme, Lord, Father, etc...** Just the last one, "Father", which in Aramaic is **"Abba",** was the most commonly spoken by Jesus and it is commonly used in the Gospel texts. We can inspect these sentences: **"...And he said, Abba, Father, all things are possible unto thee..." (Mk 14, 36), "...when he cometh in the glory of his Father with the holy angels..." (Mk 8, 38), "...that your Father also which is in heaven may forgive you your trespasses..." (Mk 11, 25), "...I**

thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth..." (Mt 11. 25). Such examples are very numerous in the Gospels.

Hence, both Jesus and the High Priest, instead of saying "son of God", would have certainly used the expression "son of the Father", that has been kept in Latin as the regular "filius Patris", which in the Aramaic idiom is rendered by the words "bar", that means "son", and "Abba", that means "father": namely the entire expression is "bar Abba", which can even be pronounced with no pause and so sounds like the word "**Barabbas**" (there are numerous similar cases: Barnabas means "son of the master", Bartholomew means "son of Ptolemy". etc...). Therefore the whole expression we know as "Jesus, the son of God" may appear in Aramaic as "Jeshu bar-Abba".

I am sure that any reader, at this point, coming to learn of such an odd coincidence, will be somewhat surprised. Of course I am referring to the similarity (we might even say equality) between the expression "son of God", as it sounds in Aramaic, and the name of the prisoner who was liberated in the place of Jesus, that is Barabbas. All the more so as that lucky fellow's name wasn't really Barabbas: for the Gospels affirm he was nicknamed Barabbas.

Answer for yourself: What does this mean? Should we believe he was "son of God" too? However, what was his real name?

In order to be able to answer this question we must know that some old manuscripts of the Gospel according to Matthew, dating back to the fourth century, call this fellow not only by his nickname but even give his real name as "Jesous Barabbas" (the manuscript having been written in ancient Greek). In actuality the authors did nothing but transcribe in Greek characters the Hebrew expression "Jeshu bar Abba", whose meaning we already know: "Jesus the son of God" [let all those who are reluctant to believe this see the "Novum Testamentum Graece et Latine", by Augustinus Merk, edited in 1933 by the Istituto Biblico Pontificio, page 101, where the sentence that is commonly rendered "*...And they had then a notable prisoner, called Barabbas...*" (Mt 27, 16) is written "*...And they had then a notable prisoner, Jesus called Barabbas...*"].

Answer for yourself: What are we to say to this?

Answer for yourself: Why have Roman translators of the New Testament made Barabbas anonymous from the fourth century on?

Answer for yourself: Indeed, why have the Roman translators let us believe that Barabbas is his real name?

Answer for yourself: What is hidden behind the curious circumstance that during the action brought by the Romans, two persons were brought into the presence of Pilate: Jesus the son of God (that is Jeshu bar-Abba), who was sentenced to death, and Jesus Barabbas (that is exactly the same), who was liberated? How can that be?

Answer for yourself: Why the Christians have always been kept in the dark about the fact that the Aramaic "Barabbas" is not a name but the equivalent of the modern expression "son of God"?

As we can see, the subject begins to raise some curious enigmas. Even so, among the many questions we cannot answer, one, on the contrary, it appears we can: we can be sure the Gospel narration of Christ's Passion has been censored and is full of literary tricks contrived on purpose so as to thoroughly distort some important aspects of the oral tradition, long before written records, concerning the way Jesus was arrested, tried, sentenced, and executed; and about the reasons why all of these things happened.

Please do not think there is some conjuring trick lurking behind what we have said so far, based on plays upon words because, if such word plays really do exist, it is not we who are to blame, but those who wrote the

Gospels or, in any case, retouched them later.

THE HISTORICAL FAKE: JEWS SENTENCE JESUS, BUT THE ROMANS EXECUTE HIM?

Some other important indications, which turn out badly for the historicity of the Gospel narration of Jesus' Passion, concern the traditional explanation of the presumed necessity of the Jews' having consigned Jesus into Pilate's hands. Usually it is said, and we have addressed this before in earlier articles, that the Jews, under the Roman occupation, had no right to execute any death sentence for such powers had been removed from them!.

Answer for yourself: How has it been possible to affirm such a blunder? The same Gospels show it is but a botched trick; for we know that it is recorded:

- Herod, a half-Jew, executed hundreds of Jews;
- The famous adulteress who was about to be stoned by the Jews survived thanks to Jesus who said: "*...He that is without sin among you, let him cast the first stone at her...*";
- Saint Paul was present at the stoning of the first Christian martyr, Stephen;
- John the Baptist was executed by the Jews;
- After Jesus' death the Sanhedrin threatened the apostles with the death sentence;
- James the apostle was stoned by the Jews in Jerusalem;
- The same Jesus, according to what the Gospels affirm in many different circumstances, ran the risk of being stoned by the Jews...

Answer for yourself: Need we go on?

There is more than enough evidence for executions of Jews, by Jews, in the same Gospels. **Nevertheless, in Jesus' case, as we have seen from the charge of "blasphemy" which does not hold up before the evidence according to Jewish law, it follows that the Jews had no right to execute a death sentence for a "non-charge" let alone to hand over Jesus, a supposed religious blasphemer, to Pilate and Rome's hands when they did not involve themselves in religious disputes and only political ones.**

All these things testify to one simple truth: **the desperate and inescapable necessity for the Gospels' authors to demonstrate that, in spite of the form of a typical Roman execution (the crucifixion), the Romans were completely innocent of Jesus' death since only the Jews were guilty of it, as they were his real enemies.** But as we have seen this is simply not the truth of the matter. That is why the historical absurdity of a Roman procurator imploring the Jewish people to liberate the Jewish preacher was invented for there is no historical record of Rome ever releasing such a prisoner in such a manner as we are told "was their custom". In no Roman record to date is to be found just one reference to such a Roman "custom" of releasing political prisoners.

PILATE: WAS HE INNOCENT AS THE NEW TESTAMENT DEPICTS?

According to Matthew, Pilate washed his hands to signify that he was not responsible for the death of Jesus (Matthew 27:24). In the other gospels he clearly disassociates himself from the killing.

Answer for yourself: But was Pilate really such a kind and just man? Philo of Alexandria quotes King Agrippa I, a contemporary of Pilate who knew him well, as saying of him He was cruel by nature and in his hard-heartedness entirely lacking in remorse (Philo: De Leg. 38). History records that he was a harsh oppressive ruler who killed many of his Jewish and Samaritan subjects (Josephus: Wars 2, 9, 2ff.; & Luke, 13:1). It was an act of atrocity towards Samaritans that eventually caused Vitellius, Roman governor of Syria, to have Pilate recalled

to Rome in 36 CE and replaced as procurator. I will have more to say on this in a moment.

But we are not done yet with our evidence. The truth of the Gospel is further complicated when we consider the motivations and actions of the Roman Procurator Pontius Pilate, whom Jesus is brought to by the High Priest. During his ten-year tenure as prefect, Pilate had numerous confrontations with his Jewish subjects. the New Testament depicts that an innocent man, this Jesus, is handed over to Pilate where he is accused of sedition.

Answer for yourself: Did you notice the charge against Jesus has now changed from "blasphemy" to "sedition"?

Now we find Pilate questions Jesus and personally asking him, *"Are you the King of the Jews?"* to which Jesus replies *"I am."*

Answer for yourself: Why is this such a big problem? Simply because the "king" of the Jews is Caesar and any other claimant is an enemy of Rome. The texts inform us that the priest continue "heaping accusations" against Jesus despite the fact that his sedition was clearly established by Jesus himself by teaching that the Kingdom of Heaven is near which means a new kingdom is coming to town and the old one, the Kingdom of Rome, will be replaced by God's Kingdom. In the prophetic book of Daniel we read of a dream that an ancient Babylonian king had of a great image. The meaning of the dream was made known by God (Daniel 2:23) through the prophet Daniel. The image represented a preview of humanity's worldly kingdoms from ancient times right to the end times when the last of the world kingdoms, Rome, would be destroyed and replaced by the eschatological Kingdom of God. It is this which apocalyptic Jews spoke of in the first century during the Roman occupation and any who did, like Jesus is shown to have taught, was subject of suspicion of sedition against Rome.

Stranger still is that after such a confession made by Jesus that he is the rightful "King of the Jews and not Caesar" Pilate passes by such an comment as if he does not care and Pilate is made to ponder if this Jesus character is dangerous (Mk 15:1-5).

Answer for yourself: What should this alert us towards? Simply the fact that the author of the Gospel of Mark is either glaringly ignorant of the facts, or spinning a good yarn for the sake of the overall agenda of his Gospel which in this instance is the deflection of blame from Rome for the crucifixion of "the Christ".

This account is quite out of context with the monster Pilate that Philo wrote Gaius Caesar about, reporting that Pilate was inflexible and "cruel." Pilate's lack of concern for Jewish sensibilities was accompanied, according to Philo writing in 41 C.E, by corruption and brutality. Philo wrote that Pilate's tenure was associated with "briberies, insults, robberies, outrages, wanton injustices, constantly repeated executions without trial, and ceaseless and grievous cruelty." Philo may have overstated the case, but there is little to suggest that Pilate would have any serious reservations about executing a Jewish rabble-rouser such as Jesus. As if that is not enough, Josephus reports several occurrences where Pilate flagrantly incites insurrection in order to ruthlessly purge it with his soldiers.

At the end of Pilate's rule--three to six years after the sentencing of Jesus--Pilate was insensitive to the Samaritans. A man claiming to lead a throng to gather vessels Moses had placed at Mount Gerizim, the holy mountain for Samaritans, was overrun by troops sent by Pilate. In the process, both the man's associates and innocents were killed. Jews and Samaritans complained to Pilate's superior in Syria, Vitellius, who in turn informed Rome. The result was that Pilate was called to Rome to face the emperor. Fortunately for Pilate, Tiberius died before he arrived. Again, Jewish pressure clearly had an effect on Roman politics; the Jewish community may have been oppressed but was not completely powerless.

Somewhere between early confrontations with Jews in which Pilate once showed mercy when thousands of Jews offered to die unless Pilate removed the Roman eagle standards from the Temple and Pilate relented and later incidents of his awful brutality fell the two other events that show how complex Pilate's position was. First, Pilate took money from the Temple treasury to help build an aqueduct, something the sacred money was not

intended to do. This also led to a public protest in the thousands. Pilate dealt with this complaint ruthlessly, slaying many. There was no reprisal from Rome for this act. In this case, there was no effective Jewish persuasion. The different results show that sometimes Jewish pressure worked; other times it did not.

History records for us that Pilate was eventually recalled to Vitellius (then Legate of Syria) after a particularly violent attack on the Samaritans in 36 CE, and was ordered sent to Rome in order to stand trial for the accusations of the slaughter (Josephus, Antiquities 18.4.85). He would be exiled in Vienne, France, for his excess cruelty toward the Jews by his Roman bosses yet we are expected to believe, based on this New Testament account, that such a man would "wash his hands" for another Jewish seditionist and revolutionary. This is highly unlikely when one understands the time that involved Pilate and the Jews. The anti-Semitic Pilate was not the sort of governor that would have acted with even the slightest civility toward a Jew who openly admitted to sedition. Pilate's dismal record of purges and punishments against seditious behavior was an abomination and history shows him to be one of, if not the cruelest of the Procurators of Judaea. Yes the picture painted by the New Testament concerning Pilate is opposed to even Rome's own history concerning this man.

According to the Christian "historical" version, the "praefectus Iudaeae Pontius Pilatus" (the prefect of Judea, P. Pilate) was compelled to liberate an outlaw, perhaps a revolutionary, as the Gospels depict him, instead of the preacher, because the people preferred Barabbas to Jesus. He even tried to implore the Jews, but they insisted crying: "Crucify him! Crucify him!" and were resolute in their decision to liberate the outlaw (the Fourth Gospel says the "robber") and to let Romans execute the man who is said to have cured blind people, deaf people, dumb people, cured lepers, cripples and paralytics, feed the hungry, and raised the dead (both children and adults). This just does not make sense. Crucifixion was for extreme crimes, such as a slave who murders his master or a revolutionary (which Jesus and his teaching made him out to be). It was also practiced on rebellious provinces. Rarely would a thief be executed for theft alone, much less by crucifixion. A pickpocket might get heavy punishment, but probably not execution. It is, of course, a upside-down absurdity: reasonable persons would find it much more logical for the robber to be executed, and a stay of execution granted the preacher, instead of the other way around; also for an authoritarian stance to have been taken by the procurator instead of by the suppliants; also for the people to have desired to set the healer and the preacher free, rather than the thief... Something fraudulent is hidden behind this presentation!

Christian accounts of the trial of Jesus, even the ones contained in our current New Testaments, suggest either that Pilate played no direct role in the decision to execute Jesus (Peter), or that he ordered the crucifixion of Jesus with some reluctance (Mark) or with great reluctance (Luke, John). Many historians attribute these accounts to efforts by early Christians to make their message more palatable to Roman audiences. Given what is known about Pilate's concern with crowd control, it is hard to imagine that he would not have willingly acceded to a request from high Jewish officials to deal harshly with anyone who proclaimed himself "King of the Jews." Pilate undoubtedly knew that past messianic claims had led to civil unrest. It seems likely that he would have been eager to end the potential threat to the existing order presented by the subversive theology of Jesus. The form of execution used--crucifixion-- establishes that Jesus was condemned as a violator of Roman, not Jewish, law.

Answer for yourself: But is the Pilate account of him absolving all personal blame for the crucifixion of Jesus the Jew but a veiled attempt to reverse the blame for the crucifixion of so many Jews that included according to second century oral tradition a Jew named Jesus? Let us never forget that there are no existing written historical records of the crucifixion of a Jew named Jesus outside of this one New Testament and all such later stories originated via handed down oral tradition.

Answer for yourself: Have you or how many Christians do you know have undertaken to study that historical period closely let alone the history and background behind the arrest and trials of Jesus?

Answer for yourself: How many have asked themselves whether the presumed custom of liberating a prisoner on the occasion of the Jewish holiday of Passover really existed or not?

Answer for yourself: How many have read the works of the Jewish authors Philo and Josephus Flavius, Jesus' near contemporaries, or even know they exist?

These two New Testament authors, who describe in detail customs and events in ancient Palestine, never mention such a custom as releasing a prisoner and always depict Pilate as a cynical and hard procurator who never asked permission of anybody and who, even less, ever submitted himself to the popular will of the Jews but, on the contrary, always ruled with a strong hand and atrocious cruelty.

Answer for yourself: Now how does this knowledge make you feel having now understood that Gentile monks and redactors of the evolving New Testament fabricated such a story and wrote it into the Gospels in order to put the blame for Jesus' death on the Jews instead of Rome by confusing the play on the names for the Aramaic "son of God" let alone contriving up opposition charges against this Jew names Jesus long after the fact?

We are supposed to believe in a story of the Pilate of the Gospels, in front of the shouting crowd, who declares himself defeated and announces blamelessly: *"I'll wash my hands, you (Jews) are responsible for this innocent blood, not I!"* and then sets free a man many theologians want to identify as a revolutionary, one who is thought to have fought the might of the Roman invaders but at the same time may never have lived and is but a play on the Aramaic "son of the Father"? It is preposterous!

At this point, into the mouth of the Jews there has been put a sentence that is a real ideological manifesto: *"...Then answered all the people, and said: - His blood be on us and on our children..."* (Matt. 27, 25). **This is the starting point for two-thousand plus years Christian anti-Semitism and anti-Judaism.** The Jews of Jesus' days seem aware of their fate and, what is more curious, ready to accept it: the terrible war against the Romans, the destruction of Jerusalem and the Temple, the massacre of hundreds of thousands of them, the Diaspora, the persecutions perpetrated by the Christians, the Inquisition, the infamous name *"perfidious Jews"*, two thousand years of oppression and extermination.

These irreconcilable problems with the arrest and trial of Jesus show that the Gospel accounts concerning the Passover, arrest, and trial of Jesus cannot be trusted with the truth of the matter. With the mystique and misunderstanding surrounding Jesus' arrest, coupled with the legend and myth attached to the accounts at later times, the truth may never be fully known. But we can presume a few things from the New Testament account possibly: Jesus was a political figure and a claimant to the throne of Israel. His Triumphal Entry into Jerusalem as that of a long-awaited Messiah who would destroy the Romans and seize his rightful kingship ended in failure and crucifixion as a rebel.

"HERE IS THE ANOINTED OF YAHWEH, THE KING OF THE JEWS..."

Let us consider a famous episode in the Gospel story, from which the typical Christian feast called Palm Sunday is derived: on the Sunday before Easter the whole Christian world celebrates Jesus' entry into Jerusalem, when he, riding on an ass, was welcomed by an applauding crowd and by a chorus of hosanna.

Answer for yourself: Oh by the way, are we expected to believe that this multitude of people who loved, accepted, and believed him to be the Messiah would later turn upon him and desire the release of a criminal instead? Where is our intelligence?

The episode in question is called the Messianic Entry, and this name could not be more appropriate: *"...Blessed be the KINGDOM OF OUR FATHER DAVID, that cometh in the name of the Lord..."* (Mk 11, 10). *"...Blessed be THE KING THAT COMETH IN THE NAME OF THE LORD..."* (Lk 19, 38). *"...On the next day much people that were come to the feast, when they heard that Jesus was*

coming to Jerusalem, took branches of palm trees, and went forth to meet him, and cried, Hosanna: BLESSED IS THE KING OF ISRAEL THAT COMETH IN THE NAME OF THE LORD. And Jesus, when he had found a young ass, sat thereon; as it is written, fear not, daughter of Sion (=Jerusalem): behold, THY KING COMETH, sitting on an ass's colt..." (John 12, 12-15).

The evangelist John makes an explicit reference to a Biblical prophecy in which a messianic liberator is spoken of; the prophet Zechariah says that conquered Jerusalem can exult because its King, riding an ass, is coming to turn out all the foreign oppressors: *"...Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion; shout, O daughter of Jerusalem: behold, thy King cometh unto thee: he is just, and having salvation; lowly, and riding upon an ass, and upon a colt the foal of an ass...." (Zechariah 9, 9).*

As we see as depicted in the New Testament, Jesus was welcomed by everybody as the awaited liberator, as the son of David, as the King of Israel; reading the episodes we can easily deduce not only Jesus' religious worth, but his political worth as well. Both Jesus and the evangelists could have denied the interpretation offered by the people, had only they wanted to (I mean they could have, had Jesus or the evangelists had the specific intention of specifying that his mission was not political but only spiritual).

Answer for yourself: Why then should they have told us that Jesus' entry into Jerusalem was the very fulfillment of the messianic prophecy, if they had truly meant to distinguish between the spiritual mission of Jesus and the political mission of the awaited Messiah? Why should they have insisted on calling him "son of David" so many times (twelve times in the Gospels), thus attesting his full right to the crown of Israel, as a descendant of the dynasty of the ancient founder of the kingdom?

The synoptic Gospels tell of another famous episode: Jesus' anointing in the village of Bethany. What is very curious is that the synoptic authors seem determined to disguise the true meaning of the episode. Let us consider the following elements:

1. the protagonists are all anonymous, but for the host, who is identified as a Pharisee named Simon, and the star of the scene is just simply "a woman": *"...there came a woman having an alabaster box of ointment of spikenard very precious; and she brake the box, and poured it on his head..." (Mk 14:3);*
2. the time is after the messianic entry, for Mark and Matthew, or long before it, for Luke; what gives with this?
3. Luke doesn't name the village: *"...a woman in the city, which was a sinner, when she knew that Jesus sat at meat in the Pharisee's house, brought an alabaster box of ointment...began to wash his feet with tears, and did wipe them with the hairs of her head, and kissed his feet, and anointed them with the ointment" (Lk 7:37).*

Many theologians even try to minimize the differences by proposing the lame excuse that the episode in Luke is not the same. As in many other cases, the synoptic authors submit the events to heavy censorship; in fact if we read John's version of the episode something surprising happens: all the protagonists have names and the time is just before the messianic entry: *"...Martha served: but Lazarus was one of them that sat at the table with him. Then took Mary a pound of ointment of spikenard, very costly, and anointed the feet of Jesus, and wiped his feet with her hair..." (John 12, 2-3).*

We even note that this poor woman, whom Luke calls "a sinner", had in her hands an alabaster box full of a whole pound of very precious spikenard. It may be that today many readers have not the slightest idea what that means: do poor women usually have large amounts of the most expensive perfumes at hand? The evangelist John avers it cost three hundred pence, that is... sort of thousands of dollars!

Well, then she broke the alabaster box and poured the spikenard on Jesus' head, or on his feet. And here is the

clue to the circumstance: *"...And there were some that had indignation within themselves, and said, why was this waste of the ointment made? For it might have been sold for more than three hundred pence, and have been given to the poor. And they murmured against her...And Judas Iscariot, one of the twelve, went unto the chief priests, to betray him unto them. And when they heard it, they were glad, and promised to give him money. And he sought how he might conveniently betray him" (Mk 14, 4-11).*

Answer for yourself: What on earth did she do to stir up everybody's wrath? How could she have induced that reaction in Judas? Are we to believe that the waste of perfume was truly the reason Judas convinced himself that it was better to betray his Lord Jesus? Or should we rather believe that somebody has been trying to tease us, and to take from us any understanding of the real meaning of the episode?

I am sure many readers, at this point, have noticed the succession of events:

- Jesus Christ is anointed with spikenard, like a new Messiah;
- somebody is disappointed at that public anointment which was visible to all and the news of which would spread (symbolic of being accepted as Messiah by the people);
- Judas the betrayer runs to the chief priests;
- 4 the next day (following the anointing) Jesus Christ makes a messianic entry into Jerusalem, during which the people welcome him as the King of Israel (news of Jesus accepting the anointing had spread);
- 5. on the eve of the holiday, in the night-time, Jesus gathers his disciples, fitted out with swords, on the Mount of Olives. They hope their action will be followed by the many thousands of people come to Jerusalem for the great Passover of the Jews (in hopes of full-scale revolt as led by Messiah Yeshua);
- 6. six hundred Roman soldiers, informed by Judas of the place and time of the revolutionary assembly, come, and, after a short fight, arrest Jesus;
- 7. the man is tried by Romans and sentenced to death as a revolutionary and seditionist;
- 8. he is crucified as a rebel.

Answer for yourself: So, what about Mary's deed?

Now the answer is very simple: it was a mock Messianic anointing, a public declaration of the arrival of the Messiah of Israel, the King of the Jews. That is the reason for the reactions of those who did not agree with the views and opinions of Messianic movements, like Essenes and Sadducees, and even some of the Zealots like Judas as we shall see. Many people, in the Palestine of Jesus' days, thought the ideas of the Messianic movements too dangerous: *"...If we let him thus alone, all men will believe on him: and the Romans shall come and take away both our place and nation..." says one of the chief priests, and the High Priest goes on: "...consider that it is expedient for us, that one man should die for the people, and that the whole nation perish not..." (John 11, 48-50).* Some preferred peace to war.

Answer for yourself: And what about Judas?

What is more logical than to understand how troubled he was when he realized that not everybody in Jerusalem agreed with the revolutionary plans of the partisans of Yahweh. On the occasion of the banquet in the house of Simon, when Jesus was anointed in the presence of priests and Pharisees, he saw how much political resistance there was to the idea of a Messianic revolution.

That is why he seriously began to believe the exploit to have no hope of success, and the danger of being arrested and crucified by the Romans to be very real and present. He did not succeed in saving his life anyway: the other partisans who could escape the arrest set him a trap; and a few hours later he was killed and his bowels spread on the ground as a warning to all betrayers.

ST. PAUL, THE INVENTOR OF THE NEW CHRISTIAN RELIGION

Shortly after the execution of the aspirant-Messiah, a certain Paul, a Hebrew who was born and grew up in Anatolia, and was accustomed to living together with heathens, and who would rather compromise with the non-circumcised than clash with them, perceived the insane dangerousness of the traditional and radical interpretation that Essenes and Zealots put upon the Messianic prophecies; according to them direct conflict with the enormous power of Rome and her Hebrew footmen (the Sadducean caste and the Herodian family) would lead to victory because of the support of Yahweh himself. But what the Jews would not know till later is that they could not force the hand of God and Yahweh would not intervene as He had in the days of the Maccabees. Rome will ultimately win and crush Israel and destroy her Temple and cast them throughout the world as slaves.

Paul, whom we call St. Paul, was fully aware of the possibility that the Romans might soon have enough of this small but indomitable province of their empire, and might decide to have done with it. But this was a small hope to say the least.

Even the Sadducees shared that opinion, since they were in a very comfortable position: protected by the Romans, as well as being rich and having great influence and prestige in Judean society. We have already quoted the words of the High Priest who spoke of his fear for the possible reaction of the Romans against Jewish fundamentalism. He was right: what the Sadducees and Paul and the Pharisees were afraid of, came literally true when, in the year 70, the Romans really decided to have done with Judea. They massacred thousands and thousands of Jews, destroyed Jerusalem and sacked the temple and put it to the torch.

At first, sharing the views of the Hebrew conservatives, Paul, allied with the Sadducees in preventing a Messianic uprising, he was an obstinate persecutor of the dangerous adherents of the Messianic sects (alias the Christians; please note that the word "Christian" is simply the translation into Greek of the Hebrew word "messianic"); then, as time passed, he was to realize that this way the national-religious fanaticism of the Essene and Zealotic sects would not dampen. Unfortunately even nowadays we see that there is no weapon that can get the better of ethnic-religious fundamentalism.

Therefore Paul convinced himself that opposing arms to ethnic-religious purity is of no use; you only risk getting the opposite effect; ideas must be fought with ideas. In fact ethnic-religious fanaticism satisfies a psychological need that is closely connected with unconscious feelings of identity and popular pride; the only thing which can compete with that is another psychological image, another idea tailored to the need to satisfy people's unconscious needs, to give them an identity and a self-respect that is more than the tribal feeling of being part of a given group.

Well then, the only way to fight the dangerous messianic hope of Israel's national-religious salvation was to create a new messianic hope of salvation, still greater, still more responsive to the psychological needs of the people: the idea of a universal spiritual salvation, of a Messiah who was not to rescue the small house of Israel but all of mankind, especially the poor, the humble, the oppressed, the weak, the sick, the suffering, from their subjection to evil.

Thus Paul invented the new image of the Messiah (fictitious but less trouble to Rome): Faith alone in an enthroned Messiah Yeshua was coupled with no need for obedience to the Commands of God any longer, Jesus Christ died for sins, was risen from the dead, and will return later. He composed this image by grafting onto the remains of the old Messiah (the real one but one's whose political agenda was too dangerous) new concepts of universal salvation. Israel becomes inconsequential as a Jewish Messiah was recast by Paul into one resembling the character of the oriental spiritual Saviours, like the Greek Soter, the Persian Saoshyant, and the Indian Buddha more than Moses. This

"synthesis of saviors" was a stroke of genius for Paul.

It was the most ingenious theological composition ever put into practice from the time that history began. **It was the syncretistic meeting of a number of religious components: Hebrew, Egyptian, Hellenic, Persian, and Indian. Destined to become the spiritual guide to the subsequent development of all the western civilization.** It was really able to knock down the pagan Roman Empire (unlike its historical counterpart).

Not that Paul converted himself on his way to Damascus, but the Christian idea revealed a new dimension, not just right for the future of Israel, but for the future of all of mankind.

When this theological and ideological revision was made, it elicited much more popular response than the original faith in the aspiring Messiah of Israel and his followers who were looking for a political and military deliverance; and the Hebrew traditionalists (devoted to their national-religious idea) were seen as an obstacle to the development of the new supra-national idea. Not this alone, but the image of the historical aspiring Messiah of the Jews and his patriotic sacrifice became an obstacle to the image of the universal Messiah, the apolitical one, solely spiritual, who promised salvation in the kingdom of Heaven, not on earth.

The new Christians were also persecuted by the Romans because they could not forget that the original Messiah was a dangerous martyr of the liberation movement, who could even infect other subject nations of their Empire with his ideas.

That is why the Evangelists were absolutely compelled to distance themselves from the Jews and to turn the Romans' responsibility for the death of Jesus into the responsibility of the Jews.

That is why the Gospel stories are filled with tricks, with the purpose of readjusting the image of the Messiah to the new theology.

That is how the Gospels were conceived and written. And you thought the New Testament was infallible, inerrant, and inspired? History and language does not lie but men do.



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LOOKING AT THE CONFLICTING ACCOUNTS CONCERNING JESUS AND THE PASSOVER IN THE NEW TESTAMENT #4

In many ways this is a summary-conclusion to the prior articles. Where it is different is in the conclusions at the end of the article. We need to look once more at the first account of Jesus' trial in the Gospel of Mark. A corresponding account is also offered by the writer of the Gospel of Matthew (Matthew 26:57-67).

Mark 14:53-65 53 And they led Jesus away to the high priest: and with him were assembled all the chief priests and the elders and the scribes. 54 And Peter followed him afar off, even into the palace of the high priest: and he sat with the servants, and warmed himself at the fire. 55 And the chief priests and all the council sought for witness against Jesus to put him to death; and found none. 56 For many bare false witness against him, but their witness agreed not together. 57 And there arose certain, and bare false witness against him, saying, 58 We heard him say, I will destroy this temple that is made with hands, and within three days I will build another made without hands. 59 But neither so did their witness agree together. 60 And the high priest stood up in the midst, and asked Jesus, saying, Answerest thou nothing? what is it which these witness against thee? 61 But he held his peace, and answered nothing. Again the high priest asked him, and said unto him, Art thou the Christ, the Son of the Blessed? 62 And Jesus said, I am: and ye shall see the Son of man sitting on the right hand of power, and coming in the clouds of heaven. 63 Then the high priest rent his clothes, and saith, What need we any further witnesses? 64 Ye have heard the blasphemy: what think ye? And they all condemned him to be guilty of death. 65 And some began to spit on him, and to cover his face, and to buffet him, and to say unto him, Prophecy: and the servants did strike him with the palms of their hands. (KJV)

That Mark intended the trial to mean a formal trial before the Sanhedrin cannot be doubted. For this is obviously what he meant in verses 53 and 55 above. This account however, immediately many historical inaccuracies that escapes the layman when he reads the Gospels.

Answer for yourself: Is the Gospel writer correct when stating that the Sanhedrin gathered at the high priest's home?

The writer of the Gospel of Mark mentioned that the Sanhedrin met in the house of the high priest while all our other sources on the Sanhedrin tells us that the council does not gather anywhere else except in the Chamber of the Hewn Stone in the Temple (Maccoby, Revolution in Judea: p202).

Answer for yourself: Did the Sanhedrin meet at night? We saw repeatedly in earlier articles that they did not!

The accounts say that Jesus was arrested during the night after the last supper and was interrogated by the Jewish authorities the next morning before the cock had crowed (Sanhedrin, 4, 11). The last supper is usually

taken to mean the meal when the Paschal lamb was eaten, which was the first eve of Passover, known today as Seder Night. The Jewish interrogation would then have taken place on a Yontov (Yom Tov) a holy day, on which no work was allowed to be done (Sanhedrin, 4, 1). But historical problems surround such things that escapes the uninformed readers of the New Testament. Let us recall what we learned from earlier articles.

- **Jewish law does not permit a court case to be tried on that day, and certainly not a Sanhedrin, as some have suggested. A Jewish day runs from sunset to sunset. So no trial would have been permitted for at least 24 hours from the beginning of the last supper.**
- **When a sentence of death is passed, Jewish Law stated that the sentence could not be pronounced until the following day, to allow for careful deliberation (Sanhedrin, 3, 5). So if there really was a trial on First day Passover, then the judgement should not have been given until the second day.**

Yet the New Testament depicts to the reader that the Sanhedrin was said to have gathered immediately after Jesus was arrested and taken to the high priest's house. This was after the Passover supper and the prayer at Gethsemane which makes the council meet around 9 to 10pm at night. This is again incompatible with what we know of the procedures of the Sanhedrin which disallows nocturnal meetings (Craveri, Life of Jesus: p 381, Guignebert, Jesus: p 463, Maccoby, Revolution in Judea: p 202).

Answer for yourself: Did the Sanhedrin meet on the Passover? We have seen that according to Jewish law that they did not.

To add to the absurdity, this night, if we are to believe the synoptic chronology, was passover eve and by Jewish reckoning already the 15th of Nisan, passover itself. As many eminent Jewish scholars have pointed out, this is simply inconceivable, given the strict ruling of no council meetings on the Sabbath, and on religious feast days, such as the passover (Guignebert, Jesus: p 463, Maccoby, Revolution in Judea: p 202, Nineham, Saint Mark: p 400-401).

Now we look to a Jewish scholar upon the New Testament Jesus names Joseph Klausner. I would like to quote from Jo Joseph Klausner's book Jesus of Nazareth (New York 1925):

the Sadducees themselves would not have conducted even a simple judicial enquiry either on the night of the passover or the first day of the passover...the Mishnah lays it down that capital cases may not be judged on the eve of a Sabbath or on the eve of a festival to avoid delay should the case not be finished that day, since all trials were forbidden on a Sabbath or a festival. (quoted in Yerby, Judas, My Brother: p 515).

Answer for yourself: Did the Sanhedrin pronounce the death sentence upon Jesus immediately? We have seen that according to Jewish law such was not allowed.

Another procedural impossibility is given in Mark 14:64 which includes the sentence: they all condemned him as worthy of death. This means that the sentence was passed on the same day instead of the prescribed interval of twenty four hours (Craveri, Life of Jesus: p 381, Guignebert, Jesus: p 463). **These procedural flaws in the Markan account weighs heavily against any claims of historicity for the episode described there.**

Anyone familiar with Jewish law recognizes the impossibility of the chief priests and scribes arresting Jesus and assembling to question him during the most holy of Jewish festivals. **That is why I strongly recommend that Christians study Judaism in order to spot the "lies" in the New Testament because without such knowledge we are so easily led astray by the antisemitic writers of the New Testament.**

But there are more problems with the account from the pen of the writer of the Gospel of Mark.

Answer for yourself: When did the priests and scribes gather together to question Jesus?

- Matthew 26:57 says that on the night Jesus was arrested the priests and scribes were gathered together prior to Jesus being brought to the high priest.
- Mark 14:53 says the priests and scribes gathered together on the night of Jesus' arrest after Jesus was brought to the high priest.
- Luke 22:66 says the priests and scribes assembled the day after Jesus was arrested.
- John mentions only the high priest - no other priests or scribes play a role in questioning Jesus.

Answer for yourself: With such a jumbled mess of inconsistencies how can we ever expect to know the truth let alone that God is behind such amnesia?

Procedural flaws are not the only problem with the Markan account of the trial of Jesus. In Mark 14:58 we are told that some people came forward with false testimony. Yet what they falsely claimed Jesus said, according to Mark, was precisely what the gospel of John claimed that Jesus did say (Nineham, Saint Mark: p 406):

John 2:18-19 Then the Jews demanded of him, "What miraculous sign can you show us to prove your authority to do all this?" Jesus answered them, "Destroy this temple, and I will raise it again in three days."

Otherwise we saw that such false witnesses took their own lives in the balance when giving such false testimony and this is rather hard to believe would be done unless those doing so did not value their lives.

We also have a passage in Acts (6:14) which seems imply that the above statement was actually uttered by Jesus.

Another problem with the Markan account is associated with the question asked by the high priest in Mark 14:61. Remember that Christ is simply the Greek word for messiah. **Mark had the high priest made the association of being a messiah with being the Son of God. No Jewish priest, let alone the high priest, would have made that connection in the divine sense in the gospels. The Jews simply did not consider the Messiahship to have a divine status** (Ibid: p 406, Wilson, Jesus: The Evidence: p 407). Even so the concept of one believing and teaching that he was "the" Messiah we saw was not considered "blasphemy" according to Jewish Law even though the New Testament falsely depicts it as such. Furthermore the high priest's assertion (Mark 14:64) that Jesus committed blasphemy in his reply (Mark 14:62-63) makes no sense. It was not an offence for a Jew to claim to be the messiah because eventually, according to their belief, someone has got to be he. It is no blasphemy, though of course it could be a mistake, in claiming the title of messiah for oneself (Maccoby, Revolution in Judea: p 203; Wilson, Jesus: The Evidence, p 103). The claim Jesus made, as being seated at the right hand of God does not necessarily have any divine connotation for himself, as the Jewish scholar Rabbi Morris Goldstein stated:

Use of the phrase "Son of the Blessed" or "Son of God" was no capital crime. The reference to sitting at the right hand of power (Mark 14:62) is not greatly different from King David's allusion to himself sitting at the right hand of God (Psalms 110:1), at all events, it is nowhere indicated as blasphemy (Morris Goldstein, Jesus in the Jewish Tradition, Macmillan, New York 1953 quoted in Wilson, Jesus: The Evidence: p 103).

And finally Mark 14:65 had members of the Sanhedrin spitting and striking Jesus. We saw that this is another patently absurd claim as another Jewish scholar, Hyamm Maccoby noted:

As to the reports that members of the Sanhedrin spat on Jesus and stuck him, this is just as incredible in the proceedings of that highly dignified body as if it were reported of the high court of England or the supreme court of the United States (Maccoby, Revolution in Judea: p202).

In short almost every point in the Markan account of the nocturnal trial of Jesus is incompatible with what we know of the Jewish council. In short Mark's account is fiction;

and poor fiction at that!

In the morning, according to Mark the Sanhedrin met again:

Mark 15:1 Very early in the morning, the chief priests, with the elders and the teachers of the law and the whole Sanhedrin reached a decision. They bound Jesus, led him away and turned him over to Pilate.

This account is subject to some of the procedural difficulties we have already noted for the nighttime trial. **Namely that it was held on the passover and that a decision was reached less than twenty four hours after the conclusion of the testimony.** Another difficulty, a question asked repeatedly by skeptical scholars, is this: **if Jesus was condemned for blasphemy (i.e. a crime in Judaism) why was Jesus not sentenced to death by stoning or strangulation in accordance to the Jewish Law?** (Craveri, Life of Jesus, p 384; Guignebert, Jesus, p 463; Nineham, Saint Mark, p 403; Schonfield, The Passover Plot, p 141).

The Torah is unambiguous about this:

Leviticus 24:10-23 Now an Israelite woman's son...blasphemed the name and cursed. And they brought him to Moses...And the Lord said to Moses; "...He who blasphemes the name of the Lord shall be put to death; all the congregation shall stone him..." So Moses spoke to the people of Israel; and they brought him who had cursed out of the camp, and stoned him with stones.

Neither Mark nor Matthew attempted to explain why Jesus was handed over to Pilate and sentenced to die by crucifixion. For crucifixion was essentially a Roman penalty (Guignebert, Jesus, p 463; Nineham, Saint Mark, p 403) and as we have also seen Rome did not concern themselves with internal religious struggles of the Jews but rather let them handle their own religious issues.

In Luke's account, the nocturnal trial in Mark was omitted but Luke's story of the trial in the morning is still subject to the same objection as against Mark's, **for the trial was conducted on passover day itself, something we have seen as impossible.** Luke's story of the trial before the Sanhedrin is as unhistorical as Mark's.

Now let us move on in this study in hopes we can continue to find more "truth".

THE DEATH PENALTY...FOR WHAT OFFENSE? WHAT WERE THE GROUNDS FOR IT?

The Gospel accounts say that at the Jewish interrogation:

- He was suspected of claiming to be the Messiah (Matthew 26:63; Mark 14:61; Luke 22:67).
- He hinted that he was the son of God, while according to Mark he clearly claimed to be the son of the Blessed One (Matthew 26:65; Mark 14:61f; Luke 22:70).
- He was judged to have uttered blasphemy (Matthew 26:65f; Mark 14:64).

Each one of these "charges" need to be examined.

- As stated previously if Jesus had claimed to be the Messiah, it would not have been a crime. At that time a Messiah was a person anointed by God for a particular purpose and not a "God" which we are familiar with to day in the wake of the theological decisions of the Council of Nicea. Claiming to be "the" Messiah might have been thought presumptuous, but it would not have been thought to be blasphemy. In fact let us not lose sight of the fact that millions of Jews prayed daily for the Messiah to come and according to the unaltered Hebrew Scriptures the seed of David was just that; namely, a human being and not a "godman"

which the Messiah became at the hands of the Essenes and their apocalyptic writings like the Book of Enoch and others.

- The son of God is a vague expression, which can be interpreted in various ways. If he meant by this, that he regarded himself as a child of God as all people are sons or daughters of God, then this would have been acceptable. Jews to this day speak of God as their Father (or Parent), and the Bible refers to the children of Israel as His firstborn (Exodus 4:22; Jeremiah 31:9). It is extremely unlikely that he meant that he was a child born by immaculate conception and hence he was part of a trinity, because those beliefs were not suggested until Paul developed his theology and afterwards. However even that was not considered as blasphemy or punishable by death.
- The term son of man which Jesus used is also obscure. But some take it as referring to a mystic verse in Daniel variously translated as one like a son of man or as one like a human being (Daniel 7:13, (as in New RSV.)). This was understood by some as referring to the Messiah, while others take it more literally.
- It follows from all this that a conclusion that Jesus had blasphemed was very unlikely, and if it had been made would have been unsound. For Jesus had not spoken of God in a derogatory or contemptuous way, nor had he misused the sacred Divine name (Sanhedrin 7, 5).

WHAT ABOUT HEROD?

Luke says that Pilate sent Jesus to Herod who questioned Jesus at length and then returned Jesus to Pilate (Luke 23:7-11). The writers of the Gospels of Matthew, Mark and John make no mention of Herod. This, in itself, means nothing, but it brings about another contradiction later.

CONFUSION AROUND PILATE:

The accusations and the questions asked when Jesus was brought before Pontius Pilate were very different. The Luke says that the Jewish leaders accused Jesus of fomenting trouble, of telling the Jews not to pay their Roman taxes, and of claiming to be the Messiah, the anointed king (Luke 23:2). The only question that Pilate is reported as asking was: *Are you the king of the Jews? (Matthew 27:11; Mark 15:2; Luke 23:3; John 18:33)*. To which Jesus answered that people were saying this about him. At this Pilate is made to say that Jesus is innocent.

The question of kingship arose from the claim that Jesus was the Messiah. The word Messiah (Greek Christos) means anointed one. The Bible tells us that two kinds people were officially anointed for special purposes. They were either priests or kings. So we read that Moses anointed Aaron and his sons for the priesthood (Exodus, 40:13-15) and Samuel anointed both Saul (1 Samuel 15:1) and later David (1 Samuel 16:13) to be kings. The Gospel writers claimed that Jesus was descended from the royal line of David . No attempt was made to claim his descent from Aaron, showing that they clearly regarded him as a Kingly Messiah (Matthew 1:1ff; Luke 3:31).

WHO IS RESPONSIBLE FOR JESUS' DEATH...THE JEWS OR PILATE?

The gospel writers go to every conceivable length to absolve the Romans in general, and Pilate in particular, of Jesus' crucifixion and to blame it on the Jews as we have seen repeatedly by the misrepresentation of history as well as both Jewish and Roman law. The reason, of course, was that Christianity was going to have to exist under Roman rule for many years, which is why the New Testament contains nothing critical of the Romans, even though they were hated for their heavy taxation, and Pilate was hated for his brutality.

For the church, the Jews made an appropriate scapegoat because the Jews were a thorn in side of the early church. The Jews, of course, had far greater knowledge of Jewish laws and traditions than the largely

gentile church, and were able to call attention to some of the theological errors being taught by the gentile church.

We have also seen that the Biblical account of Pilate's offer to release Jesus but the Jews demanding the release of Barabbas is pure fiction, containing both contradictions and historical inaccuracies.

Answer for yourself: What had Barabbas done?

- Mark 15:7 and Luke 23:19 say that Barabbas was guilty of insurrection and murder.
- John 18:40 says that Barabbas was a robber.

Answer for yourself: Were you aware that it was the Roman law and custom to NEVER crucify robbers? They got lashes but again I have told you this in earlier articles. Matthew 27:38 and Mark 15:27 say that Jesus was crucified between two robbers (Luke just calls them criminals; John simply calls them men). **It is a historical fact that the Romans did not crucify robbers. Crucifixion was reserved for insurrectionists and rebellious slaves.**

Answer for yourself: Could have this account of the "crucifixion" of the sungods between 2 thieves (constellations) be the background for the fictionalized account of the crucifixion of the New Testament Jesus between 2 thieves? It sure is. Quezalcoatl of Mexico **587 BC** is but one example of this that predated the New Testament's Jesus. Historical authority of the crucifixion of this Mexican god is explicit, unequivocal and inefaceable. The evidence is tangible, and indelibly engraven upon metal plates. One of these plates represents him as having been crucified on a mountain. **Another represents him as having been crucified in the heavens, as St. Justin tells us Christ was (all sungods were crucified in the heaven before the foundation of the world).** Sometimes he is represented as having been nailed to a cross, sometimes with two thieves hanging with him, and sometimes as hanging with a cross in his hand. Sounds familiar does it not and let us not forget that the Roman records teach us that thieves never were crucified but received whippings and lashes for their crimes.

Answer for yourself: What is the truth about Pilate's "custom" of releasing a prisoner at Passover?

This we have seen is again pure invention as is much of the passion of "the Christ" that we read in the New Testament. The only authority given by Rome to a Roman governor in situations like this was postponement of execution until after the religious festival. Release was out of the question. It is included in the gospels for the sole purpose of further removing blame for Jesus' death from Pilate and placing it on the Jews.

We are expected to believe that a ruthless tyrant like Pilate gives in to the Jewish mob desiring the blood of Jesus when only a few days earlier we are told that untold numbers lined the road from Jerusalem to Bethany and waved palm branches and laid their garments before Jesus in his triumphant entry into Jerusalem when they beheld their hoped-for Messiah. This simply does not add up; an Israel that prayed and cried for deliverance and redemption and the unveiling of their Messiah only a few days later desiring his death and calling for his crucifixion (think). The gospels have Pilate giving in to an unruly mob. This is ridiculous in light of Pilate's previous and subsequent history. Josephus tells us that Pilate's method of crowd control was to send his soldiers into the mob and beat them (often killing them) into submission. Pilate was eventually recalled to Rome because of his brutality.

Answer for yourself: Were the tombs opened as the New Testament says and did the "dead walk" again?

According to Matthew 27:51-53, at the moment Jesus died there was an earthquake that opened tombs and many people were raised from the dead. For some reason they stayed in their tombs until after Jesus was resurrected, at which time they went into Jerusalem and were seen by many people.

Here Matthew gets too dramatic for his own good. If many people came back to life and were seen by many

people, it must have created quite a stir (even if the corpses were in pretty good shape!). Yet Matthew seems to be the only person aware of this happening - historians of that time certainly know nothing of it - neither do the other gospel writers.

TIME TO WRAP THIS UP...BUT CLOSING COMMENTS

One of the terrible shortcomings of Mel Gibson's move "The Passion of The Christ" is that it never explains why so many wanted the death of this Jesus who was the hoped-for Messiah of so many. The answer to this lies in the accounts of the interrogation before Pilate which we saw in the prior article. Luke is the only gospel to state the charges made before Pilate.

Answer for yourself: We have seen the conflicting charges made concerning Jesus made before the Sanhedrin but what were the charges made against Jesus which were made before Pilate?

They were that he was found perverting our nation, forbidding us to pay taxes to the emperor, and saying that he himself is the anointed king (Luke 23:2). In the four gospels, the only question Pilate is reported to have asked was "Are you the king of the Jews?" (Mark 15:2; Matthew 27:11; Luke 23:3 & John 18:37). To Pilate he appeared to be a dangerous agitator stirring up opposition to Roman taxation and setting himself up as a secular rebel Jewish leader. His only option was to get rid of him, as he had already done to others who had opposed Roman rule.

As we have looked at in the prior article Jesus' claim to kingship really got up the Roman hair on their necks to stand up. The crown of thorns and the purple cloak were clearly mocking this claim. Although the text of the notice placed at the foot of the cross is slightly different in the four gospels they all referred to him being the King of the Jews (Matthew 27:29; Mark 15:17 & John 19:2). Rome was adamant that there can be only one King and that King was Caesar and not a Jewish Messiah.

John 19:15 15 But they cried out, Away with him, away with him, crucify him. Pilate saith unto them, Shall I crucify your King? The chief priests answered, We have no king but Caesar. (KJV)

WHY THE JEWS HAD TO BE BLAMED

The Gospel accounts did not put the blame only on the Jewish leaders; but by stating that the crowd clamored for Jesus' death, they accused the general Jewish populace as well. To understand this, we need to remember the historical situation at that time.

The gospels were written from anywhere from 70 to 150 years after the crucifixion. But we must not forget that many of the stories concerning "the Christ" and "Jesus" existed verbally prior to being written down and many of them varied depending upon geography and different locales. By this time the early Christians were actively seeking converts within the Roman Empire. The gospel writers were not trying to write an objective and accurate history, so much as to persuade people to believe in Jesus and join in following his teachings. As most of the people they were approaching were Romans, it was not a particular persuasive message to say to them *"Join our religion, worship to or through Jesus, and by the way, you Romans were responsible for killing him."* It made more sense to blame the Jews who for more than a generation had refused to recognize him as either the Messiah or as the "son of God".

THE RESULTS OF THIS LIE...DECEPTION FOR MILLIONS OF CHRISTIANS

As a result of these stories being told to the largely uneducated masses of Christians in the middle ages, the Jew was thought of as the "Anti-Christ", an object of hatred and suspicion. Jews were

often spoken of as "Christ-killers". Quite unintentionally, the gospel-writers slant on history gave rise to centuries of murder and persecution of Jews. Nobody knows the number of Jews killed in the Rhineland by Crusaders on the way to the Holy Land, nor of those who died at the hands of the Spanish Inquisition. Unknown to most is the fact that Christopher Columbus, a Jew, left Spain in search of a new world of religious freedom, on the last day before his presence as a Jew in Spain would mean his murder by King Ferdinand and Queen Isabella. Little know is the fact that King Ferdinand and Queen Isabella expelled the Jews from Spain and was behind in inquisition. Almost every ancient town and city in Europe where Jews lived, has a tale to tell of Jews, who died there just because they were Jews. The Gospels have had a strong influence on the spread of anti-Semitism right up to and including the Holocaust. A very large proportion of the attacks on Jews took place at Easter, following an impassioned sermon by an over-zealous preacher on Good Friday, who had incited the mob to fall upon the ghetto. It is so easy to stir up fear and hatred and so difficult to spread feelings of peace and brotherhood. That is why Jews fear the result of releasing the film called "The Passion". And that is why these articles have been written, in the hope of spreading a little truth and light rather than hatred and passion.

ROME'S REPENTANCE...IS IT ENOUGH?

In the mid 1960s, following a lead from Pope John XXIII, the Roman Catholic Church made considerable progress to come to terms with these problems. Regarding Jewish guilt for Jesus' death, the second Vatican Council declared that *...authorities of the Jews and those who followed their lead pressed for the death of Christ...* Still, what happened in the passion of this New Testament Jesus cannot be blamed upon all the Jews then living, without distinction, nor upon the Jews of today. However, even this statement did not go as far as many Catholics and other Christians would have liked, because the sentence the Jews should not be presented as repudiated or cursed by God, which appeared in the final draft, originally included the words: *or guilty of deicide* in earlier drafts of the Declaration; but this last phrase was removed before the final draft was published.

Answer for yourself: So what is truth? What a question. Well several things appear to be certain from our short study of the Passover and the "Passion of the Christ" as well as the arrest and trial of Jesus as depicted in the New Testament and that is this: None of these New Testament accounts regarding Jesus and the Passover, his arrest, trial, and crucifixion seem to be truthful when compared to existing historical records that can be obtained from both Jewish and Roman records, writings, and archives. So I guess we are left with the only response needed in such a situation; namely, study to show yourselves approved before God in order that we don't appear before the Creator one day clothed only in fiction and fables. Somebody tell Mel Gibson will ya before he makes a sequel.

Bet Emet Ministries is dedicated to restoring the faith of Jesus back to his followers in the Christian Church. Will you help? Maybe you know those who want to study the history of our faith. All is not pretty, but God did not give us these lies...men who hated Jews did....May God forgive us and them...as we endeavor to find the unity of the faith as we return to the Faith of Jesus...the faith once given to the saints...Shalom.

Craig Lyons M.Div.



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PASSOVER...WHAT DOES IT MEAN?

The Exodus, the singular event commemorated by Passover, is nothing less than a defining element of Jewish thought and behavior. It set in motion the pattern for Jewish history, provided the foundation for the Jewish approach to the world, and established the agenda for Jewish national life.

Answer for yourself: What is the theme of the Passover? The theme of the Passover is one of exile and redemption is the very heart of Israel's existence, its message of the absolute right and necessity to be free the core value of the Jewish people.

So central are the Exodus and its lessons to Judaism that references to it recur throughout the Bible's accounts of history and its laws, prophecies, and prayers. The life of a traditional Jew is suffused with it not just once a year during an extended festival, but every single day. It is because God brought the Israelites out of Egypt that they are commanded to obey Him regarding this two-way relationship along with man ritual observances and other important ethical behaviors required by God. Among Torah passages enclosed inside the *tefillin* put on by Jewish men each weekday morning are those pertaining to the Exodus (Exodus 13:1-10, 11-16). Daily services include recitation of the song sung by the Israelites after crossing the Reed Sea (*Shirah* [Exodus 15:1-18] and a prayer covering the past, and hoped-for future, redemption. And the fact that the Sabbath, the once-a-week respite from the servitude of the work week, memorializes the Exodus (Deuteronomy 5:15) elucidates the meaning of Creation, which the Sabbath also commemorates (Exodus 20:11): Both the world and the liberated Israelite nation were brought forth with specific Divine purpose.

Even the Jewish calendar design reminds one of the Exodus. The Torah emphasizes that *Nissan*, the month of *nissim* (miracle of the Passover), and not *Tishrei*, when the world was created, is to head the year (Exodus 12:2). Just as the Earth comes to life again after being constrained by the nature of winter, Israel was renewed. The original naming of months reflected the notion that being reborn with purpose is much more significant than merely coming into existence: As we count the progression of the week with reference to its most important day (Sunday is the First Day [toward Shabbat], Monday is the Second Day [toward Shabbat], etc.), the Bible numbers months beginning with *Nissan*. This again shows us just how integral and important the Exodus is to everything in the Bible.

THE JEWISH VIEW OF FREEDOM AS CONNECTED TO THE EXODUS

On the day the Israelites were taken out of Egypt, Moses reminded them to remember it. Later, when they reached Canaan, they were to eat *matzah*, get rid of leaven, and tell their children, "*It is because of this that God acted for me when I left Egypt*" (Exodus 13:3-8). The sages ask what "this" means. Their having cried out in anguish? Their suffering? The pleasure of eating unleavened bread?

Although our God is a merciful God (Exodus 34:6), He did not get the Israelites out from under Egyptian oppression merely to end their suffering and restore control over their lives to individual inclination. From the

time God sent Moses back from Midian to confront Pharaoh, He made it clear that He wanted the Israelites to show their appreciation for His benevolence of leading them from the house of bondage to the Land of milk and honey.

The two Torah words generally used for freedom, *khofesh* and *deror*, are not applied to the Exodus.

Both imply lack of restraint, complete self-determination, a misconception of freedom prevalent in an undisciplined Western society like America today. This is a kind of liberty that in the end can enslave you to whims and desires that have a way of leading you from what you really want.

The Israelites, however, were given *kherut*, freedom to live a certain kind of life, one according to God's system of discipline. It was summarized in the Ten Commandments engraved (*kharut*) on the two tablets of stone that were to be given at the conclusion of the Passover experience at Mount Sinai (the festival of Shavuot and the giving of the Torah). The sages equate the two-liberty (*kherut*) and the engraving of the law (*kharut*).

Answer for yourself: What is so startling about that? Simply the connection between "law" and "freedom" in light of the New Testaments teaching that "Law is bondage" as found in many of the Pauline Epistles as well as several of the Gospels. We grow up thinking that "the Laws kills" and that we are "not under the Law but under grace" because this mean old bad law is out to kill me when it fact just the opposite.

"Only he is free who occupies himself with Torah" (Pirkei Avot 6:2)

Rabbi Levi Isaac of Berdichev saw a reflection of the reciprocal relationship between Liberator! Lawgiver and liberated/law abiders in the dual names of the holiday. Israel called it Passover, he said, in recognition of God's mercy in redeeming them. And God called it Feast of Unleavened Bread as a compliment to Israel, who would carefully follow the commandments surrounding it.

The Jewish concept of freedom means the unrestrained ability to have a relationship with God, show obedience to Him, and accept Torah, which sets one on the path in life that will allow him/her to fulfill his/her role in the overall plan for the world. The only way to be free to worship God is to be free of an earthly master. There is a universe of difference between being a servant (*ehved*) of Pharaoh and a servant-like Moses-of God. Under human oppression, those in bondage labor for the aggrandizement of others, or because someone wants to break their spirit. Under God, we can choose obligations that are aimed at benefit for all.

That is why Judaism abhors slavery. No Jew is to be owned, not even by another Jew. If a Hebrew had to enslave him-/herself to someone else-in the case of indebtedness, for instance-it was for a limited period of time (all debts were forgiven at the Sabbatical-every seventh year; all lands reverted to original owners at the Jubilee-every fiftieth year, to keep a socioeconomic balance in the society and prevent development of a serf or landless class). And a servant had to be treated well (so well that the rabbis observed that one who acquired a servant acquired a master for himself!).

A servant who refused liberty at the end of his term had his ear pierced, a symbol of shame that he had not heard God's declaration of independence for all children of Israel. The piercing was done against a doorpost, recalling the site the Israelites smeared with lamb's blood to indicate their readiness to abandon their life of slavery.

Since they are not free to choose their Master (God), slaves may not recite the *Shema*, the Jewish declaration of faith in One God: A person in bondage to another lord is not at liberty to accept God's sovereignty. The *haggadah* reminds us that the degradation experienced by the Jewish peoples was not just slavery in Egypt but a lack of recognition and negation of God. This makes it all the more clear the religious revolution of Akhenaton (many believe was the Biblical Moses) to refocus Egypt's worship upon Aten, the Invisible God of All.

Prior to the Exodus, there was a Jewish nation, a distinct ethnic group that distinguished itself, *midrash* tells us, by maintaining the names, dress, and language of their ancestors. But they were not given Torah until they had

forsaken their human masters (by preparing the paschal lambs), had made a commitment to heed God's commandments (by following the instructions for *Nissan* 14), and had been led out of Egypt (the place-physical and psychological-limiting their lives).

RESPECT FOR OTHERS

Although we must not be slaves, the Jews we are also commanded, repeatedly, not to ever forget that they were slaves. The danger of liberty is that once given control, the formerly oppressed can take advantage of their new positions to wield power over others. How often in history have liberation movements, once achieving their immediate aims of toppling the existing structure, succeeded only in establishing a new tyranny (e.g., Church Reformation, French Revolution, Bolshevik Revolution, overthrow of the Iranian Shah. . .)?

The Israelites were to retain the humility of their former lives (the hallmark of the authentic Jewish personality in order to remain sensitive to the plight of others. This explains why the Jewish people treat servants like guests, provide food for widows, orphans, and strangers, are kind to foreigners, use honest weights and measures in Jr business dealings, help the poor, and do not act with prejudice (particularly toward the disadvantaged) precisely because they were slaves in Egypt. In three dozen of Torah's social laws the Jews are instructed to take certain action based on their early experiences: the hurt they suffered was to teach them to refrain from inflicting pain on others. Their entire religion, which was summarized by Hillel as "*do not do to others that which is hateful to you*," is drawn directly from their experience as slaves. As slaves, they did not like the humiliation, whippings, and restrictions, so they learned not to degrade, torture, or oppress others.

Judaism's new concept of freedom and unmatched standard of social ethics was designed to create a just balance in a world that seems to thrive on injustice. If realized, this system would revolutionize the world in ways no liberation movement since the Egyptian Exodus has even approximated. Its unique legislation, which gave the world such concepts as life, liberty, the pursuit of happiness, tolerance, and the six-day work week-governs virtually every aspect of a Jew's personal life and his/her relations to the world: political, legal, ethical, spiritual, environmental, economic. It makes provisions against homelessness and corruption of courts and for monetary retribution, ensuring the dignity of every human being, making everyone feel part of the community, rehabilitation of criminals, and separation of powers in government.

The Jews have laws meant to liberate all people from physical, spiritual, psychological, emotional, and economic oppression. For only when all peoples are released from such restraints will God's grand scheme for the world be fulfilled. And Jews, with their unique heritage, have a particular responsibility to safeguard the freedom of others and to work for the release of those enslaved.

Now we have a better understanding of what Israel learned from the Passover that lives with them today. Let us continue our study into the Spiritual essences of the Passover.



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THE PASSOVER...LESSONS OF HOPE FOR THE FUTURE

Only in dire circumstances would the Jews have followed Moses and God. Having been removed from them served as a reminder that no matter how terrible our situation, we must not lose hope, that there is some ultimate purpose to it: You can live through anything if you know it is not forever. The Exodus demonstrates that our suffering is in fact finite, that in exile we can expect deliverance and renewal.

The message began with the design of the very first seder, a model or pattern for perpetual hope for the future. It was not a typical celebration of independence, taking place after the fact. It was held while the Israelites were still in bondage, with the expectation that something momentous was about to happen, the belief that the promise of liberation would be fulfilled. The exiled Jews believed that the nation would be revived, that Jerusalem would be rebuilt because they had an established pattern for the suffering then the salvation sequence.

"Now we are here, next year may we observe Passover in the Land of Israel, now we are still enslaved, next year may all men be free" (taken from the Haggadah) has rung true in every age. The belief that the words would eventually become reality has made it possible for Jews to observe Passover without becoming discouraged no matter what the horrendous situation outside their doors as history has shown. There is a lesson in this for all of us; namely, that it remains the inspiration for today, when, separated from the ideal we are supposed to be creating in the world, we remain in exile (galut). As much as it commemorates the redemption already executed, Passover celebrates the redemption expected (Geulah).

MESSIANIC REDEMPTION IS CONNECTED TO THE PASSOVER

Belief that, just as God sent Moses as His servant to redeem us once, a descendant of the House of David will arise as the *moshiakh* (messiah) is a tenet of classical Judaism. It is one of Maimonides' Thirteen Articles of Faith which are central beliefs to which every Jew must ascribe. They maintain that the redemption will occur: *"I believe with a perfect faith in the coming of the messiah and though he may tarry, daily I wait for his coming."*

By the second century B.C.E. two concepts of a "messiah" who/which would rescue Israel and return it to former glory had developed. The word *moshiakh* in Hebrew is derived from *mashakh*, which simply means "to anoint," as to anoint a king, who was supposed to remain faithful to the law of God).

- One focused on a human leader--the personal messiah--who would emerge from among the Jews, guide the Jewish people to independence, and bring the world to accept God.
- The other messianic concept foresaw a series of cosmic cataclysmic events that would destroy Israel's enemies and world evil and initiate a period of peace--the messianic age--in which the

world would be perfected.

Debate over the "true messiah" concept has continued through numerous crises in our history, including the emergence of false messiahs (most notably Shabbatai Zvi in the seventeenth century, the Egyptian, Jesus) and controversy in our own time over the Lubavitcher Rebbe, Menachem Mendel Schneersohn, some of whose followers, believing him to be *Moshiakh*, urged him to reveal himself as such.

Kabbalists of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries promoted the concept, later enthusiastically embraced by the Reform movement, that we ourselves, through our efforts to perfect the world (*tikkun olam*), would bring messianic redemption. The Lubavitch *Khabad Khasidim*, whose wide-ranging outreach programs are aimed at bringing as many Jews as possible back into the fold of Jewish observance, believe this will happen by following the commandments of Torah. According to the ultra-Orthodox *Neturei Karta* (Defenders of the Faith, who do not recognize the existence of the State of Israel), only an act of God will accomplish it.

By whatever means and in whatever form, belief in a redeeming force and attempts to see it realized are very much a part of the Jewish tradition. Its power remains in the fact that the arrival of the messiah has always been seen as a future occurrence providing hope and, as the legendary Eastern European Jew stationed outside his village to greet the messiah found, steady work. **Most of all, the undying anticipation fostered the eternal optimism that eventually things can, and will, improve, for the Jewish people and the entire world.**



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THE PERSONAL SIGNIFICANCE OF THE PASSOVER

For thousands of years the people of Israel have not forgotten that their ancestors were slaves in the land of Egypt. The passage from slavery into freedom became the chief event of Israelite history. Classical Hebrew writings lay stress on the fact that the external liberation was not an end in itself but the necessary precondition for the receiving of the Law on Mount Sinai -- the sublime climax of Israel's liberation which took place thirty-two centuries ago.

"In every generation let each one feel as if he or she came forth out of Egypt." This tenet strove to make the Exodus from slavery into freedom a living personal experience. It was in this spirit that the story of the liberation was told and handed down from generation to generation, each generation in turn growing up in the knowledge that it would have the responsibility to tell the story to the next one.

The *haggadah*, the book read during the Passover Seder, telling the story of the holiday, instructs that each of the participants (*"In every generation. . ."*) is actually supposed to feel as though we had been a slave and made the transition to a new status.

Answer for yourself: How can we one do this? How can one take ancient history and make it into his own personal story?

We who live in an open, democratic society tend to think of ourselves as free.

Answer for yourself: But are we really, just because we are not physically bound to an overlord? What do being enslaved and unencumbered by oppression really mean? And are they mutually exclusive?

In Hebrew, Egypt is called *Mitzrayim*. According to the text on Jewish mysticism, the *Zohar*, the name is derived from *m'tzarim*, meaning "narrow straits". When God took Israel out of Egypt (*Mitzrayim*), He extricated the Israelites from the place of constricted opportunities, tight control, and narrow-mindedness, where movement was severely limited.

Each of us lives in his or her own *mitzrayim*, the external or physical narrow straits of financial or health constraints or, perhaps, personal tragedy; universally the psychological burdens to which we subject ourselves. Like the duality in virtually all of Pesakh's symbols, they work in two ways: They turn us into both slaves and oppressors, of ourselves and others. Passover leads us to question the values and attitudes we hold and which hold us to those roles.

Answer for yourself: Do we pursue, even worship, things like money and status for their own sake, rather than for how they can make our lives and the lives of those around us better?

Answer for yourself: Do our own insecurities or overconfidence inhibit us from fully participating in life rather than getting the most out of relationships?

Answer for yourself: Do our stereotyping, prejudice, or exploitation oppress other people by robbing them of their dignity rather than affording them the same opportunities we want for ourselves?

As we get rid of leaven and replace it with *matzah*, we are supposed to confront whatever it is that we normally allow to persist in our lives but which should perhaps, like the leaven, be eliminated, and that which we suppress which should, like the back-to-basics unleavened bread, be admitted.

Answer for yourself: Do you work to live or live to work?

Answer for yourself: Do you play for enjoyment or to avoid having to think?

Answer for yourself: Are you unhappy in a situation but so entrenched in it that you have come to accept it as the norm-as acceptable?

Answer for yourself: Does an addiction to food, alcohol, drugs, a pattern of behavior, or another person interfere with leading the life you really want for yourself?

Answer for yourself: Do you allow others to take advantage of your time and resources?

Pharaoh is seen as the evil enslaver of others. But he was bound by his own ego, which led him to ruin everything he valued, including himself. Even his officials recognized the catastrophe his attitude brought: *"Let the men go," they advised. "Don't you realize that Egypt is being destroyed?"* (Exodus 10:7). His arrogance simply got in the way.

In order to take the necessary action, we need to believe that things must change for our own good. When we do, we, like Pharaoh, make vows to change. But often, once an immediate need has passed, we, like Pharaoh, who gave and then retracted his permission for the Israelites to leave, revert to old habits. It may be easy, but in the long run, we only hurt ourselves.

Connected with the Passover is the Counting of the Omer. According to the Torah (Lev. 23:15), we are obligated to count the days from the second night of Passover to the day before Shavuot, seven full weeks. This period is known as the Counting of the Omer. An omer is a unit of measure. On the second day of Passover, in the days of the Temple, an omer of barley was cut down and brought to the Temple as an offering. Every night, from the second night of Passover to the night before Shavuot, we recite a blessing and state the count of the omer in both weeks and days. So on the 16th day, you would say "Today is sixteen days, which is two weeks and two days of the Omer." **The counting is intended to remind us of the link between Passover, which commemorates the Exodus, and Shavuot, which commemorates the giving of the Torah. It reminds us that the redemption from slavery was not complete until we received the Torah.**

One lesson of the *Omer* period is how easy it is to slide back into familiar ways. Remember the ancient Israelites who, not a week out of Egypt, were ready to forego liberty and return to their miserable lives-yearning for the comfort of the familiar evil over fear of the unknown.

Slavery does offer a certain freedom that can be attractive: the freedom from responsibility for yourself and others, the freedom from having to establish goals, figure out how to reach them, or think beyond the moment. It takes strength and guts to walk out of a known situation, which for all its pain, is predictable. It is human nature to want to stay put, within the stability of the status quo. The danger is that often in those situations you don't even know that you are mired in a negative situation, one you don't realize until too late.

You tell yourself you will look for a better job, sign up for community service, be much nicer to your kids, get out of an abusive relationship, go back to school, pay off your contributions ... tomorrow. Jacob did not intend to stay in Egypt more than a short time-and look what his sojourning cost. **At Passover, we should at least recognize inertia for what it is and not kid ourselves into complacency about our own situation or that of others.**

Passover, with its message of hope, tells us that like the Egyptian slaves, we can escape from our straits. Once they had tasted freedom with the paschal lamb, the Israelites gave up the comfort of the familiar, without concern for provisions or how they would get to or exist at their destination. They left Egypt because they believed a better life awaited them elsewhere. As Rabbi Nakhman of Bratslav (eighteenth-century khasidi leader) counseled, when you are about to leave "*mitzrayim*" you should not worry about how you will manage in a new "place." Anyone who does or who stops to get everything in order for the journey will never pick him-/herself up.

As we begin the seder with a broken, incomplete piece of *matzah*, we are encouraged to take the first steps toward change even if all the pieces are not in place. We cannot wait until the time is perfect. The European Jews in the prewar years, who were concerned about losing property, did not recognize this. The Ethiopian Jews, at the time of Operations Moses and Solomon, who did not yet have the new clothes they had dreamed of wearing for their entry into Jerusalem, did.

A *midrash* tells that when the Israelites were at the Reed Sea, the Egyptians at their backs, they wailed and moaned and longed for the taskmaster's whip rather than the lash of the sea's raging waves. They hesitated. Moses prayed. And one man, Nakhshon ben Amminadab, recognizing the opportunity before them, plunged into the waters. Only then did the sea subside, allowing the Israelites to continue. Like Nakhshon ben Amminadab, we have to forge ahead, with faith that we will reach the goal and the belief that the attempt to gain freedom is still better than stagnating in slavery.

Passover also reminds us that the process does not stop if we are comfortable with our own progress or situation, with the good fortune of our families. An important aspect of this holiday is recognition of the needs of others. Just as God helped liberate us, people enslaved today need outside assistance to become free. The Jewish people have been extremely successful in rescuing Soviet and Ethiopian Jews and helping numerous other communities. It is sickening to learn that, according to a United Nations Center of Human Rights report, issued in mid-1993, at least half- *half* !-the world's population lives under social, cultural, economic, and political oppression, including outright slavery, now, on the eve of the twenty-first century.

Rather than allowing ourselves to become inured to suffering, we should use Passover to recharge our sensitivities which, if the message of the holiday has any impact, should lead us to action. Get involved and make a difference in spreading freedom in all ways to all people through education and service.

FOSTERING A SENSE OF BELONGING

"In each generation" echoes a recurring refrain in Judaism. From generation to generation, the slogan of the continuity is crucial. It is quite significant that one begins the annual festival cycle (the Passover) by passing the tradition to one's children in an important family holiday that takes place at home. While we are personally experiencing the Exodus, our job, as non-Jews and symbolically part of the "mixed-multitude of Exodus", is also to make our children feel that they are a part of the story, able to identify with the Exodus and with the Jewish people.

This is a difficult task, particularly for those of us who grew up in Christian Churches separated from our Jewish Roots, the Sabbaths, and the Festivals of the Lord. We are like the generations born in Canaan who did not experience the rigors of slavery and the miracles of salvation (mirrored in our time by the Holocaust and the establishment of Israel); who turned away from (or were perhaps never exposed to) our Jewish brothers and "spiritual parents'" tradition (the Jewish Nation as the Israel of God) and their Torah. It is we as Christians and follower of the New Testament Jesus and "the Christ" who have been diverted by overwhelming and omnipresent influences of our prevailing culture and erroneous inherited Church traditions that have removed us from our rightful place next to the Jewish people and the "Pattern of Worship" exhibited by them for the whole of mankind.

But it is not an impossible task, because Jewish identity is established within the family, where feelings of freedom, responsibility, and a sense of belonging to something greater than the individual self are fostered. We must learn from this. What causes someone to feel part of the community is largely based on what happens in the home-the stories that are told, the songs sung, the symbols used.

Answer for yourself: What could be a better opportunity to begin to help us as Christians and followers of the New Testament Jesus and "the Christ" to return to the Jewish Roots of our Christian Faith than observing and keeping the Passover, with its drama, music, and representational food?

Judaism turns the symbols of the Passover into a reality for the participant (the bread of affliction transformed into the bread of freedom leads to freedom itself). The process necessitates our being knowledgeable about what the symbols and the national goals are and this is what I hope to do on this Website and the articles that follow.

"Being grafted into the Israel of God with the Jewish people means allowing Jewish history to make a claim on your life, to turn the collective memory of the Jewish people into a personal account for yourself as you identify with them and the truths that they as God's Holy Nation and Royal Priesthood share with others." There can be no future without vision. There can be no vision if we are incapable of dreaming, and one who has no memories cannot dream. Therefore we must study and learn if we are to change appropriately and for the better and ever hope to recover the "Pattern of Worship" once given to all mankind; a "Pattern of Worship" as I have shown you began long before Israel with the non-Jewish Egyptian parents of these Jewish "children of Egypt".

If we teach our children so they feel that they are part of the Israel of God and brothers and sisters of the Jewish nation, then they will be able to participate in the enterprise built on the memories (Exodus) that inspire the dream (redemption), which supports the vision (universal freedom), which fosters the efforts toward making the vision reality (perfected world). **We draw on the past in order to build for a better future,** like the desert generation who had to give up their former way of life so that the Land of Milk and Honey could be occupied by their children.

Let us continue to study and grow.



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GETTING FAMILIAR WITH THE PASSOVER AND ITS ELEMENTS...THE HAGGADAH

THE HAGGADAH

The printed version of the *seder* service, the *haggadah*, is a collection of Bible passages, talmudic narrative, Second Temple supplications, *piyyutim* (liturgical poems) of the Middle Ages, prayers and readings in response to persecutions of the medieval era and modern times, and folk songs. In the words of Heinrich Heine (in The Rabbi of Bacherach), it is "a marvelous mixture of age-old legends, miracles of the Exodus, curious discussions, prayers and festive songs."

The word *haggadah* (from the verb *l'haggid*, "to tell") is derived from the Torah verse commanding **"and you shall tell it to your child on that day" (Exodus 13:8)**. The choice of verb indicates that our **responsibility is not merely to recite the story but to use it to inform and instruct.**

Haggadah is also related to the homiletic sayings (the stories, parables, tales) from *midrash*-called *aggadot* (plural of *aggadah*)-used to teach *seder* participants about the history of redemption.



Since the time of Jewish freedom from Egyptian slavery, the celebration of Passover was organized into a feast called the Passover Seder. The Passover seder feast was patterned somewhat after the Greco-Roman feasts that rabbis observed during the time of the Romans' presence in Jerusalem in the 1st century B.C.E. and the first century C.E. **The word 'Seder' means 'order' or 'procedure' in Hebrew and refers to the order of historical events recalled in the Passover meal as well as the meal itself.** The story of Passover is read from a book or manual called the 'Haggadah', meaning 'narration' or 'telling' in Hebrew. The Passover Haggadah was loosely organized by rabbinic scholars during the period just before and after the time when the Common Era (C.E. or A.D. to Christians) began. **In addition to containing the story of Passover, the Passover Haggadah contains prayers, blessings, songs, biblical passages, and scholarly commentaries by rabbinic sages.** While the main story of Passover is read at Passover seders by Jews the world over, local customs - including musical and culinary traditions - have been added over time so that the Passover festival has been adapted to reflect the life and routines of Jewish communities in different countries. This explains why, for example, the festival of Passover is celebrated differently in various areas of the world. Moreover, the Passover Haggadah may be read either in the local language, or a mixture of the local language and Hebrew, or different combinations of the local language, Hebrew, and either Ladino (the language of Sephardic Jews originating in Spain) or Yiddish (the language of Ashkenazic Jews originating in Central and Eastern Europe).

Since the late Middle Ages, when the *haggadah* first appeared as a publication separate from the common prayer book, more than thirty-five hundred versions have been created, some of them magnificently illustrated. Illuminated editions such as the *Bird's Head*, *Damstadt*, *Golden* and *Sarajevo haggadot* (plural) provide a record of Jewish social life (costumes, professions) and attitudes (as in the style of representation of the Four Sons) and have contributed greatly to the development of Jewish art. The text has also been illuminated by hundreds of commentaries, which since the fifteenth century have included philosophical, theological, and mystical

discussions of the *haggadah's* contents.

In the last century alone, hundreds of editions have been produced, not only in response to particular artists' creative impulses but to the developing diversity among the Jewish people. Today it is possible to use a facsimile edition of one of the historic illuminated *haggadot* or a *haggadah* representing the philosophy of a particular movement in Judaism (Orthodox, Conservative, Reform, Reconstructionist), social-political philosophy or concern (egalitarian, feminist, secular, Holocaust, contemporary war! oppression), dietary preference (vegetarian, including the wonderfully titled *Haggadah for the Liberated Lamb*), and even national culture.

Haggadot come in Hebrew only, in Hebrew and English or any other vernacular language of Jews, and in Braille, sometimes with transliterations of major segments. Illustrations range from comic book to museum quality featuring the work of modern Jewish artists like Yaakov Agam, Leonard Baskin, Ben Shahn, Shalom of Safed, and Marc Chagall. Contemporary commentators include Elie Wiesel and Rabbi Shimon Riskin.

CHOOSING AND USING A HAGGADAH FOR PASSOVER

While the old wine-stained *haggadot* with the antique etchings and archaic language used in some families for generations may hold sentimental value, and the *haggadot* provided free of charge by Maxwell House and other food companies may be appealing for their price, **do yourself and everyone else at your seder table a favor by having at least one *haggadah* that contains commentary. A good commentary not only explains how to perform a ritual and what it means but provides insights as to the deeper significance of parts of the service, including how to apply them to your own situation and time.** The purpose of the *seder* is to inspire identification with the experience and its messages. It is supposed to be an enriching, exhilarating experience, which may be difficult to achieve if you have to deal with a leaden unannotated script. The *haggadah* can serve as a starting point for topical discussion; a good one will give you a little push.

Each person at the table ideally has his or her own copy. When they are all the same, it is easier for everyone to keep his or her place (page numbers and English translations vary). With a variety of annotated editions, on the other hand, you have a wealth of resources, and each participant can contribute interesting commentary from the one she or he uses.

A store that sells Jewish books and ritual items will have a wide selection of *haggadot* in the month prior to Passover. You should have no problem finding several to choose from at good book stores like Barnes and Noble or Borders or Bookstop. Your library may also have several editions. Probably the easiest way to find one you feel comfortable with is to review the numerous possibilities for style of translation, illustration, denominational orientation, underlying theme, and so on. Some people compile their own *haggadot* from a combination of traditional and modern, religious and secular sources.

[We at Bet Emet offer our home version of the Haggadah with commentary and it is available on this website.](#)



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BECOMING FAMILIAR WITH THE ELEMENTS OF THE PASSOVER SEDER

MATZAH

Unleavened bread was one of the foods the Jews in Egypt were commanded to eat along with the paschal lamb (Exodus 12:8). In commemoration of that first *seder* meal, and the haste in which the Israelites left Egypt, giving them no time to allow their bread to rise, the Jews eat *matzah* at the *seder* (and instead of bread throughout the holiday).

It is customary to have three pieces stacked on the table. Two are traditional for Sabbath and festivals (when we usually use two *khallot*), as a reminder of the double portion of manna (food from heaven) the Israelites gathered before every day of rest in the desert (Exodus 16:11-22). We need the third to break at the beginning of the service as we will see below.

The number three is also said to have symbolic significance. Among other things, the number represents: the three measures of fine meal from which Sarah baked cakes for her husband Abraham's three angelic visitors (Genesis 18:6); the three categories of *Jews-Kohein*, *Levi*, and *Yisraeli-that* make up the Jewish people, or the three patriarchs, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, by whose merit the Israelites were redeemed from Egypt and whose covenant with God the Israelites were redeemed to fulfill.

In recent years, it has become popular to add an additional sheet of *matzah*, representing hope for Jews still enslaved by oppression around the world.

HIDDEN MEANINGS CONNECTED WITH THE MATZAH

Matzah is one of those wonderful transcendent ritual items in Judaism, a symbol embodying a duality to teach a moral lesson. At the beginning of the *seder*, we break one of the cakes of *matzah* and call it the bread (*lekhem*) of affliction (*oni*). It is the meager sustenance of slaves, the meanest fare of the poor, the quickly produced food of those who make a hurried, under-cover-of-dark getaway. Yet later, it represents freedom, the bread we ate when we were liberated from Egyptian bondage.

In both situations, as slaves in Egypt and once the Israelites were free, the Israelites ate the same flat wafers. What was different was their own attitude when they ate: cowering, accepting their subservience, then claiming their rightful dignity as human beings equal before God. Just as we transform mentally and physically, the symbol of our status is transformed.

ACCEPTABLE FORMS OF MATZAH

For the *seder*, we may use only *matzah* made of the pure and simple ingredients flour and water, prepared and baked in less than eighteen minutes. Any longer and the fermentation that causes leavening occurs. It is so

important to avoid allowing the *matzah* to swell that each cake is perforated to let the steam escape (that's why each wafer has rows of little holes). To teach us to remain vigilant in our responsibilities, it must be made from flour that has the potential to become leavened if left unattended. If you do not want to bake it then you can buy *matzah* at the grocery store.

No *matzah* containing egg, milk, honey, wine, or fruit juice or other enhancements (called *matzah ashirah*, or rich *matzah*) may be eaten, except by the sick or aged who cannot digest the basic recipe. Avoiding the enhanced *matzah* reminds us of the importance of simplicity, of returning to basics, which the plain flour and water *matzah* represents.

Until the mid-nineteenth century, when the first *matzah* machine was invented in Austria, the unleavened bread was baked by hand. The innovation sparked controversy over whether it could in fact produce *matzah* acceptable according to *halakhah*, since authorities feared that pieces of dough could get stuck in it and become leavened. Even after it was accepted, *matzah* continued to be baked manually, in the traditional round form, often in communal ovens and bakeries set up just for the holiday. Said to represent the unity of God, the round *matzot* are still preferred by particularly tradition-minded Jews because of Torah's term for the *matzah* baked just before the Israelites left Egypt: *ugot* (round cakes [Exodus 12:39]). Square *matzot*, the kind most of us use right out of the box, are perfectly acceptable.

The pious use the extra special handmade *matzah shmurah* (commonly said reversed, in Yiddish, *shmurah matzah*). Based on the commandment, "*And you should keep [watch] the festival of the matzot*" (Exodus 12:17), the sages believed watching (*shimurim*) required supervising the *matzah*-making process from the time of reaping to ensure that no water, which initiates the leavening process, comes into contact with the wheat, whole or ground, until it is mixed into dough and eighteen minutes are clocked. Made in round cakes, sometimes with unwanted ripples and burned edges, and often tasting even more like cardboard than the prepackaged variety, they are nevertheless coveted because of the attention and care that go into producing them.

MATZAH COVERS

Embroidered, painted silk, and other special *matzah* covers containing three pockets, or special boxes to hold square or round *matzot*, can be purchased at Judaica stores or made, but are not necessary. A plate and a napkin for covering the *matzot* during the *seder* are also acceptable.

If you have more than a few people at your *seder*, you will need more than just the three cakes of *matzah* in order for everyone to have their requisite pieces during the service prior to the meal. The additional *matzah* can be placed near the leader, who will distribute it at the appropriate time, or made directly accessible to guests.

K'ARAH (THE SEDER PLATE) AND ITS CONTENTS

The centerpiece of the *seder* table is the ceremonial plate, *k'arah*, containing essential ritual foods. It may be a specially designed platter with compartments, indentations, or separate dishes that fit on or into it, each identifying the item it holds. Made of wood, copper, pewter, silver, stoneware, and porcelain, *seder* plates of tremendous stylistic variety are available in Judaica stores (and, sometimes, by manufacturers such as Lenox, in department stores that sell fine china).

Although incorporating aesthetics into holiday observance is encouraged, it is not necessary to purchase a fancy *seder* plate. Children, or an adult so inclined, may make one, or you may arrange the foods on any plate or tray. (Many *Sephardim* traditionally use wicker baskets.) If you host a large *seder*, you may want to have an additional *k'arah* or two so everyone will have access to it (originally, when celebrants reclined on individual sofas at individual tables, each person had his or her own) or place around the table dishes containing extra supplies of the foods that will be consumed.

Whatever *k'arah* you select, it should contain the following:

Karpas

All holidays have their origins in nature and the seasonal changes, and people throughout the world celebrate similar festivals at roughly the same time throughout the year. Like all people, our people in ancient, pastoral times celebrated the liberation of the earth itself from wintry darkness, and rejoiced in the yearly rebirth of nature. In the spring of the year, the season of rebirth and renewal, we find the festival of Pesach.

We dip karpas, greens, symbol of the renewal of the earth at springtime, into salt water, symbol of the bitter tears shed by the slaves in Mitzrayim. This, the first dipping of the Seder, evokes the imagery of the birth of the Jewish people at the time of the Exodus.

Derived from the Greek word for grass or vegetation, *karpas* is a green vegetable or herb such as parsley, celery, lettuce, endive, watercress, chervil, or scallion. Potato, though obviously the wrong color, was also used in Europe, probably because of its availability, and is still the choice in many families. Evidence of the renewal of nature in the spring, the green symbolizes the season of Israel's renewal through redemption, past and future. Near the *karpas*, though usually not on the plate itself, is a bowl of salt water.

One often-cited explanation for the use of *karpas* is that the Hebrew word read backwards is (*s*)*parak*, the term in the book of Exodus used to describe the toil of the Israelites in Egypt, preceded by the letter designation for sixty. The number suggests both sixty types of physical labors the Egyptians forced on the Israelites and the sixty myriad (six hundred thousand) slaves (or "six hundred thousand labored"). As victors of ancient battles were crowned with wreaths of laurel greens, the *seder* greens represent our victory over enslavement.

There is also a simple historical explanation: Formal dinners of the Greco-Roman culture, the basis for our *seder*, began with an *hors d'oeu vre*, customarily a vegetable, usually dipped in vinegar or wine. We replace the vinegar and wine with salt water, which can be seen as a symbol of birth as well as of sweat and tears.

Maror

Bitter herbs (from the Hebrew *marah*, "bitter") represent the nature of the Israelite lives under oppression. Grated horseradish, most commonly used among *Ashkenazim*, is just one of the acceptable bitter vegetables-and the *maror* of choice because there is no mistaking its message (your sinuses will be clear for a month after you eat it!). The sages also listed romaine lettuce, endive, chicory, and escarole. They preferred, as do the *Sephardim*, the lettuce, which they likened to Jewish settlement in Egypt: first sweet to the taste, only later is the bitterness realized. They also connected the word for lettuce (*khassa*) to God's having mercy (*khas*) on the Israelites and redeeming them.

Khazeret

Some people use another form of bitter herb, usually whole (pieces of horseradish root, for example), for the second time *maror* is eaten. The term relates to the Hebrew for return, in the sense of repentance (*khazarah*), and also to mercy (*khas*), signifying that when we take the initiative to turn to God (as the Israelites did in pledging their allegiance with the paschal lamb rite), He treats us mercifully.

Many *seder* plates come without a separate section for *khazeret*, because it is common to use only one form of bitter herb.

Kharoset

A mixture of apples, nuts and wine, or other fruits and spices (particularly those mentioned in the Song of Songs-figs, dates, and pomegranates-because they serve as metaphors for Israel), *kharoset* stands for the mortar

and clay (*khar'sit*) the Israelites had to use to make bricks and build Pharaoh's projects.

Almonds are a popular ingredient because their name in Hebrew (*shekeidim*) suggests that God was watchful (*shaked*) over Israel. Some add unground spices like cinnamon or ginger to recall the straw the slaves had to collect to mix with the mortar. The color of the wine, added to make the mixture appropriately pasty, recalls the blood of the Israelite infants killed by Pharaoh and of the first plague.

Although it symbolizes something terribly painful, this sweet, tasty concoction is one of the most popular items on the table. In many households, family members sit with spoons poised to dig into whatever *kharoset* remains once it is no longer needed for ritual use. Associated by its dual nature with both physical oppression (clay) and sensual delight (taste, aroma), it suggests the bittersweetness of life and expresses Jewish optimism: Even the most negative condition can contain redeeming features.

Passing down the often unwritten formula for *kharoset*, individual families produce their own distinct flavors. You can find recipes in Passover and other Jewish cookbooks.

Z'roah

The roasted shankbone is one of two symbols on the *seder* plate we do not eat. Representing the paschal sacrifice, it proclaims freedom of religion that the slaves seized when they slaughtered their lambs. It also recalls the "outstretched arm" (*z'roah netuyah*) of God that took us out of Egypt (Deuteronomy 26:8).

You can get the shoulder bone of any kosher animal, containing some meat, from a butcher, or, as many do, use the neck or wing of a chicken. It should be roasted dry, just as the paschal lamb was (but you do not need to do it over an open fire).

Beitzah

The egg, the other symbol we do not eat, reminds us of another part of the paschal offering, the *korban khaggigah* (festival sacrifice) required as an expression of thanksgiving at every festival. On Passover, pilgrims ate the *korban khaggigah* first, to satisfy their appetites, and finished their meals with the paschal lamb. One reason we put both meat and egg on the *seder* plate is to demonstrate our repudiation of the Egyptian custom of not eating any animal product because the Egyptians worshipped the animals as gods. Some connect the egg with its Aramaic word, *beiyah*, meaning want or desire, implying God's desire to deliver His people.

The egg should be hardboiled, then scorched on a stove burner or under a broiler to resemble having been roasted. It remains in the shell.

ARRANGEMENT OF THE PASSOVER ELEMENTS

As with just about every other aspect of the *seder*, there are different opinions as to how the *k'arah* should be organized, based on each authority's concept of not slighting the *matzah*, or any other item, by reaching over it before it has been used. Most people follow a modified version of the pattern established by the Ari (Rabbi Isaac Luria, leading kabbalist of sixteenth-century Safed).

At the center of the plate is *maror*. *Karpas* is below to the left, *khazeret* (if used) below it at the bottom of the plate, *kharoset* below to the right, the bone above the *maror* to the right, and the egg above to the left. We usually put the three *matzot* the Ari placed at the top of the plate separate from the *k'arah*, or under it, as the Vilna Gaon did: This is practically accomplished with a three-tiered combination *mat zah/seder* plate, with holders for the *k'arah* foods on top.

Together, the items on the *k'arah* reflect what has happened to Jews in every dispersion throughout their history. First the Israelites experience renewal and birth (*karpas*) and establish themselves through labor

(*kharoset*). Their lives become bitter (*maror*); they sweat and cried (salt water) under oppression (*khazeret*). Through sacrifice they were redeemed (*z'roah*) and experienced rebirth (*beitzah*).

Often your Seder Plate will have cups or depressions labeled for where the Passover elements are to be placed.

KITTEL

The leader of the Passover ritual, who at his table (the substitute for the altar) acts in place of the Temple priest, traditionally wears a white robe (*kittel*) reminiscent of the vestments of the *Kohanim*. If your leader of the Seder does not possess one then it is customary to wear a white shirt and light colored slacks. It reminds one that the *seder* is not just a family get-together, but a sacred occasion. Lightweight, sometimes edged with gold or silver embroidery and belted over one's slacks and shirt, the *kittel* was also worn by Israelites on festivals as an expression of joy and freedom.

In the Jewish mystical spectrum, white represents God's mercy and loving kindness. The special garment also recalls that the slaves preserved their Jewishness partly by keeping their traditional clothing, for which God looked kindly on them. Carrying additional meanings when worn on Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur, on those days and this, as well as when donned by a father at his son's *brit milah* (covenant through circumcision) and by a bridegroom on his wedding day, it signifies a transition from one state of life to another.

Previously made by women for their husbands, the cotton wrap can be purchased where religious articles are sold. Today they are used primarily by more traditional Jews.

FOUR CUPS OF WINE AND A FIFTH FOR ELIJAH

Each person at the table needs a glass for wine or grape juice, because drinking four cups is required of every participant. Since spills are inevitable, it is a good idea to place each wine goblet on a plate or into a shallow bowl, and or to put an absorbent paper napkin or towel under it.

An additional wine glass, designated as Elijah's cup, is placed on the table for use later in the service.

Additional Seder Items

To fulfill the *mitzvah* to "recline" during the service as an expression of freedom, pillows are usually placed behind the leader, if not every guest. The custom developed from the origins of the *seder* when festive meals were taken Greco-Roman freeman style on comfortable chaises.

Many people have snack items and candy on hand to keep children occupied and attentive. Candles long enough to burn throughout the *seder* are popular for adding a festive touch to the table. A pitcher and basin (or any pouring device and receptacle available) and towel for the hand-washing rituals, and *kippot* (skullcaps, or *yarmulkes*, in Yiddish) for all men present are also needed.

MEMORIAL CANDLE

On the evening before the *Yizkor* memorial service will be held in synagogue (the last day of pilgrimage festivals and Yom Kippur), anyone who has lost a parent customarily lights a *yahrtzite* candle in memory of the deceased. Since candles, which come in small cans or glasses, burn for twenty-five hours, they are also popular sources of fire for candlelighting and cooking done after a festival has begun. You can find them in Jewish supply stores and supermarkets that have kosher food sections.

Well that was not too hard was it? I sure hope not and the more you read over this and familiarize yourself with these new terms then the Passover becomes more comfortable; especially for those who are just beginning to be Torah observant and who are beginning to observe the Festivals of the Lord.



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OBSERVING PASSOVER...KEYS TO SUCCESS

Set within the home environment and focused on the family, the key to Jewish continuity, Passover is a model for observing a holiday and teaching the tradition. In fact, it is the most important domestic event of all Jewish festivals.

Despite the fact that it is the most labor-intensive, complicated, time-consuming and habit-altering holiday on the calendar, it has always been extremely popular. Its messages have resounded with truth and encouragement, and it speaks even to religious skeptics on a very basic level. Those throughout the ages who had little concern for following the *mitzvot* have often celebrated Passover, in its fullness, at least for the benefit of their children. And despite the minutia of preparation, it was always celebrated with joy, fostering renewed confidence that whatever terrible situations Jews found themselves in would eventually be relieved.

The major observances of Passover are abstention from eating any foods containing leavening and participation in the ritual meal on the first two nights of the holiday (only the first night in Israel and among Reform Jews).

USHERING IN OF THE PASSOVER

As for all biblically ordained holidays, we welcome Passover by:

- **Lighting festival candles (called to *bentsh* [blessing] *likht* [light] in Yiddish),**
- **Bringing blessings and light and symbolically, the illumination of Torah into the house.**

As for Shabbat, the woman of the household (or the man if no woman is present) lights at least two candles (corresponding to the two Torah passages commanding us to remember and guard the Sabbath day [Exodus 20:8; Deuteronomy 5:12]). Often a candle is added for each child in the family.

If *yom toy* (holiday) coincides with Shabbat, you must light the candles as you would for the Sabbath, eighteen minutes before sundown. You can get a calendar that gives the proper time which depends on your location from a Jewish bookstore or institution such as *Khabad*, or check your newspaper for the time of sunset. This is done because after sundown, the Jewish people are commanded that they cannot light a fire, and the extra minutes help prevent you from accidentally going over the time limit. To the non-Jew who has not converted to Judaism this commandment is optional and does not apply. If *yom toy* falls during the week, you may light after sunset from *an existing flame*, but it is preferable to light candles at the earlier time, which signals the beginning of a welcome occasion.

By Jewish tradition, a blessing is supposed to precede the *mitzvah* it describes. However, in the case of Shabbat, once you recite the blessing, you have already introduced the Sabbath into your home, which means you can no longer light. So in this situation, it is customary to light the candles first, then cover our eyes, so it is as though the candles have not yet been lit. Although technically this is not necessary on *yom toy*, for the sake of avoiding confusion we consistently follow the Shabbat procedure on festivals as well. It is customary to circle

our arms over the flames three times, drawing the spirit of the day of sanctity to ourselves, ending with our hands over our eyes.

Recite both the blessing for the candles, and the *shehekheyanu*, a blessing made the first time each year that something is experienced: a festival begins, a piece of new clothing is worn, a particular fruit is eaten, and so on.

Blessed are You, Lord our God, King of the Universe, Who has sanctified us with His commandments and commanded us to kindle the lights of [Sabbath and of] the festival.

Blessed are You, Lord our God, King of the Universe, Who has kept us alive, sustained us, and brought us to this season.

Before lighting candles to usher in the second day of *yom toy*, we have to wait for the first day to be finished, so instead of lighting prior to sunset, we light after nightfall. We use a preexisting flame twenty-five-hour candle, oven pilot light, stove burner (which had been lit prior to the festival candles on the first evening) to ignite the wicks.

On the seventh and eighth days of Passover, which are full festival days, candles are lit as described above. However, since these are not separate holidays in their own right, and we have already said the *shehekheyanu* for this festival, only the blessing for the candles is made. The *yahrtzite* candle (memorial candle) in memory of a departed relative should be lit before the festival lights.

THE SEDER

It has been observed that no Jewish ritual is more followed and thought of more fondly than the Passover *seder*. As Jewish communal surveys and numerous literary works demonstrate, reminiscences of the shimmering holiday table, the aromas of once-a-year foods, the togetherness of family, and especially the familiar tunes stir something in us, bringing more people to the *seder* table than to any other Jewish celebration during the year. As Heinrich Heine observed, “even those Jews who have long forsaken the faith of their fathers and pursued foreign joys and honors are moved to the depths of their hearts when the old familiar sounds of the Passover happen to strike their ears.”

Such praise for Pesakh is not to deny that many people today have mixed if not outright contradictory feelings about the *sedarim*. Many capitulate to the whines of children and other participants who complain that the wait for the meal is too long, or the process boring or without significance. We all know people who race through the first part of the *haggadah* just to get to the meal and abandon the service after they have eaten, or treat the occasion as a springtime Thanksgiving, a family feast unencumbered by ritual. Sadly, they are missing the point and the exhilaration that Pesakh offers, robbing themselves and their children of beautiful meaning and memories.

If done right, the *seder* can captivate, excite, and inspire no less than a good stage production or a fascinating seminar. **The *haggadahs* inclusion of prayers and passages from different times and places in Jewish history that reflect not just one event but a continuous cycle of exile, oppression, and redemption, through today and into the future.** Working from the role of the Exodus in our national life, it emphasizes that the event in Egypt is just a beginning, not only of our journey but of our discussion on *seder* nights.

The Torah commands, and the *haggadah* reiterates, that **“in every generation each Jew should regard himself as though he personally went forth from Egypt.”** **By reliving the experience of the Israelites, we too as non-Jews share in these Eternal Truths and progress from idolatry to slavery and from ignorance to meaningful worship, freedom, and knowledge. Recalling that it was once possible to rise above the debasement and warped values of a surrounding and suppressing society and**

establish a more equitable order renews our faith that it is possible to do so again. There is tremendous hope in the saga of the Exodus and Passover can inspire us to seize it.

The key is to keep the *seder* stimulating. Certain elements of the service must, according to *halakhah*, be covered (explanation of the paschal lamb, *matzah* and *maror*, Rabbi Gamliel's dictum, plus telling the story of the Exodus and drinking four glasses of wine). When the tradition says "*Whomever expands on the story of the Exodus deserves praise,*" it does not mean that we should simply read every word of the *haggadah*. Only communicating Pesach's themes in a way that moves and motivates participants fulfills the *mitzvah*.

Celebrants use all sorts of devices to accomplish the purpose, with variety the rule: different *haggadot* for each of the two nights (or from year to year), stressing a theme (current events, Holocaust, endangered Jewish communities); using dramatic techniques (acting, mime, costumes, puppetry) and songs to present parts of the story (or its modern equivalents), scripted or ad-libbed (such as the *Sephardim* have long employed); using props and special effects, updating the service by listing modern-day plagues (diseases, famine, war, homelessness) or using "*Dayeinu*" to express appreciation for what is right in our world.

Each individual can talk about what freedom or the Passover experience means personally or can share the oppressions from which they fled. Some spend each of the *sedarim* with a different group of people, or in a different setting. There is no limit to your imagination. Some lounge on sofas, or recline on pillows on the living room floor or gather around a low table. Maimonides instructed that it is necessary to make changes to draw the children into the proceedings. He suggested such attention-getters as distributing snack foods, moving the table prior to the meal, and snatching pieces of *matzah* from each other.

Many of the rituals are included just to prompt questions, particularly from children, who are the focal point and honored attendees at the *seder*: They are our hope for the future as Pharaoh knew too well (Exodus 1:22, 10:11).

At the same time, we are all, some ways, like children. The sages instructed that if no child were present to ask the "Four Questions," the wife must do it, or another man, even a scholar. If no one else is available, the service leader must ask himself. There is always something to learn, especially, for most of us today, about what it means to be children of Israel.

PARTICIPATION IS THE KEY

If you will not be making a *seder* and cannot attend one made by friends or relatives, contact your local synagogue because many often have tickets for visitors if you so desire to attend the Passover at the Temple or synagogue. You might try to contact other communal organization and ask to be placed with a host family. Since it is a *mitzvah* to invite strangers to the festival table, people are happy to accommodate and generally sign up for the privilege of doing so. As a last resort, you may be able to join a communal *seder*, which many congregations and some organizations hold on one of the nights. These are not the same as the interfaith/interracial *sedarim* offered during the intermediate days of the holiday as an expression of shared values and concern and/or opportunities to improve mutual understanding.)

TIMING IS IMPORTANT

Unlike other festivals, when the candlelighting and *kiddush* which initiate the holiday are done at sundown, the *seder* may not begin until nightfall because that was the time the paschal lamb, *matzah*, and *maror* had to be eaten, and when *kiddush*, over the first of the four cups of wine, must be done. The start should not be delayed longer, however, because you want the children to remain awake, there is no point in unnecessarily delaying the meal, and the last part of the dinner must be eaten prior to midnight.

BASIC STRUCTURE TO THE SEDER

Fifteen steps take us through the evenings experience. Each one is designed to prepare us physically or psychologically for the next step as the ancient Jew did; progressing from slavery, from a life lived only in the moment, to redemption, which we see clearly in the future. They relate to the fifteen psalms that comprise the “Song of Ascents” (120-134), chanted by the Levites as they walked up the fifteen steps to the Temple, and suggest that the *seder* is also an ascent (*aliyah*), from slavery to freedom, the beginning of the forty-nine steps that will take us higher, to Mount Sinai and Torah which just so happens to follow as the next chronological Biblical Festival (Shavuot, Pentecost). Through it, we become a holy nation, eventually able to ascend to Jerusalem. (The same word, *aliyah*, is used to denote immigration to Israel.)

To ensure that the components of the *seder* were preserved when not every Jew had a *haggadah*, the rabbis devised a rhymed mnemonic that some families chant at the beginning of the *seder* and then up to the appropriate part as each ritual is reached. Variations on the tune are included in songbooks for Pesakh and on recorded versions of the *haggadah*.

The text of the *haggadah* and numerous commentaries fill entire books by themselves. What follows is an outline of the *seder* ceremony and a few highlights to help you think about what the steps mean.



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15 STEPS IN THE PASSOVER SEDER...WITH EXPLANATION

The Passover seder is the focus of the Passover holiday. The Passover Haggadah serves as the "instruction manual" for the Passover seder, and a copy is given to each person at the Passover seder table. There are 15 steps in the Passover seder and they are discussed below.

These 15 steps are the basic rituals and customs performed at the Passover meal, but the content of what one uses as vegetables and/or bitter herbs can vary with the country, region of a country, and/or city where you reside. One may ask: why are there 15 steps in the Passover seder? The answer may lie with where the number 15 appears in the Hebrew Bible. There were 15 steps leading up to the Temple in ancient Jerusalem, where the Levites, members of the priestly Hebrew Tribe of Levi, would climb up these 15 steps to the Temple and sing 15 psalms from the Book of Psalms, written by King David. These 15 psalms were referred to collectively as the **Song of Ascents**. This was probably either referring to the fact that one 'ascended' to Jerusalem, since it sits atop hills, or to the fact that one 'ascended' to a House of God (Temple), or to an altar in the Temple. **The connection between the 15 Passover steps and the 15 Song of Ascents lies with the holiness each step represents, leading up to communicating with God.**

As one moves through the 15 steps of the Passover seder, there is a gradual transition from recalling past tragedies of slavery in the Passover story to discussing the future and the subjects of freedom and redemption. This is achieved by describing the food and wine rituals and the symbolisms they represent in recalling the past and in describing the future. This essentially means that from past sufferings can arise hope, happiness, freedom and justice for all in future times.

The Sages designed the Passover Seder as 15 steps to make you enormously successful. Here's the key to unlocking the code. **Passover is the time when each Jew, as well as non-Jew if he observes the Passover, embarks on a personal journey from slavery to freedom.** In order to guide us in our quest, the Sages carefully wrote a book outlining 15 steps to freedom. **It's called the Haggadah.** The Sages say that Passover occurs on the 15th of Nissan (the Jewish month), to teach us that just as the moon waxes for 15 days, so too our growth must be in 15 gradual steps. Think of these as 15 pieces of the Passover puzzle. Assemble them all and you've got freedom!



Kaddesh...The Reciting Of The Kiddush Blessing

We begin the Seder by reciting a blessing, or kaddesh. At the beginning of most festive meals, we drink wine, and we recite a blessing to thank God for providing us with the wine, and for showing us his grace. The leader of the Passover will lead the participants in saying the blessings throughout the Passover in "unison".

So in beginning the Seder, we make Kiddush and sanctify the day. The word "kiddush" means special and unique. The sanctification over wine (usually pronounced *kiddush*, from the word for holy) initiates every Sabbath and festival, customarily over a brimming cup of wine, a symbol of joy. ***"Wine gladdens the heart of***

man"* (Psalms 104:15.) Giving a regular meal a spiritual dimension, *the kiddush on seder nights is recited over the first of the four cups of wine.

While it is customary to use red wine because it was thought to be superior (based on Proverbs 23:31), it also recalls the blood connected with Passover (murdered newborns, first plague, doorpost markings, circumcision required to partake of the Passover meal). White wine was often substituted in the Middle Ages because of the blood libels (though that did not always help), and today both red and white are used. Grape juice, for children and those who cannot tolerate wine (especially in Pesakh quantities!), is counted as wine.

After "slaving away" during the previous days and weeks to get ready for the holiday, the wine helps us make the transition from enslavement to liberty. Each cup helps take us back in time and space, facilitating our ability to relive the experience. The four cups are said to represent the four times Pharaoh's cup is mentioned in the story of Joseph's success at dream interpretation (Genesis 40:11-14) and the four kingdoms that subjugated Israel after the Exodus (Babylon, Persia, Greece, and Rome). They also reflect the four expressions God used when He promised to bring us out of Egypt: "bring you out", "deliver you", "redeem you", and "take you unto Me" (Exodus 6:6-7).

We recline when we drink, and eat (except for the *maror* [since the slavery it symbolizes conflicts with the freedom expressed by reclining]), toward the left. It was the position on the ancient sofas, so people could free their right hand (for most, the preferred hand) to feed themselves. It was believed that leaning toward the right might allow food to enter the windpipe, causing one to choke.

The Kiddush over the wine is recited and all drink from the "first cup" of wine.

Urkhatz...Washing Of The Hands

It is an ancient custom to wash one's hands before eating. In modern times, we usually wash our hands in private before sitting at the table. However, as part of the Passover ritual, we wash our hands together at the table. A bowl of water and a towel are passed and the guests wash their hands.

"Why do we wash our hands at this point in this Seder?" the Talmud asks. "Because it is an unusual activity which prompts the children to ask questions." The very name Haggadah means "telling," for the goal of the Seder is to arouse curious questions, and satisfying answers.

We wash our hands by taking a cup of water in the left hand and pouring half its contents in three splashes over the right hand, then switching and pouring the remainder over the left (lefties reverse the order). You can pass a pitcher, basin, and towel from person to person, have one person walk around to each guest's place, or rise from the table to use a sink.

Although we normally say a blessing when washing (because we usually wash in preparation for eating bread), we omit the *brakhah* (blessing) here because it will be a while until we begin the actual meal. The action may be left over from the ancient practice of washing hands prior to eating anything moist (our next step) because the sages said that unclean hands defiled the liquid.

Today it serves two purposes: to prompt questions from children ("Why is someone walking around the table with a pot of water?" "Why are we washing if we're not ready to eat?" "Why don't we say a blessing?") and to prepare us physically for the Exodus experience: we "wash our hands" of the slave mentality, the first step to independence.

Karpas...The Eating Of The Vegetable That Is Dipped In Salt Water

Like today, formal dinners in ancient times began with an hors d'oeuvre, or an appetizer. At the Seder, we eat a green vegetable. The green vegetable itself is a symbol of renewal. However, we dip the green vegetable into salt water, in order to remind us of the tears shed by the Jews in Egypt.

A small cup of salt water is set apart from the **Passover seder plate**. These are helpful in the laying out and orderly arrangement of the elements that you will incorporate in your Passover observance. Later on in the Passover seder meal, the karpas is also dipped into the salt water. The custom of dipping vegetables into salt water or vinegar may have been derived from the activities at ancient Roman banquets where guests would begin the banquet by dipping vegetables in either vinegar or a fruit sauce.



The salt water should also remind us of the tears shed by oppressed and dispossessed people today. Together, the salt water and green vegetable remind us that even out of grief can come the joy of new growth. In many parts of the world today, grief is leading to joy. The new freedom of oppressed people, though tenuous, is still a welcome relief from years, or even decades, of turmoil.

The karpas can be a mixture of boiled potatoes or radishes, and parsley which is dipped in salt water and symbolizes the undernourishment of the Hebrew slaves, as well as the new Spring season.

There is a blessing said to God for the green vegetable which is given man. We take a green vegetable and bless God for creating fruits from the ground.

The green vegetable or potato or parsley is then dipped into salt water, the substance both of tears and life genesis. Initially in Egypt the Israelites grew and prospered. But birth of too many led to oppression, salty sweat, and tears of pain. Salt also recalls the Temple, whose loss we mourn, where sacrifices were always salted. This is another stimulus for questions ("You call that an hors d'oeuvre?" "Where's the rest of dinner?" "Parsley? Why are we eating this stuff that's normally just plate decoration?") and an opportunity for parents to teach children that physical desires are not always immediately met, that a physical act can be invested with spirituality when accompanied by learning and prayer.

Yakhatz...The Breaking Of The Middle Matzah

We eat Matzah at the Seder because, as the story of Passover tells us, the Jews did not have time to wait for their bread to rise as they fled Egypt. All they had to eat was the flat, unleavened bread that they baked on rocks in the hot sun. We will eat from three Matzot during the Passover Seder. These 3 matzah are named the Cohen, Levi, and Israel, after the three classes of Jews. We eat from all three because, tonight being a festival of freedom, class distinctions are meaningless.

The middle of the three matzot is broken in two. One half is replaced on the plate, and the other is hidden. It will become the Afikomen. We break the middle matzah, and put it aside to serve later as the Afikomen. Many wonder why the middle matzah is broken and it is saved for later. We are taught that it is "saved" for later because a key to freedom is to anticipate the future and make it that make make it real. The definition of maturity is the ability to trade a lower pleasure now for a higher pleasure later. Children lack this perspective and demand instant gratification. The challenge of adulthood and maturity is training ourselves to look at the long-term consequences. "Who is the wise man?" asks the Talmud. "The one who sees the future." We break the middle Matzah, not for now, but for later. Because true freedom is a long-term proposition. Knowing these lessons we continue with the Seder and the breaking of the middle matzah.

The leader breaks the middle *matzah* in half, puts the smaller portion back on the plate, and wraps the larger portion (suggesting that more is hidden to us than revealed) in a napkin or a special bag for the *afikoman* (as this piece of *matzah* is called). This is another one of the devices promoted by Talmud to keep children awake and prompt them to ask, once again, what is so special about this night. Among *Ashkenazim*, children customarily "steal" the *afikoman* and ransom it at the end of the meal for a reward when the leader cannot find it. In some families the leader hides it and the child who finds it claims a reward.

At this point, the *matzah* is *lekhem oni*, the inadequate fare of the poor (slaves to their status), who must suffice with less than a full portion, and often, not knowing where the next meal will come from, saving some for later. The act of breaking the *matzah* puts us in the position of the poor, at least symbolically. Having a partial portion also suggests that life is incomplete for all of us as long as we are in exile.

Shattering and breaking of the *matzah* brings to mind the breaking of the bonds that we come, through habit and complacency, to accept, the illusion of security in which we live, financial and especially political, which makes us think that somehow we can exist with the threat of tyranny. It is taking the first step to liberation.

Signifying the hospitality we are about to extend, breaking the bread also prepares us to break bread with those who need it.

Maggid...The Story Of The Exodus...Is Recited

The telling of the story of Exodus is the reason for the *seder*. It turns the *seder* table into a Jewish environment for learning. One interesting note about it: Except for a truly incidental reference, the name of the hero of the story, affectionately known in our tradition as Moshe Rabbeinu (Moses our Teacher), is not mentioned. The omission was purposeful: to avoid anyone thinking that Moses, rather than God, had effected the redemption and to prevent the possibility of Moses being turned into an object of idol worship-which the Exodus was meant to eliminate. The sites of Mount Sinai and Moses' burial are unknown for the same reason.

Opening Ones Home And Hearts

The leader begins by uncovering and lifting the plate holding the "bread of affliction our ancestors ate in Egypt" and invites all who are hungry to eat with us (fulfilling physical needs), all who are needy to join us in celebrating Passover (fulfilling spiritual yearnings). We go to the trouble of reexperiencing our servitude in Egypt so that we never forget what it means to be a slave, an outcast. Reaching beyond ourselves to help others is the true sign of freedom from "self".

This part of the *seder* originated in Babylonia, where hosts actually went into the streets to extend a welcome. So that everyone would understand the invitation, it was said in Aramaic, the local tongue. For this reason, many people today say it in the vernacular. Although it is unlikely we would bring someone off the street at this point in the evening, we should think of all those who are hungry, physically, emotionally, and spiritually, all who are strangers, within their own families and to their own heritage, who need our support. With the persecutions from the Middle Ages on, opening the door became too risky and was eliminated from the beginning of the service. As a sign of hospitality, some people have recently reinstated it.

In contrast, the lines that follow, expressing hope to be in Jerusalem next year and for all to be free, were pronounced in Hebrew. This prevented the Babylonians from understanding the words and thinking that the Jews were planning to revolt.

Matzah of Hope

In the past few decades, it has become customary to include special prayers and readings on behalf of Jewish communities still oppressed (most commonly the Soviet and Ethiopian Jews), often over a specially designated piece of *matzah*. Prayers on behalf of Soviet and Ethiopian Jewry have been altered to reflect the change in their situations since mass immigration to Israel was allowed. Check with an advocacy group or a local synagogue for an updated text. The arrival of large numbers of those communities in Israel has not eliminated the need for concern. Not all have reached safety; Jews in certain countries (e.g., Syria) are still endangered, and Jews everywhere live under the afflictions of poverty, sickness, and spiritual malaise. As long as some are oppressed, none of us is truly free, and collectively we are prevented from enjoying universal peace. To emphasize our responsibility in bringing all Jews together, the *Matzah* of Hope is also identified as the *Matzah* of Unity.

Four Questions

The content of the "*Mah Nishtanah*" (why is [this night] different), as the four questions are more popularly known, presents the dual themes of the evening. *Matzah* (the first question) is both the bread of slaves and of free people. Bitter herbs (second question) symbolize servitude as well as an elegant privilege: the hors d'oeuvre dipped into another substance. *Karpas* (third question) represents the suffering of slavery and the rebirth of redemption, as does dipping twice-greens in salt water and later bitter herbs in *kharoset*, which itself commemorates both enslavement (Joseph's brothers, after selling him, dipped his coat in lamb's blood to convince their father he had been attacked by a wild animal [Genesis 37:31]) and liberation (the hyssop dipped in lamb's blood to mark the Jewish households [Exodus 12:22]).

The act of questioning reflects freedom, evidence that we are not restrained in seeking to satisfy our intellectual curiosity through probing and analysis. Questions, not answers, allow us to progress in our learning, to acquire knowledge that lifts us out of ignorance, which can be as brutal an oppressor as a tyrannical taskmaster.

The four questions are not directly answered in the *seder*, a suggestion that formulating the right questions, and searching for the truth in response, is an ongoing process.

Avadim Hayinu (We were slaves)

What we really want to know, of course, is why we celebrate Passover, which the *haggadah* explains. The sages debated whether, in following the talmudic principle that we "begin with degradation and end with glory," we start with the debasement of slavery or that of idolatry. Is physical bondage imposed from outside more shameful, or is spiritual bondage, the result of personal choices, a worse humiliation? In including both slavery and idolatry in the *seder* story (the second comes a few pages later in the *haggadah*), we reach back to Abraham, who started the journey to redemption by smashing his father's idols, recognizing One God, and receiving the covenant the Israelites were taken from Egypt to uphold.

Remembering our lowly origins is a means of keeping us from rising so far above afflictions we have escaped that we forget they are very real for too many people. Yet with our eye on glory at the conclusion of the story, we know there is a happy ending, and are encouraged to keep going forward.

Five Sages

A well-known passage of the *haggadah* describes one Passover evening in B'nei B'rak when leading rabbis of the post-Temple era sat up all night, so engrossed in discussing the Exodus that their students had to inform them the sun was about to rise. The report raises numerous questions (among them, especially for children, "how could they have possibly spent so much time at it?"). This is an example of how the night's themes have held immediacy throughout Jewish history: It is a veiled account of Passover celebrated with political purpose.

The sages of the story lived under Roman occupation-essentially in exile in their own land-when Torah study had been prohibited. On that memorialized Pesakh evening, they were engaged in a crisis session to plan the best course for the community:

Were they to merely keep the memories alive secretly, through the darkest periods, finding ways to worship, always hoping for and expecting redemption, or were they to resist openly, fighting for political and religious independence?

One of the participants, Rabbi Akiva, supported the rebellion leader Bar Kokhba ("son of star"), whose rising the eager activist students announced after the all-night debate (see chapter on Lag B'Omer). Later, after the devastating defeat of Bar Kokhba and the end of any kind of dynamic Jewish existence in the Holy Land until the modern era, the *galut* mentality of passivity-out of which grew the image of the meek, defenseless, physically subordinate Jew- dominated until the twentieth century.

Then Zionism reignited the pacifism versus activism debate that was essentially ended by the Holocaust and establishment of the modern Jewish homeland. In recent decades, similar questions were again raised by advocacy groups grappling with determining the most prudent means of obtaining freedom for Soviet and Ethiopian Jews.

The Four Sons

Four times the Torah instructs that a parent teach his/her child the story of Passover (Exodus 12:26; 13:8; 13:14; Deuteronomy 6:20), both in response to questions (three of the passages) and even when a child does not ask. The wording of each suggests a different level of personal involvement with the Exodus story and its commemoration and reflects a different level of commitment to the Jewish people (the intellectually curious "wise" person, who includes him/herself in the community and is eager for details of all the laws; the rebellious "wicked" person, who disassociates him/herself from the group and is negative toward its ritual; the "simple" person perhaps immature or naive, who has natural faith; and the unquestioning person, who needs to be treated and taught from beginning to end with sensitivity). On one level the questions acknowledge that individuals have varying interests and capacity to understand, and that the responses they elicit should be given accordingly. Many commentators contend that the four sons, or children refer not only-or not at all-to minors or aspects of them within all of us. Rather, they stand for ideological groups that threatened rabbinic Judaism in the first and second centuries, when the *haggadah* was written (Hellenes, Judeo-Christians, Sadducees, Essenes), or political attitudes of Jews living under Roman rule (supporters of revolution, those who refused to join the revolt even at its crisis point, those who had been enslaved by Rome, and those who had not been exposed to Judaism and did not know what the revolt was all about).

The most significant interpretation for our age is that ascribed to Rabbi Joseph Isaac Schneersohn (1880-1950), the former Lubavitcher Rebbe, who saw in the four generations of the American Jewish experience, each one successively removed from European roots of Jewish observance:

the religious immigrant; the rejecting second generation; the confused third generation in conflict between the tradition of his/her grandparents' home and the trouncing of *mitzvot* by his/her parents; and the alienated ignorant fourth generation, who never knew his/her great-grandfather and has no basis on which to even form a question. It is the ignorance and indifference that every generation must combat, by making Judaism and Jewish education relevant and appealing so that the next child in line is not so far from our heritage that she or he does not know that Pesakh has arrived or what it signifies.

By now you've probably noticed that there are quite a few "fours" in this ceremony (glasses of wine, questions, ritual foods, sons). The number is used to describe a long list of things with Jewish significance (matriarchs, epochs of the universe, groupings of the tribes in the wilderness, fringes on the corners of ritual garments, species used on the holiday of Sukkot, and on and on). A mystical number in several religions, in Judaism the number four suggests stability and wholeness, as in defining a square that is the base of a house-or the "four corners of the earth" from which the Jews will be collected together at the time of redemption.

The Ten Plagues

When Pharaoh would not answer Moses' pleas to let his people go, God visited upon him 10 plagues. With each drop each of the plagues are recited: "These were the ten plagues that God visited on the Egyptians: Blood, Frogs, Vermin, Wild Beasts, Cattle Disease, Boils, Hail, Locusts, Darkness, Slaying of the First-Born". We recite the name of each plague, and spill a little wine with each one into a plate. We spill our wine to lessen our enjoyment of the wine, because no one deserves the cruelty that was made necessary by their short-sighted leader.

Scholars love to give natural explanations for the ten plagues. They may be right and still not negate traditional Jewish belief that the plagues were arranged "by Heaven" (the Jewish definition of miracle is a natural occurrence that comes at the opportune moment), or that they hold relevant symbolic significance. For instance, they are interpreted as measure-for-measure retribution for the Egyptians' own actions.

According to this explanation, blood was for the drowned infants; frogs covering everything for the taskmasters being constantly on the Israelites' backs; welt-causing lice getting under the skin for the whip of overseers; beasts to mirror the Egyptians' beastly behavior; cattle disease for stealing the livestock of the Jews when they had been shepherds and herds-men; boils for making the Jews live in filthy, skin-irritating conditions; hail for the evil words rained down on the Jews; locusts to destroy grains for the straw the Jews had to collect to make bricks; darkness for the general condition slavery imposes on its victims; and death of the firstborn for torture of God's firstborn, Israel.

The plagues have also been understood as means of humiliating the Egyptians for the worthless gods they worshipped, portraying them as bloody (the Nile), obnoxious (a frog-headed creature), diseased (livestock), eclipsed (the sun), and dead (heir to the throne). Affecting the ground itself, the creatures that live on it, and the atmosphere, the plagues demonstrated the Israelite God's sovereignty over earth, nature, life, and death.

The way we incorporate the ten plagues in our ceremony highlights an important Jewish value: We must never sink to the level of our oppressors. We were taken out of Egypt not just to end the brutal subjugation but so that we would not be lost in their unjust, decadent, life-wasting culture. As we recite each of the plagues, we remove a drop of wine from our cups-either with the pinky (symbolizing the "finger of God" Pharaoh's priests recognized as the force behind their troubles [Exodus 8:15]) or with a spoon. Despite all the horrendous actions of our enslavers, they were still human beings. And because our salvation involved their suffering, our joy cannot be complete. For that reason we diminish the wine, symbol of gladness, to express our sorrow. (Since these drops represent plagues, it is inappropriate to lick your finger or spoon after spilling them.)

For the same reason, only the half *Hallel* is recited during the last six days of Passover. *Midrash* relates that when the Egyptians were drowning in the Reed Sea, the angels wanted to sing praises. God rebuked them. "How can you sing Hallelujah when My children are drowning?" Proverbs teaches us "If your enemy falls, do not exult. If he trips, let your heart not rejoice" (24:17). Our tradition teaches us that although we should categorically reject Egyptian practices, we are not to despise the Egyptians, who despite later abuse, did feed and shelter us during the famine. The expression of sensitivity is a reminder that once we win freedom we are to use it appropriately and not apply our new strength to oppress others.

Dayeinu

A *seder* favorite, the lively song with the one-word refrain (much longer in English: "It would have been sufficient for us"), is a progression of expressions of gratitude for each of the fifteen stages in the redemption from Egypt. Although we needed to reach Sinai and then the Temple to achieve our spiritual potential, the song teaches us to appreciate whatever we have, however short of the goal it might be (the glass is half full rather than half empty). Each step provides a promise of something better than the current situation, a reflection of the Jews' eternal optimism. At the same time, the situation at each step is better than the previous one and an accomplishment in itself. Creating a personal *Dayeinu*, or a family version as part of the *seder*, can be a powerfully affirming exercise.

Hallel

Following explanation of the symbolic foods (*zroah*, *matzah*, *maror*), and commandment for each of us to feel as though we personally left Egypt, we chant the first part of the "Psalms of Praise." Called Egyptian *Hallel*, it consists of two psalms (113 and 114) dealing with the delivery from Egypt, which were chanted by the Levites in the Temple when the paschal sacrifices were offered. They form one of the oldest portions of the *haggadah*.

Rakhatz...The Second Washing Of The Hands

One aspect of freedom is the ability to elevate ourselves above the lowest common denominator on the street. We've all felt the sensory assault of billboards, gratuitous talk-radio, immodest fashions, and violence on TV. At

the Seder we wash our hands as a preparatory step before the Matzah, in order to carefully consider what it is we're about to eat. One who is concerned with spiritual and physical health is discriminating about all forms of consumption: which movies to watch, which friends to spend time with, and what standards of business ethics to uphold. The streets are filled with a multitude of options. But we must not consume indiscriminately. We "wash our hands" to cleanse and distance ourselves from unhealthy influences. Freedom is the ability to say: "I choose not to partake."

After the second cup of wine, we wash our hands, as in *urkhatz*, this time with the blessing. It is another transition point, as we are about to begin the meal. We refresh our spirits in preparation for the physical celebration of a new physical state.

Motzi/Matzah...The Blessing For The Matzah

We make the "hamotzi" blessing to thank God for "bringing forth bread from the ground."

Matzah is unleavened bread similar to a cracker and it symbolizes the haste with which the Israelites experienced when they were fleeing slavery in Egypt. When the Israelites were hastily preparing to leave Egypt, they had no time to bake leavened bread and instead baked the unleavened bread known as matzah. According to tradition, the original matzah was kneaded and baked in a total of 18 minutes. Traditional matzahs - including the matzah that was created by the Hebrews in their haste to leave Egypt - are thin, round-shaped and are hand-made, while machine-made matzahs - and in some cases hand-made matzahs - are thin and square-shaped. Perforations are added into the dough for making matzah to retard the leavening process.

When we make "hamotzi," or the blessing to God for "bread", we hold the Matzah with all 10 fingers - reminding us that while human hands produced this food, it is yet another gift from the Creator and Sustainer of all life.

With such understanding each participant takes a piece of the top *matzah* and the broken middle *matzah* (because there is disagreement as to whether the blessing applies to the bread of affliction or the top festival bread, we take both), salts them and eats, following the *brakha* (*the blessing*), reclining to the left.

Maror...The Bitter Herbs

The bitter vegetables remind us of the bitterness of a life not free. We dip them in Charoseth (Haroset) to help us remember, however, that even in a difficult life there are little joys to be had.

Maror (Marror, Morror, Moror) is very bitter horse-radish that symbolizes the hardships of slavery. It is very strong. I mean it. Some communities place a second maror on the Passover seder plate called chazeret which is used for making Hillel's sandwich. The chazeret must not be the same type of bitter vegetable as the karpas. Examples of chazeret include radishes, watercress, cucumber, endive, or romaine lettuce.

Charoseth (Haroseth, Charoset, Haroset) is a mixture of crushed nuts, apples, cinnamon, and honey, which symbolizes the mortar the Hebrew slaves in Egypt used in constructing buildings for the Pharaoh. The sweet taste of charoset is also supposed to take the sting out of the bitter taste of the maror, both literally and symbolically. Although the composition and mixture of charoset represents the bricks and mortar used by the Hebrews, the sweet taste of charoset represents the sweet taste of freedom that overtakes the bitter taste of maror, which represents slavery. The movement from slavery to freedom also refers to a transition from depending on other cultures to survive to depending on one's own self and one's own group to survive and self-govern. At Roman feasts or banquets, there was a custom of dipping vegetables in either fruit sauce or vinegar. Over time, charoset may have eventually represented the fruit sauce.

At the Seder we say: "In every generation they rise against us to annihilate us." The Egyptians broke our backs and our spirits. The Romans destroyed the Second Temple and rivers of Jewish blood flowed. And so it was in every generation: Crusades, Inquisitions, Pogroms, Holocaust, Arab terrorism. Intense and irrational violence

has stalked our people to every corner of the globe. Why the hatred?

The Talmud says the Hebrew word for "hatred" (*sinah*) is related to the word "Sinai." At Mount Sinai, the Jewish people acquired the legacy of morality and justice -- a message that evil cannot tolerate. The Jews taught the world "to beat their swords into plowshares." They taught the world "to love your neighbor as yourself." They taught the world equality before justice, and that admiration belongs not to the rich and powerful -- but to the good, the wise, and the kind.

Throughout the generations, the forces of darkness have sought to extinguish the Jewish flame. But the Jews have somehow prevailed. They have God's promise that we will be the eternal nation. For without the message of Israel, God's Royal Priesthood, the world would revert to utter chaos.

At the Seder, we eat the bitter herbs -- in combination with Matzah -- to underscore that God is present not only during our periods of freedom (symbolized by the Matzah), but during our bitter periods of exile as well. He will never forsake us.

We dip for the second time, immersing the bitter herbs (use a spoon if your choice is horseradish) into the *kharoset*. When the Temple stood, *maror*, representing bondage and exile, was eaten at the end of the *seder*, say our rabbis, because the celebrants knew that they would end up going into exile. Today, when we are in exile, we eat them first, as a prelude to the post-dinner concentration on future redemption.

Korekh...The Matzah/Maror Sandwich (Hillel Sandwich)

Hillel, a Jewish sage, invented this way of eating and together, in recognition of an obscure biblical commandment. It also serves to symbolize the bitterness of slavery combined with the beginnings of freedom, as the Matzah was the first thing the Jews ate on their long road to freedom. The Hillel Sandwich is "bricks-and-mortar" which is broken but Matzah held together by bitter herbs and charoset. The Matzah was once whole. So too, the Jewish people can become crushed and divisive. But they are held together by their common links to Torah and their shared historical experiences.

The Talmud says that as Jews in Egypt, we were redeemed only because of our unity. We were unified in our commitment to each other and to the future of as God's people. **Weeks later at Mount Sinai, as a mixed multitude our Gentiles forefathers (Egyptians) stood together with the Israelites and accepted the Torah with one heart and one mind. We stand symbolically every Passover when partaking of the Seder and make our statement of faith and commitment to God realizing that we are truly grafted into the Israel of God with the Jewish people.**

The Matzah may be broken, but it can be restored. It is this Hillel Sandwich which has traditionally symbolized the commitment to glue the Jewish nation back together. On the merit of unity they were redeemed from Egypt, and it is on that merit that we shall be redeemed once again.

The first-century sage Hillel invented the sandwich (*korekh*) of *matzah* and *maror* because of the Torah injunction to eat the two with the Passover lamb (Exodus 12:8). He understood they were to be eaten together. Each person at the *seder* constructs a sandwich out of two pieces of *matzah* and some *maror*. We do not lean while eating it because the bitter herbs signify slavery, but the sandwich actually combines that state with redemption (the *matzah*).

This duality prompts us to think about how the two factors coexist in our own lives, and how each reminds us of the other: When we are oppressed, the taste of freedom lingers. And when we are free, we recall the pain of oppression. This awareness keeps us mindful of those who still live under slavery and helps us guard our own behavior.

Shulkhan Orekh...The Festive Meal

Now the first part of our Seder is complete we can eat our festive meal.

When we think of attaining levels of holiness, it seems strange that one of the mitzvots of Seder night should be eating a festive meal. That is because the Jewish attitude toward our physical drives and material needs is quite different from that of other religions. Jewish religious leaders are neither celibate nor do they meditate all day on a mountain top. Rather than negating or denying the physical, Judaism stresses the importance of feasting and marital relations and sanctifying all aspects of life unto God. God wants it that way. The proof is that instead of creating all foods bland (or in the form of "protein-pills"), God concocted a variety of flavors and textures -- orange, strawberry, chocolate, banana and mango. Why? Because God wants His people to have pleasure! Adam and Eve were put into the Garden of Eden -- the Garden of Pleasure.

The Talmud says that one of the first questions a person is asked when they get up to Heaven is: "Did you enjoy all the fruits of the world?" "Did you enjoy the beauty of Creation? I made it for you". On Seder night, we eat the festive meal to teach us that true freedom is the ability to sanctify all of life, not flee from it.

Eating a sanctified meal on our set table is part of the Jewish system of food preparation and consumption designed to elevate every step of the process above animal need to holy service (and likewise, to elevate us above our animal nature to more spiritual consciousness). The model is particularly appropriate for this occasion: The first commandment given to and followed by the Israelites in Egypt concerned preparation of the family meal they would make at home as a sign of their commitment to serve God. It shows how we can use the opportunity to strengthen feelings of belonging to our family and the family of Israel while teaching Jewish spiritual values.

Tzafun...The Afikhomen

The meal cannot end before dessert, and the Afikhomen means dessert. In ancient times, the roasted lamb was the dessert of the Passover meal. Today we eat the half of the middle Matzah that was hidden earlier.

The last thing we eat all night is this Afikoman. We eat this final piece of Matzah -- not because we are hungry - but because we are commanded. Physical pleasure, though an integral part of our lives, sometimes gives way to a higher value. The Bible teaches that we are to become a master of ourselves. It is this ability to rise above our physical selves that demarcates the difference between humans and animals. "Who is the strong person?" asks the Talmud. "The one who can subdue his personal inclination." In such a spirit we choose to "obey" and eat this piece of matzah even though we are full in order to underscore "obedience" as the stronger of the desires of the soul.

At the Seder, we hide the Afikomen, search, find it, and then the winner wins a prize! The same is true with our spiritual yearning to do the right thing. Although it might be buried inside, we can search for it, find it -- and the prize is pure freedom.

With this understanding then we see that the meal is not completed without the hidden afikoman-which means that the child who has successfully hidden or stolen it (in a family that follows one of those customs) is in a good position to be rewarded for relinquishing it. The leader "buys" it back for money, a prepared gift, or the promise to provide the requested ransom. The stand-in for the paschal lamb (or the *matzah* eaten with it), which was the last item eaten in the Pesakh meal, must be consumed prior to midnight, as the *pesakh* was. Nothing is to be eaten afterward (some authorities say water, apple juice, seltzer, coffee, and tea fall outside of "nothing"). If you do not have the actual *afikoman*, take another piece of *matzah* to end the meal.

Usually explained as "dessert," *afikoman* is from the Greek word describing post-banquet revelries. It may have been borrowed by the Jews to identify the desserts that followed a meal. Since no sweets were eaten after the sacrifice, and secular song and dance were prohibited, *afikoman* came to mean the last bit of the paschal lamb, later symbolized by this last piece of *matzah*, which finished the meal, leaving behind its taste of liberty.

Its hiddenness during the part of the *seder* that relived a time of oppression suggests that deliverance can come at anytime, when the instigator for it (like Moses, whom some say the *afikoman* represents) suddenly appears.

Bareikh...The Blessing After the Meal

Tradition states that barech, the "Grace After Meals" was instituted by Abraham 4000 years ago. It states that Abraham would invite idolatrous wayfarers into his tent for a hearty meal, and then tell them the price of admission is to bless God.

In the blessing (*birkat*, a form of *bareikh/barukh*) for the food just eaten, we thank God for physical, emotional, and spiritual gifts: sustenance, the Land He gave us on which to grow food in security, and our spiritual center there, Jerusalem. It is concluded by drinking the third cup of wine.

Elijah's Cup

Earlier we recited the famous words "let all who are hungry come and eat." There is one particular guest that we welcome now. The prophet Elijah, according to tradition, is the champion of the oppressed, and herald of good news. It is Elijah who is traditionally expected to announce the coming of the Messiah. Traditionally the leader of the Seder fills the 5th cup of wine for Elijah, and welcome him into our home. We open the door to welcome Elijah the prophet, who will announce the messiah, into our homes. A benchmark in the seder, particularly for the children who historically were advised to watch Elijah's cup carefully to see if any wine from it disappeared, it is actually a curious part of the proceedings.

Originally, the custom of opening the door had nothing to do with the prophet. Subjected to the horrifying blood libels of Europe, the Jews had to fearfully open their doors to prove to Christian neighbors that they had nothing heinous to hide.

Until recently, the name of the prophet did not even appear in the *haggadah* except in the *Birkat Hamazon*, and that is standard year-round text. Today, some people greet him with "*barukh habah*" (welcome) and often sing the hope that he will arrive soon ("*Eliyahu Hanavi, Eliyahu Hatishbi . . .*") usually intoned at the close of Shabbat. Traditionally, the opening of the door was followed by an invective against the nations ("Pour out Your wrath. . . clearly a reflection of the frustration felt by the Jews of the Middle Ages who, as victims of Crusades, pogroms, and countless indignities, introduced it).

While there is a clear connection between Passover, the holiday of redemption, and Elijah, the advance man of the future redeemer, the custom of including a special cup for the prophet on the *seder* table arose out of disagreement as to whether a fifth expression of deliverance (Exodus 6:8) called for an additional cup of wine, since it referred to something that would occur later, in messianic days, and not as part of the Exodus. Elijah was identified with the end of days because he was entrusted by God to witness the Jews' continued observance of the *mitzvot* (like *seder* and circumcision, every one of which he is said to attend). With the notion that prior to the messiah's arrival Elijah would solve all doubts and settle differences of opinion, the question of four or five cups was left to his ruling. In case it would be affirmative, the fifth cup was provided but not consumed (except by the Yemenites).

In a rich tradition of folklore, Elijah has often appeared on Earth, usually in the form of a beggar, to help the sick and impoverished. So it was not unusual for people to expect him to show up on their doorstep on the event dedicated to salvation and take a sip.

Like preparation of the paschal lamb, we open the door for Elijah (it's not as if he could not let himself in) because it is we who must act to bring about the desired goal. Based on the practice of the *khasidim*, to show their involvement in trying to facilitate redemption, some families have each person pour wine from his/her cup to fill Elijah's or place their cups around the one for Elijah.

Remembrance for the Six Million

Some *haggadot* include a ritual to commemorate those murdered in one of the most recent oppressions (see

chapter on Yom Hashoah). It includes special readings, poems, diary excerpts, prayers, and passages by and about victims of the ghettos and concentration camps, along with the song "*Ani Ma'amin*" (I Believe), the expression of total faith that the messiah will come.

Hallel...Another Blessing After the Meal

Hallel is a psalm of praise, which follows the Seder meal to indicate that this has been a religious service. It is a lengthy prayer, and many families omit it or abbreviate it.

The Seder is the only one of the 613 mitzvot that is performed specifically at night, for on Passover, we turn the darkness into light. With "Hallel," we abandon all intellectual posits, and experience the emotional joy of freedom. Song is the expression of an excited soul. It is the way to break out of oneself and reach for freedom.

The rest of the "Psalms of Praise" (115-118) follow the meal. Pledging service to God, thanking Him for many forms of goodness including freeing us, it concentrates on national redemption. The Great Hallel (*Hallel Hagadol*, Psalm 136), recounting the delivery from Pharaoh and other oppressors, deals with universal redemption.

Nirtzah...The End of the Seder

We conclude our Seder with the prayer, "Next Year in Jerusalem." Every synagogue in the world faces Jerusalem. It is the focus of our hopes and aspirations -- not merely in a geographic sense, but in a conceptual sense as well. The Talmud says creation began in Jerusalem, and the world radiated outward from this spot. Medieval maps show Jerusalem at the epicenter of Asia, Europe, and Africa. The world flows into this place, and all of life's forces resonate there. From Jerusalem, the whole world is cast into perspective.

The name Jerusalem means "city of peace." Peace, shalom, is more than the absence of conflict; it is the seamless harmony of humanity genuinely embracing a common vision. Jerusalem is a vision of God in our lives, a metaphor of a perfected world. Jerusalem gives us hope to achieve what we as a people must do, to sanctify this world.

In Egypt, we hadn't yet absorbed this lesson: we were too burnt out from hard work (Exodus 6:9) and had become immersed in the spiritual abyss of Egyptian society. When we finally were redeemed, it happened so quickly and hastily that even then we were unable to grasp its full significance. What this means is that year after year, each successful Seder adds meaning to the original events, and brings us closer to the final redemption.

As the Seder draws to a close, we sense the process of redemption is under way. We shout aloud: "Next Year in Jerusalem!" We're on our way back home.

After we count the *Omer* (see next section) and drink the final cup of wine, we express the desire that our concluded *seder* is acceptable, and that we will celebrate in freedom next year. We proclaim "L'shanah haba'ah b'Yerushalayim" ("Next year in Jerusalem"; when in Israel, "next year in Jerusalem rebuilt," the dream of Jews since we lost the Temple.

Although we have reclaimed the capital, until conditions in the world are drastically changed, the exile continues. It is not just a geographic boundary. It is a separation in the soul, within a community, among nations. One of the dangers we face as Jews living in a fairly tolerant democratic nation is that we are so comfortable as to not even realize we are in exile. If the preparation for and enactment of the *seder* has been experienced meaningfully, we emerge from it conscious of how the world needs to change drastically, of the exiles in our lives we need to reconcile in order to truly be in Jerusalem, a city whose name suggests peace (*shalom*) and completeness.

Post-Seder Songs

In the Middle Ages, reluctant to leave the festive table, participants added religious folksongs, number madrigals, nursery rhymes, and hymns that remain a popular part of the celebration. It is fun to sing them when enough people around the table are familiar with the words and music.

Well I hope that was educational and helped familiarize yourselves with what you will be dealing with when you actually observe and keep the Passover Seder.

Blessings..Craig Lyons M.Div.



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BET EMET MINISTRIES: INTRODUCTION TO THE PASSOVER...ADAPTED FOR THE NON-JEWISH BELIEVER

The Biblical (Jewish) Feast Days, including the Passover, represent a primary tool for teaching the Hebraic roots and fulfillment of Scripture. We believe that as a believer in God since most of us came to the knowledge of God through the ministry of Yeshua/Jesus as taught in the New Testament, that we should observe and commemorate the **Jewish Biblical Feast Days as God's Holy Days since they are commanded in Scripture of both the Jew and Gentile alike, but we do not believe that their observation is a religious requirement for salvation.** Keeping these Feast Days in themselves will not produce salvation. In Ephesians 2:8-10 it is written:

"For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith -- and this not from yourselves, it is the gift of God – not by works, so that no one can boast. For we are God's workmanship, created in Messiah Yeshua to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do."

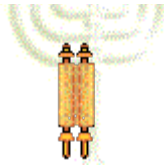
This Passover Haggadah (in Hebrew called ("the telling") is re-written as Bet Emet Ministries' own interpretation of a traditional Jewish Passover Seder as adapted for the non-Jewish believer. **The commentary and teachings in a traditional Jewish Passover DOES NOT contain references to Yeshua as the Messiah.**

It is the desire of Bet Emet Ministries [Hebrew for the House of Truth] that Christians begin to experience and celebrate the richness of Passover. Celebrating Passover and conducting Passover Seders has changed our lives and will your also. The Passover Seder is just one part of the annual cycle of God's Holy days that teaches so much more about God's redemptive plan and sadly few Christians have ever head this precious teaching let alone have ever experienced the Passover or shared a seder. Sadly, most Christians do not understand how Passover relates to their faith. Therefore, this Passover Haggadah is specifically written for Christians who want to know these truths and how each step of the Passover Seder teaches us about God's redemptive plan and our personal relationship with Him.

It is our prayer, that once you celebrate Passover, that you will understand the necessity of studying your Bible from a Hebraic perspective and am confident that God will bless you beyond measure and your walk with Him will blossom into a new and greater dimension than ever before!

If this Passover Haggadah is a blessing to you and if you would like further training materials on understanding the Hebraic roots of Christianity, please write or contact the ministry at the following addresses:

- Bet Emet Ministries
- Pastor Craig Lyons M.Div.
- 902 Cardigan Garland, Texas 75040
- or call us at 972-4964238



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BET EMET MINISTRIES: THE PASSOVER SEDER HOME SERVICE

Let us remember as non-Jews that we as a people are "grafted" into the Israel of God and likewise as Sinai were a "mixed multitude" of Jews and non-Jews who had just experience God's Passover in their lives. Let us learn the lessons taught to these people and apply then in thankfulness to our lives.
Craig Lyons M.Div.

In the following service many parts are to be read by a "designated" leader of the seder and other parts are to be "responded by the worshippers in unison". These parts are designated by both "Leader" or "All".

THE ORDER OF THE SERVICE

- Kaddesh and the 1st Cup
- U-R'chatz
- Karpas
- Yachatz
- Maggid and the 2nd Cup
- Rachtzah
- Motzi
- Matzah
- Maror
- Korech
- Shulchan Orech
- Tzafun
- Barekh and the 3rd Cup
- Hallel and The 4th Cup
- Nirtzah

It is a common practice to repeat aloud each step of the Seder as you proceed through the evening. This is not only a matter of convenience, but also makes you aware of the significant pattern of the Seder observance in all its detail. The structure of the Seder helps you experience the Exodus and teaches you the pattern for the future redemption.

KADDESH AND THE FIRST CUP OF WINE (Sanctification)

LEADER: We now sanctify this Holy day with the recitation of the Kaddesh. Please stand.

LEADER: As soon as evening is come, the Seder begins. Remember, the Biblical day begins in the evening and ends in the morning as God spoke concerning the seven days of creation and as recorded in the book of Genesis. In the traditional Jewish home, the father would have returned from the synagogue and the Yom Tov (festival) candles would have already been kindled. In many communities, parents bless their children as on other Shabbat and Yom Tov evenings. Next, the family and guests gather around the table to recite the Kiddush, proclaiming the sanctity of the day.

LEADER: Mention is made of traditional Jewish customs throughout this Haggadah in thanksgiving and gratitude to the Jewish people for preserving the customs given to them by God. The Bible tells us in the book of Romans, that God gave His divine services (understood as “the” pattern for worship”) and His Holy Scripture, first to the Jewish people, and then for all nations. -- Romans 3:1-2, 9:4

LEADER: We now fill each others cup with about 4 oz. of wine/grape juice. It is a practice that each of us pour another's cup.

LEADER: By pouring your neighbor's wine we experience the freedom that comes only in God and His grace. In ancient times nobility never poured their own cup. As we each fill another's cup we are reminded that on this day each of us is a king before God. In Passover we celebrate our freedom from the world and sin -- Egypt.

LEADER: After your cup is filled, lift it in your right hand and recite the following.

ALL : I am ready and prepared to observe the commandment to drink the first of the four cups for the sake of the One God and His Presence, may it be counted as done in the name of all Israel.

NOTE: If the Seder is celebrated on Friday evening, the following should be recited.

[ALL : (Friday night only, recite in a whisper). And it was evening and it was morning, (Out Loud) the sixth day. And the heavens and the earth were completed and all their vast array. And on the seventh day God completed His work which He had made; and He rested on the seventh day, from all His work which He had made. And God blessed the seventh day and made it holy, because on it He rested from all His work that He had created.]

LEADER: Baruch Atah Adonai, Eloheynu Melech Ha Olam Boray P'ri Ha Gafen. Which translates:

ALL : Blessed are You, O Lord, our God, King of the universe, who creates the fruit of the vine.

ALL : Blessed are You, O Lord our God, King of the universe, Who has chosen us from all peoples and raised us from all languages and sanctified us by Your commandments. You have given to us, O Lord our God, appointed times for gladness, festivals, and holy days for rejoicing, and this feast of Matzot, the season of our freedom, a holy assembly commemorating the Exodus from Egypt. For you have chosen us and sanctified us from all peoples. Your sacred holy days with gladness and joy are our heritage. Blessed are You O Lord, Who sanctifies Israel and this festive season.

NOTE: If Passover is celebrated on Saturday evening, recite the following two responses.

[ALL : Saturday evening only. Blessed are You, O Lord our God, King of the universe, who creates the illumination of the fire (the Sabbath lights).]

[ALL : Saturday evening only. Blessed are You, O Lord our God, King of the universe, Who makes a distinction between holy, set apart things, and mundane; between light and darkness; between Israel and the nations, and between the seventh day and the six working days. You have made a distinction between the sanctification of the Shabbat and the sanctification of a festival and You have set apart the seventh day from the six working days. You made a distinction and You set apart Your people Israel in Your own holiness. Blessed are You, O Lord, who makes a distinction between the Holy and the Holy.]

ALL : Blessed are You O Lord our God King of the universe, Who has kept us alive and preserved us and

brought us to this appointed season.

BE SEATED

LEADER: Lean to the left and drink this cup.

LEADER: The first cup you drink is the cup of sanctification. By blessing and partaking of this cup, you set apart this day and time from other days. You make a distinction between the Holy and the Mundane, light from darkness, and the six days of labor from the Sabbath. You declare that you set this day apart for God.

You recline while drinking this cup to symbolize that on this day you are a priest and king before God. Passover is the Festival of your Freedom.

Historically, Passover celebrates freedom of the children of Israel from their bondage of slavery in Egypt. Spiritually, as a repentance believer in the God of Israel you celebrate your freedom from the bondage of sin. Therefore, you are delivered from the bondage of sin and death.

The right hand is the symbol for strength. For this reason you always lift your cup with your right hand. The right hand (arm) symbolizes Messiah, your strength.

The blessing we say as we lift up the cup is, "Blessed are You, O Lord our God, King of the Universe who creates the fruit of the vine."

U-R'CHATZ (Washing)

LEADER: The wash basin is brought to the father/host who circles the table slowly pouring the water over the hands of each person. This ritual is celebrated with silence. No blessing is recited at this time.

LEADER: By washing your hands you remember God's commandment to the Priests serving in His Temple. They were commanded to wash their hands and feet before entering into the Temple and ministering before God. When the Priest drew near unto the Holy Place he washed his hands before entering. After entering, he would raise his hands before God to show they were clean before Him.

You wash your hands during Passover because you are a priest before God and the table before you is His altar. In Psalm 24:3-4, it is written, "Who shall ascend into the hill of the Lord? or who shall stand in His holy place? He that hath clean hands, and a pure heart; who hath not lifted up his soul unto vanity, nor sworn deceitfully."

The water is called in Hebrew "mayim hayim", or living water. Living water shows that your faith is alive and active and that the Word of God is a living Word in your heart.

KARPAS (Eating of a Green Vegetable)

LEADER: Take a piece of parsley -- Karpas -- (or celery) smaller than the size of an olive and dip it in the dish of salt water on your table, then lift it with your right hand.

LEADER: Baruch Atah Adonai Eloheynu Melech Ha Olam, Boray P'ri Ha Adamah. Which translates:

ALL : Blessed are You, O Lord our God, King of the universe who creates the fruit of the earth.

LEADER: Eat the parsley that is dipped in salt water.

LEADER: Why the green vegetable and salt water? The Passover is centered in children and everything is done so that the children may ask, "Why?"

The salt water symbolizes the tears shed by the slaves in Egypt. It reminds you of your sins.

The green parsley represents resurrection and life. It recalls the journey of the children of Israel as they passed through the Red Sea to emerge alive on the other side.

YACHATZ (Breaking of the Matzot)

ALL : YACHATZ

LEADER: Each table has a matzatosh bag (a linen cloth or napkin). The matzatosh bag holds the three pieces of Matzot. Taking the middle of the three pieces of Matzot, break it into two pieces. Wrap the larger of the two pieces of Matzot inside the napkin and have someone at your table hide it for later use as the “Afikomen”. The smaller of the two pieces is placed back between the two whole Matzot and placed in front of the table host.

LEADER: The three pieces of Matzot are put in the Matzatosh bag. Why three? One explanation is they represent Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. But why break Isaac, represented by the middle piece of Matzot? Another thought is that it represents the Priests, the Levites, and the children of Israel.

The broken Matzot called the “Lechem Oni”, the Bread of Affliction -- Deuteronomy. 16:3

The Matzah that is broken, wrapped in linen, and hidden.

Following the Seder meal, the buried piece of Matzah will be found and redeemed.

MAGGID (The Telling of the Exodus Story)

LEADER: Maggid is the telling of the story of the Exodus from Egypt. It fulfills the command to tell our children about the events of the Exodus as it is written in Exodus 13:8:

ALL : And you shall tell your son in that day, saying, "This is done because of what the Lord did unto me when I came forth out of Egypt."

HA LACHMA ANYA

LEADER: The “Beitzah” (roasted egg) and “Zeroah” (lamb’s shankbone) are removed from the Seder plate recognizing there is no Temple in Israel today for the Passover celebration. The Matzah is uncovered. The host lifts the Seder plate with his right hand and the Matzah in his left and recites the invitation to come to the table and eat.

ALL : This is the bread of affliction which our forefathers ate in the land of Egypt. If any man is hungry, let him come and eat! If any man is in need, let him come and join in celebrating the Passover Festival, this year here, next year in Israel!! This year slaves, next year free men!

LEADER: Ha Lachma Anya is the invitation to eat.

LEADER: The invitation to eat is prophetic of God's invitation for all people to celebrate the marriage supper of the Lamb as it is written:

ALL : And He said unto me, "Write, Blessed are they which are called to the marriage supper of the Lamb." And he said unto me, "These are the true sayings of God." -- Revelation 19:9.

MAH NISHTANAH (The Four Questions)

LEADER: The second cup is poured.

The youngest child at the table asks these four questions:

CHILD: Why is this night different from all other nights?

1. On all other nights we eat Chametz/Leavened Bread and Matzah/Unleavened Bread; on this night, only Matzah/Unleavened Bread?
2. On all other nights we eat any kind of vegetable; on this night only Maror/Bitter Herbs?
3. On all other nights we are not required to dip even once; on this night we dip twice?
4. On all other nights we eat sitting or reclining; on this night only reclining?

LEADER: The Matzah is uncovered. It will remain uncovered until the second cup is lifted.

ALL : The Hebrews were once slaves to Pharaoh in Egypt and our God, the Lord, brought them out with a strong hand and an outstretched arm. If the Holy One, blessed be He, had not brought them out of Egypt, as well as the "mixed multitudes" of Gentiles, our fathers in the faith, then we, our children and our children's children would still be slaves to the false religions of Egypt. So even if we are all wise, filled with understanding and experience, and completely knowledgeable in the Torah/God's Word, we would still be commanded to tell of the Exodus from Egypt. Those who discuss it at length are to be praised.

It happened that Rabbi Eliezar, Rabbi Yehoshua, Rabbi Elazar ben Azariah, Rabbi Akiva, and Rabbi Tarfon were reclining at a Seder in B'nei B'rak. They were discussing the departure from Egypt all that night until their students came and spoke to them: "Our teachers it is time for the reading of the morning Shema". Rabbi Elazar ben Azariah, said, "I am like a man of seventy years old but I was never able to persuade my colleagues that the departure must be recited at night until Ben Zoma explained it. It is said in the scriptures, 'That you may remember the day when you came out of the land of Egypt all the days of your life.' -- Deuteronomy 16:3. The days of your life is a reference to the days, whereas, all the days of your life include the nights as well. But the sages say the days of your life refer to this life, but all the days of your life indicate the Days of the Messiah.

THE FOUR SONS

ALL : Blessed is the Ever Present, Blessed be He. Blessed be He who gave the Torah to His people Israel. Blessed be He!

LEADER: The Torah speaks concerning four sons:

- a) a wise son (a mature believer)
- b) a wicked son (an unbeliever)
- c) a simple son (a baby believer)
- d) one who does not know how to ask.

ALL : What does the wise son (mature believer) ask?

LEADER: What is the meaning of the testimonies, the statutes, and the judgments which the Lord our God has commanded you. -- Deuteronomy 6:20b

Then you shall instruct him in the laws of the Passover offering, that one may not eat dessert after the final taste of the Passover offering.

ALL : What does the wicked son (unbeliever) ask?

LEADER: What does this service mean to you? -- Exodus 12:26

"To you", he says but not to himself. Since he has excluded himself from the community he has denied the fundamentals of his faith. Therefore, you must blunt your teeth and reply to him: "This is done because of that which the Lord did for me when I came forth out of Egypt." -- Exodus 13:8. "For me," you say, not for him. For had he been there he would not have been redeemed.

ALL : What does the simple son, (baby believer) ask?

LEADER: What does this mean? -- Exodus 13:14. To him you shall say, "With a strong hand did the Lord bring us out of Egypt, out of the house of bondage" -- Exodus 13:14

But as for the son who does not know what to ask, you must begin to speak to him as it is written: "And you shall tell your son in that day, saying, 'This is done because of what the Lord did for me when I came forth from Egypt ' " -- Exodus 13:8

LEADER: In the beginning our fathers worshipped idols, but now the All-Present has brought us to His service, as it is said: And Joshua said to all the people, Thus says the Lord God of Israel: Your fathers..., Terah, the father of Abraham and the father of Nahor, dwelt on the other side of the River (Euphrates) in old times; and they served other gods. Then I took your father Abraham from the other side of the River, led him throughout all the land of Canaan, and multiplied his descendants and gave him Isaac. To Isaac, I gave Jacob and Esau. To Esau I gave the mountains of Seir to possess, but Jacob and his children went down to Egypt.'" -- Joshua 24:2-4

ALL : Blessed be He who keeps His promise to Israel.

LEADER: Blessed be He! For the Holy One, blessed be He, had calculated the end of their exile to do as He had said to our father Abraham at the Covenant Between the Parts, as it is written:

ALL : Then He said to Abram: Know certainly that your descendants will be strangers in a land that is not theirs, and will serve them, and they will afflict them four hundred years. And also the nation whom they serve I will judge; afterward they shall come out with great possessions. -- Genesis 15:13-14

LEADER: The Matzot are covered and the second cup is lifted while the following is joyously proclaimed.

NOTE: Upon the conclusion of this section, the cup is placed on the table and the Matzot is uncovered.

ALL : And it is this that has stood by our fathers and us; for not one alone that has risen up against us to destroy us, but in every generation they rise up against us to destroy us. But the Holy One, blessed be He, delivers us from their hands.

LEADER: Go and learn what Laban the Aramean planned to do to Jacob our father, for Pharaoh decreed solely that the male children should be put to death, but Laban had planned to uproot all, as it is said:

ALL : And you shall answer and say before the Lord your God: "The Aramean sought to destroy my father, and he went down to Egypt and sojourned there, few in number; and there he became a nation, great, mighty, and populous"--Deuteronomy 26:5

LEADER: "But he went down to Egypt," forced by the Word of God's mouth. "And sojourned there," which teaches that Jacob, our father, did not go down to Egypt to settle permanently, only to dwell there temporarily, as it is said:

ALL : And they said to Pharaoh, "We came to sojourn in the land..., because your servants have no pasture for their flocks, for the famine in the land of Canaan is severe. Now, if you please, allow us, your servants, to dwell in the land of Goshen." -- Genesis 47:4

LEADER: "With a few in number," as it is written:

ALL : Your fathers went down to Egypt with seventy persons, and now the Lord your God has made you as the stars of heaven in multitude--Deut. 10:22

LEADER: "And he became there a nation," which teaches that Israel was distinguished there. "Great and mighty," as it is written:

ALL : But the children of Israel were fruitful and increased abundantly, multiplied and became exceedingly mighty; and the land was filled with them. -- Exodus 1:7

LEADER: "And numerous," as it is written:

ALL : I made you thrive like a plant in the field; and you grew, matured, and became very beautiful. Your breasts were formed, your hair grew, but you were naked and bare. And when I passed by you and saw you struggling in your own blood, I said to you in your blood, Live!, Yes, I said to you in your blood, Live! -- Ezekiel 16:6-7

LEADER: "But the Egyptians did evil to us, afflicted us, and imposed hard bondage upon us." -- Deuteronomy 26:6

LEADER: "They did evil to us" as it is written:

ALL : Come, let us deal wisely with them, lest they multiply, and it happen, in the event of war, that they also join our enemies, and fight against us, and so go up out of the land. -- Exodus 1:10

LEADER: "They afflicted us" as it is written:

ALL : Therefore they set taskmasters over them to afflict them with their burdens. And they built for Pharaoh supply cities, Pithom and Rameses. -- Exodus 1:11

LEADER: "They imposed hard labor upon us" as it is written:

ALL : So the Egyptians made the children of Israel serve with rigor. -- Exodus 1:13

We cried out to the Lord, God of our fathers, and the Lord heard our voice and looked on our affliction and our labor and our oppression. -- Deuteronomy 26:7

LEADER: "...we cried out to the Lord God of our fathers," as it is written:

ALL : It came to pass in the process of time that the king of Egypt died. Then the children of Israel groaned by reason of the bondage, and they cried out; and their cry came up unto God by reason of the bondage. -- Exodus 2:23

LEADER: "The Lord heard our voice," as it is written:

ALL : God heard their groaning, and God remembered His covenant with Abraham, with Isaac, and with Jacob. -- Exodus 2:24

LEADER: "He saw our suffering." This refers to the breaking up of their family life, as it is written:

ALL : God looked upon the children of Israel, and God acknowledged them.--Exodus 2:25

LEADER: "Our trouble," this refers to the children, as it is written:

ALL : Every son who is born you shall cast into the river, and every daughter you shall save alive. -- Exodus 1:22

LEADER: "Our Oppression," this refers to the oppression, as it is written:

ALL : I have seen the oppression with which the Egyptians oppress them. -- Exodus 3:9 The Lord brought us out of Egypt with a mighty hand and with an outstretched arm, with great terror and with signs and wonders. -- Deuteronomy 26:8

LEADER: The Lord brought us out of Egypt, not by an angel; not by a seraph, and not by a messenger, but the Holy One, blessed be He; He alone, in His glory, as it is written:

ALL : I will pass through the land of Egypt on that night, and will strike all the firstborn in the land of Egypt, both man and beast; and against all the gods of Egypt I will execute judgment: I, the Lord. -- Exodus 12:12

I will pass through the land of Egypt, I and not an angel: I will strike all the first-born in the land of Egypt, I, and not a seraph; and I will bring judgment against all the gods of Egypt, I, and not a messenger; I, the Lord, it is I and no other.

LEADER: "With a mighty hand," this refers to the pestilence, as it is written:

ALL : Behold, the hand of the Lord will be upon your cattle in the field, upon the horses, upon the donkeys, upon the camels, upon the oxen, and upon the sheep: there shall be a very severe pestilence. -- Exodus 9:3.

LEADER: "With an outstretched arm," that is the sword, as it is written:

ALL : Having in his hand a drawn sword stretched out over Jerusalem.-- I Chronicles 21:16b

LEADER: "With great fearfulness," this refers to the revelation of the Divine Presence, as it is written:

ALL : Or did God ever try to go and take for Himself a nation from the midst of another nation, by trials, by signs, by wonders, by war, by a mighty hand and an outstretched arm, and by great terrors, according to all that the Lord your God did for you in Egypt before your eyes? --Deuteronomy 4:34

LEADER: "With signs," this refers to the staff, as it is written:

ALL : And you shall take this staff in your hand, with which you shall do the signs. -- Exodus 4:17

LEADER: "With wonders," that is the blood, as it is written:

NOTE: At each of the words, 'blood, fire and smoke' the finger is dipped into the second cup, and a drop of wine/grapejuice is removed.

ALL : And I will show wonders in the heavens and in the earth: blood and fire and pillars of smoke. -- Joel 2:30

LEADER: Another explanation: "With a mighty hand," indicates two plagues; "with an outstretched arm," another two; "with great fearfulness," another two; "with signs," another two; and " with wonders," another two. These are the ten plagues which the Holy One, blessed be He, brought upon the Egyptians in Egypt.

NOTE: As each of the ten plagues is mentioned a drop of wine/grapejuice is poured from your cup. Refill your cup at the conclusion of this reading.

LEADER: The ten plagues are: Blood, Frogs, Lice, Flies, Pestilence, Boils, Hail, Locusts, Darkness, Slaying of the Firstborn.

Let us now fill our cups.

DAYEINU (It is Enough)

LEADER: Dayeinu is the remembering of the great deeds which God did for the children of Israel, and what He does for you. Each line ends with the refrain, "It would have been enough". The spiritual message communicated to you by God through Dayeinu is:

Whenever you are going through a bitter time in your life and you feel angry toward God, your response during this time should be to remember all of the wonderful things that God has done for you rather than focus on the current problem. If you do this, you will keep life's bitter experiences from making you eternally bitter toward God. Instead, if you remember all the good things that God has done for you, then God will bring patience, peace and comfort into your life. Therefore, the attitude of your heart should be, the same God who delivered me in the past will deliver me through my present situation.

As it is written: "Many are the afflictions of the righteous, but the Lord delivered him out of them all" -- Psalm 34:19

- **LEADER:** After each refrain, everyone proclaim, "Dayeinu!"
- **LEADER:** If He had brought us out of Egypt, but had not executed judgments upon the Egyptians, it would have been enough!
- **ALL : DAYEINU!**
- **LEADER:** If He had executed judgments upon them, but not upon their gods, it would have been enough!
- **ALL : DAYEINU!**
- **LEADER:** If He had destroyed their gods, but had not killed their firstborn, it would have been enough!
- **ALL : DAYEINU!**
- **LEADER:** If He had killed their firstborn but had not given us their wealth, it would have been enough!
- **ALL : DAYEINU!**
- **LEADER:** If He had given us their wealth but had not divided the sea for us, it would have been enough!
- **ALL : DAYEINU!**
- **LEADER:** If He had divided the sea without taking us through it on dry ground, it would have been enough!
- **ALL : DAYEINU!**
- **LEADER:** If He had led us through it on dry ground but not drowned our adversaries in it, it would have been enough!
- **ALL : DAYEINU!**
- **LEADER:** If He had drowned our adversaries in it, but had not provided for our needs for forty years in the wilderness, it would have been enough!
- **ALL : DAYEINU!**
- **LEADER:** If He had provided for our needs in the wilderness for forty years but had not fed us with Manna, it would have been enough!
- **ALL : DAYEINU!**
- **LEADER:** If He had fed us with Manna, but had not also given us the Sabbath, it would have been enough!
- **ALL : DAYEINU!**
- **LEADER:** If He had given us the Sabbath, but had not led us to Mount Sinai, it would have been enough!
- **ALL : DAYEINU!**
- **LEADER:** If He had brought us before Mount Sinai, but not given us the Torah, it would have been enough!
- **ALL : DAYEINU!**
- **LEADER:** If He had given us the Torah, but had not led us into the land of Israel, it would have been enough!
- **ALL : DAYEINU!**
- **LEADER:** If He had led us into the land of Israel and had not built a Temple for us, it would have been enough!
- **ALL : DAYEINU!**

LEADER: Therefore, for the many and often-repeated favors that God bestows upon you, do you owe a debt of

gratitude to the Almighty! He brought us forth from Egypt, executed judgments upon them and their gods, slew their firstborn, gave us wealth, divided the sea for us, led us through it on dry land, and drowned our adversaries in it, supplied our needs in the wilderness for forty years, and fed us with Manna, gave us the Sabbath, led us before Mount Sinai, gave us the Torah, brought us into the Promised Land and built us a Temple to atone for all our sins.

LEADER: Rabban Gamliel used to say, "Whoever does not discuss the following three things at the Passover festival has not fulfilled his duty, namely:

- a) Passover sacrifice,
- b) Matzah, and
- c) Maror.

The Passover sacrifice that our fathers ate at the time that the Holy Temple was still standing, what was the reason for it?

It is to signify that the Holy One, blessed be He, passed over the houses of our fathers in Egypt, for it is written:

ALL : You shall say, it is the sacrifice of the Lord's passover, who passed over the houses of the children of Israel in Egypt, when He smote the Egyptians, and delivered our houses. And the people bowed the head and worshipped. -- Exodus 12:27

LEADER: The middle Matzah is removed from the Matzahtash bag, held up for all to see, and the following passage is recited:

LEADER: This Matzah that we eat, what is its significance? It is to signify that the dough of our fathers did not have time to become leavened before the King of kings, the Holy One, blessed be He, revealed Himself to them and redeemed them, as it is written:

ALL : They baked unleavened cakes of the dough which they had brought out of Egypt; for it was not leavened, because they were driven out of Egypt and could not wait, nor had they prepared provisions for themselves.-- Exodus 12:39

LEADER: The Maror (bitter herbs), the symbol of our oppression, is held up for all to see, while the following passage is recited:

LEADER: The Maror that you eat, what is its significance? It is to signify that the Egyptians embittered the lives of our fathers in Egypt, as it is written:

ALL : They made their lives bitter with hard bondage, in mortar, in brick, and in all manner of service in the field. All their service in which they made them serve was with rigor. -- Exodus 1:14

LEADER: In every generation, you are obligated to regard yourselves as though you had personally left Egypt.

ALL : Understanding that I, as a believer, am part of Israel by engrafting by faith in God through His Messiah, I shall tell my son in that day, saying, "This is done because of what the Lord did for me when I came forth from Egypt." -- Exodus 13:8

LEADER: Not only our fathers did the Holy One, blessed be He, redeem, but He also saved us with them. It is written:

ALL : "He brought us out from there, that He might bring us in, to give us the land of which He swore to our fathers." -- Deuteronomy 6:23

LEADER: The Matzot should be covered. Lift and hold the cup until after the following blessing is recited:

ALL : Therefore, it is my duty to thank, to praise, to laud, to glorify, to exalt, to acclaim, to bless, to extol, and give respect to Him who performed all these miracles for our fathers and for me. He has brought me forth from slavery to liberty, from sorrow to joy, from mourning to festival, from darkness to bright light, and from bondage to redemption. Therefore, let me recite a new song before Him. Hallelujah!"

LEADER: Set your cup down and uncover the Matzot. Now we will recite the Hallel, Psalms 113-118.

NOTE: Psalms 113-114 is recited before the Passover meal. Psalms 115-118 is recited after the Seder meal.

PSALM 113

LEADER : Hallelujah! Praise, oh servants of the Lord; praise the name of the Lord.

ALL : Blessed be the name of the Lord from now on and forever.

LEADER : From the rising of the sun to its setting,

ALL : The Lord's name is to be praised.

- **LEADER :** The Lord is high above all nations;
- **ALL :** His glory is above the heavens.
- **LEADER :** Who is like the Lord our God, enthroned on high,
- **ALL :** Who humbles Himself to look upon heaven and upon earth!
- **LEADER :** He raises the poor out of the dust,
- **ALL :** And lifts the needy out of the dunghill.
- **LEADER :** To seat them with princes,
- **ALL :** With the princes of His people.
- **LEADER :** He turns the barren wife
- **ALL :** Into a happy mother of children. Hallelujah!

PSALM 114

- **LEADER :** When Israel went out of Egypt,
- **ALL :** The house of Jacob from a people of strange language
- **LEADER :** Judah became God's sanctuary,
- **ALL :** Israel His dominion
- **LEADER :** The sea beheld and fled;
- **ALL :** The Jordan turned backward.
- **LEADER :** The mountains skipped like rams,
- **ALL :** And the hills like lambs.
- **LEADER :** What ails you, oh sea, that you flee?
- **ALL :** Why, oh Jordan, do you turn backward?
- **LEADER :** Oh mountains, why do you skip like rams?
- **ALL :** Oh hills, why do you leap like lambs?
- **LEADER :** Tremble, oh earth, at the Lord's presence,
- **ALL :** At the presence of the God of Jacob.
- **LEADER :** Who turns the rock into a pool of water,
- **ALL :** The flint into a fountain of water.

LEADER : Cover the Matzot and lift the cup as the following blessing is recited:

ALL : Blessed are You, O Lord our God, King of the universe, Who redeemed us and redeemed our fathers from Egypt and brought us to this night to eat Matzah and Maror. So, the Lord our God and God of our

fathers, bring us in peace to future festivals and days of fasting that will come, rejoicing in the rebuilding of Your city and being joyful in Your Temple service. There we shall partake of the sacrifices and Passover offerings whose blood will be sprinkled upon the sides of Your altar for gracious acceptance. Then we shall compose a new song of thanks to You for our redemption and the deliverance of our souls. Blessed are You, O Lord, Who has redeemed Israel.

ALL : I am ready and prepared to keep the commandment to drink the second of the four cups for the sake of the one God and His presence, may it be counted as done in the name of all Israel.

LEADER: After reciting the following blessing, lean toward the left side and drink the second cup.

LEADER: Baruch Atah Adonai Eloheynu Melech Ha Olam, Boray P'ri Ha Gafen

ALL : Blessed are You, O Lord our God, King of the universe, Who creates the fruit of the vine.

LEADER: The Maggid concludes with the second cup called, the Cup of Wrath or the Cup of Affliction.

RACHTZAH (Washing the Hands)

LEADER: All participants wash their hands (wash basin is brought to the leader). A pitcher of water, a towel and a bowl is brought before each person. After washing your hands, recite this blessing:

ALL : Blessed are You, O Lord our God, King of the universe, Who has set us apart by Your commandments, and has commanded us concerning the washing of the hands.

MOTZI (Blessing over Unleavened Bread)

ALL : I am ready and prepared to keep the commandment to eat the Matzah, for the sake of the one God and His presence, may it be counted as done in the name of all Israel.

LEADER: The leader takes all three Matzot in his hand, with the broken piece remaining in the middle, and pronounces the blessing for himself and all present.

LEADER: Baruch Atah Adonai, Eloheynu Melech Ha Olam, Ha Motzi Lechem Min Ha Aretz.

ALL : Blessed are you, O Lord our God, King of the universe, Who brings forth the bread from the earth.

MATZAH (Blessing for and Eating of Matzah)

LEADER: The leader places the bottom Matzah on the table. He pronounces the following blessing over the two remaining Matzot for himself and all present.

ALL : Blessed are You, O Lord our God, King of the universe, Who has set us apart by Your commandments, and has commanded us concerning the eating of Matzah.

LEADER: The father, breaking both Matzot, takes for himself, then portions to all present from both pieces. Eat the Matzah while reclining.

LEADER: Matzah has a bland taste.

ALL : There was no beauty that we should desire Him. --Isaiah 53:2

MAROR

ALL : I am ready and prepared to keep the commandment to eat the Maror for the sake of the one God and His presence, may it be counted as done in the name of all Israel.

LEADER: The leader takes a quantity of Maror -- romaine lettuce -- the size of an olive, dips it into the Charoset -- chopped apples, cinnamon, spices etc --, shaking off excess Charoset. Next, the leader recites the following blessing and eats the Maror without reclining. He then distributes the Maror to all present.

ALL : Blessed are You, O Lord our God, King of the universe, Who has set us apart by Your commandments, and has commanded us to eat Maror.

KORECH (Matzah and Maror are eaten together)

LEADER: Taking the third piece of Matzah (so far unbroken), break off a piece for each participant. Participants break their piece of Matzah into two pieces. Now you begin to make the Hillel Sandwich.

Spread horseradish on the front half of the Matzah. Spread Charoset -- chopped apples, cinnamon, spices etc -- on the back half of your Matzah sandwich. Put enough horseradish on the front of your sandwich to make your eyes water. Spread enough Charoset on the back half to taste the sweetness of the Charoset, and to counteract the bite of the horseradish. The blessing is said, then in a reclining position, the Hillel Sandwich is eaten.

ALL: Blessed art Thou, O Lord our God, King of the Universe, who has set us apart and commanded us to eat Matzah and Maror.

Why is this called the Hillel Sandwich?

LEADER: So did Hillel, while the Temple still stood, make a sandwich of Matzah with Maror and ate them both together in order to fulfill what is written:

ALL : They shall eat it with Matzah and Maror. -- Exodus 12:8

LEADER: What is the spiritual meaning of eating Matzah and Maror together? You all have bitter experiences in your lives. The message God is communicating to you is His desire for you to press through the bitterness (as symbolized by the horseradish) to experience the sweetness (as symbolized by the Charoset) that He promises you in His Word. The horseradish represents the trials and tribulations which come into your life. like the Horseradish, many trials and tribulations are so bitter they make you cry. If you allow these trials and tribulations to make you bitter toward God, you will never experience the sweetness of God's deliverance for your life. However, by not allowing your trials and tribulations to cause you bitterness toward God, but instead press through them with God's help, you will taste and experience the fullness of His promises contained in His Word for you.

SHULCHAN ORECH (Eating the Meal)

LEADER: It is customary to begin the meal with a hard-boiled egg dipped in salt water. The meal should be eaten in an environment of joyousness. The mood should be festive and the food kosher.

It is customary not to eat dipped food. The meal must end before midnight allowing enough time for the Afikoman to be eaten by that hour. Care should be taken not to eat so heavily that all appetite for the Afikoman is destroyed, or that the participant would be drowsy for the remainder of the Seder.

(Please allow 45 minutes for eating and cleanup)

AFTER THE MEAL

LEADER: The Afikomen hidden earlier in the Seder during Yachatz must be found and redeemed. The word Afikomen is from a Greek word meaning, dessert. In ancient times, the Passover Lamb was the last food to be eaten. Because there is no Temple today, no Passover Lamb is slain. Today the Afikomen replaces the Passover Lamb in remembrance of the Passover Lamb, and is the last food eaten during the Seder meal. The Seder must not go on until the Afikomen is redeemed. It is the children who are instructed to search for the hidden Afikomen. Once the Afikomen is found by one of the children, that child will begin to barter with the father concerning the price to be paid for the Afikomen. Once the price is agreed upon, the father will give a gift in the form of a down payment as his promise to the child who found the Afikomen. The immediate down payment (as seen in the earnest of the Holy Spirit) is a gift given to the child as assurance that the final agreed upon price will ultimately be paid at a future time. This promise that the father makes to the child is called, The Promise of the Father. In this, we understand that God paid a great price for our redemption.

LEADER: There is a blessing said for the Matzah, "Blessed are you, O Lord our God, King of the universe, who brings forth the bread from the earth."

Everyone who finds God and accepts God into their heart and life by faith is redeemed. The down payment God the Father gives to you for receiving Him is the indwelling Holy Spirit. Following the fall of man in the Garden of Eden, God promises that He will fully redeem both man and the earth back to Him in the fullness of time. The indwelling Holy Spirit is the gift given to us from God as a down payment and promise of the complete redemption. The Holy Spirit is the Promise of the Father.

LEADER: The Afikomen, the piece of Matzah, remembered earlier in the Seder is called the Bread of Affliction -- the Lechem (bread) -- Oni (affliction).

LEADER: The Seder follows the eschatology of God's plan for redemption. The first two cups and events prior to eating the Passover Seder meal speak of God redeeming us from Egypt.

TZAFUN (Eat the Afikoman)

LEADER: From the piece of Matzah hidden earlier during the Seder, the father takes a piece the size of an olive and distributes to all present. The Afikomen must be eaten before midnight. Except for the two remaining cups of wine/grapejuice, no food or drink may be eaten after the Afikoman.

ALL : I am ready and prepared to keep the commandment to eat the Afikomen, for the sake of the One God and His presence; may it be counted as done in the name of all Israel.

ALL : I am observing the commandment so that I may remember the Passover Lamb that was eaten at the end of the Seder before midnight. May my eating of the Afikoman also achieve all the spiritual accomplishments of the Passover Lamb itself. May it be Your will, O Lord our God and God of our Fathers, that you build the Holy Temple soon, during our lifetime, and may we be able to bring our offerings there. In remembrance may we eat the Passover Lamb during our own lifetime, like the Torah says: a perfect lamb, a male one year old, roasted over fire, together with Matzah and Maror. May we be able to do this in our holy city Jerusalem, soon, in our own lifetime. Amen.

LEADER: Eat the Afikoman while reclining to the left.

BAREKH (Grace after the Meal)

LEADER: The third cup is filled.

LEADER: Hands of all the participants are washed at this time.

The third cup is taken in the right hand, raised from the table in recitation of the Grace after the meal.

Let us recite the Birchat Hamazon, the Grace after the meal from Psalm 126.

PSALM 126

LEADER: When the Lord brought back the captivity of Zion, we were like them that dream. Then was our mouth filled with laughter, and our tongue with singing: then said they among the heathen, 'The Lord has done great things for them. The Lord has done great things for us; and we are glad. Turn again our captivity, O Lord, as the streams in the south. They that sow in tears shall reap in joy. He that goes forth and weeps, bearing precious seed, shall doubtless come again with rejoicing, bringing his sheaves with him.

The wine glass is set upon the table.

LEADER: In a literal sense, Psalm 126 speaks of the ingathering of the Jewish people from all the nations where they are scattered, and of their return to the land of Israel. This is a significant event in the prophetic plan of God.

LEADER: In a spiritual sense, Psalm 126 speaks of the prophetic restoration of Biblical truth to the body of Christ through the outpouring of God's Holy Spirit the past 500 years. This present restoration of God's people with their Hebraic roots, and an understanding of first century Christianity is an element of that restoration. Therefore, the restoration referred to in Psalm 126 is both physical and spiritual.

LEADER: I am ready and prepared to observe the commandment of Grace after the meals, as it is written:

ALL : When you have eaten and are full, then you shall bless the Lord your God for the good land which He has given you. --Deuteronomy 8:10.

LEADER: For the sake of the One God and His presence, may it be counted as done in the name of all Israel.

THE COMPANY BLESSING

- **LEADER:** If there are more than three adult males over the age of thirteen, then the Company blessing is said. Otherwise, it is skipped and grace after meals (the next response) will immediately be said.
- **LEADER:** Gentlemen, let us say Grace!
- **ALL :** Blessed be the name of the Lord from this time forth and forevermore.
- **LEADER:** May the name of the Lord be blessed from this time forth and forevermore! By permission of all the assembled, let us bless Him whose food we have eaten.
- **ALL :** Blessed be He whose food we have eaten and through whose goodness we live.
- **LEADER:** Blessed be He whose food we have eaten and through whose goodness we live.
- **ALL :** Blessed be He and blessed be his name!

GRACE AFTER MEALS

ALL : Blessed are You, O Lord our God, King of the universe, who feeds the entire world with His goodness, in grace, lovingkindness, and mercy. He gives bread to all flesh, for His mercy endures forever. In His great goodness we have never lacked food, and may we never lack His sustenance forever and ever, for the sake of His great Name, for He feeds and sustains all, and does good to all, and prepares food for all creatures which He has created. Blessed are You, O Lord, who gives food to all.

We give thanks unto You, O Lord our God, because You did give our fathers a pleasant, good and spacious land as a possession; that you, O Lord our God, did bring us forth from Egypt and did deliver us from the house of bondage; and for your covenant which You did seal in our flesh; that You did teach us Your Torah and Your statutes which You have made known to us; and for the life, grace and lovingkindness which You have given as

a gift to us, and for the food with which You support and sustain us continually, every day, at all times and at every hour.

And for all this, O Lord our God, we thank You and bless You. Blessed be Your name through the mouth of all that are alive, continually and forevermore.

As it is written: "When you have eaten and are full, then you shall bless the Lord your God for the good land which He has given you." -- Deuteronomy 8:10

Blessed are You O Lord, for the land and for the food.

Have mercy, O Lord our God, upon Your people Israel, upon Jerusalem Your city, upon Zion, where Your glory dwells, and upon the Kingdom of the house of David, Your anointed, and upon the great and holy house which is called by Your name. Our God and our Father, tend and feed us, sustain us, support us, maintain us, and grant us relief. Soon, O Lord our God, free us from all our troubles. We implore You, O Lord our God, to make us not reliant upon the gifts of flesh and blood, nor their loans, but rather only upon Your full, open hand that is set apart and generous, so that we may not be ashamed nor humiliated for ever and ever.

NOTE: On the Sabbath, say the next response. Otherwise, skip it.

ALL : May it be your will, Lord our God, to strengthen us, through your commandments and through the commandments of the seventh day, this great and holy Sabbath. For this day is great and holy before you, that we may refrain on it from all work and rest on it, in love as prescribed by your will. May it be your will, Lord our God, to grant us rest, that there be no trouble, grief or lamenting on the day of our rest. Let us, Lord our God, behold the consolation of Zion, your city, and the rebuilding of Jerusalem, the city of your holiness, for you are the Master of salvation and the master of consolation.

ALL : Our God and God of our fathers, may there ascend, come, arrive, be seen, accepted, heard, counted and remembered before You, the remembrance and consideration of ourselves, the remembrance of our fathers, the remembrance of the son of David, the Mashiach -- Messiah --, Your servant, the remembrance of Jerusalem, Your set apart city, and the remembrance of Your whole people, the House of Israel -- for deliverance, good, grace, lovingkindness, mercy, life, and peace, on this festival of Matzot! Remember us, O Lord our God, for good, recall us for blessing, and save us for a good life. And with a word of salvation and mercy, and have mercy upon us and save us -- for to You alone do our eyes look, for You, O Lord, are a gracious and Merciful King!

ALL : And build Jerusalem, the holy city, soon, in our days. Blessed are You, O Lord, who rebuilds Jerusalem in His mercy. Amen.

ALL : Blessed are You, O Lord our God, King of the universe, our God, our Father, our King, our Sovereign, our Creator, our Redeemer, our Maker, our Holy One, the Holy One of Jacob, our Shepherd, the Shepherd of Israel, the good and beneficent King, who each day was good, is good, and will be good to us. He has dealt with us, He is dealing with us, He will always deal with us, with grace, lovingkindness, mercy and plenty. May help, success, blessing, salvation, comfort, sustenance, mercy, life, peace and all good, and all that comes from good may He never deprive us.

ALL : May the All Merciful rule over us forever and ever!

ALL : May the All Merciful be blessed in the heavens and in the earth!

ALL : May the All Merciful be lauded for all ages, glorified among us forever and ever, and may He be honored by us through all eternity!

ALL : May the All Merciful grant us our needs with honor!

ALL : May the All Merciful break our yoke and lead us upright to our land!

ALL : May the All Merciful send abundant blessing to this house, and upon this table from which we have eaten!

ALL : May the All Merciful send us Elijah the prophet, of good remembrance, to proclaim to us good news, salvation and consolation!

LEADER: Guests start here. If you are in your parent's home, add the words in parentheses.

ALL : May the All Merciful bless: (my father, my teacher) the master of this house, and (my mother, my teacher) the mistress of this house.

LEADER: The host and hostess start here. If married add the words in parentheses.

ALL : Me (my wife/husband and family) and all that is mine, and all that sit here, both them and their house and family, along with all that is theirs, so also with us and all that is ours.

Even as our forefathers Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob were blessed in all things, with all things and on account of all things, may He bless us all with a perfect blessing. To that let us say: Amen.

ALL : O, may their and our merit be recognized in heaven, that we may have everlasting peace. And may we receive a blessing from the Lord and kindness from the God of our salvation and that we may find favor and understanding in the eyes of God and man.

NOTE: On the Sabbath, say the next response, otherwise skip it.

LEADER: May the All-Merciful cause us to inherit the day that will be wholly Sabbath and rest for eternal life!

ALL : May the All Merciful cause us to inherit that day which is all good, a day that is everlasting, a day when the just will sit with crowns on their heads, basking in the reflection of the Divine Presence!

May the All Merciful allow us to be worthy of the Days of the Messiah and of eternal life in the World to Come. He is a tower of salvation to His King, and He shows mercy to His Messiah, to David and His children forever. - 2 Samuel 22:51.

He who establishes peace in His heights, may he also establish peace for us and for all Israel, and say: Amen.

ALL : Fear the Lord you, His set apart ones, for there is no lack for those who fear Him. Young lions lack and suffer hunger, but they that seek the Lord shall not lack any good. -- Psalm 34:10. Give thanks to the Lord, for He is good, His lovingkindness lasts forever. -- Psalms 118:1 You open Your hand and satisfy the desire of all life. -- Psalm 145:16

Blessed is the man who trusts in the Lord, and the Lord will be His trust. --Jeremiah 17:7. I have been young and now have grown old, yet I have not seen a righteous man forsaken, or his children begging bread. -- Psalm 37:25. The Lord will give strength to His people, the Lord will bless His people with peace.

ALL : I am ready and prepared to keep the commandment to drink the third of the four cups for the sake of the one God and His presence, may it be counted as done in the name of all Israel.

LEADER: Baruch Atah Adonai, Eloheynu Melech Ha Olam, Boray P'ri Ha Gafen.

ALL : Blessed are You, O Lord our God, King of the Universe, who creates the fruit of the vine.

LEADER: Drink the third cup while reclining to the left

LEADER: The third cup is called, the Cup of Restoration or Redemption.

HALLEL

LEADER: Next, pour the fourth cup.

LEADER: An additional cup is poured for Elijah. The door is opened. It is customary at this time for the children to go to the door to look for Elijah the Prophet. As the children go to the door the following Blessing is recited:

ALL : Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord.

ALL : Pour out Your wrath on the nations which do not know You and on the kingdoms which do not call upon Your name. For they have eaten up Jacob and destroyed his habitation.-- Psalm 79:6-7

ALL : Pour out Your anger upon them and let Your burning wrath overtake them. -- Psalm 69:24

ALL : Pursue them in wrath and destroy them under the heavens of the Lord. -- Lamentations 3:66

LEADER: A Song is sung for the coming of Elijah

LEADER: The door for Elijah is closed.

LEADER: God gives this section of the Passover Seder to teach you that before Messiah returns, Elijah will come. -- Malachi 4:5-6

LEADER: The cup of the new (better understood in Hebrew as “renewed”) covenant is spoken of in Jeremiah 31:31,33. When Yeshua/Jesus said, "this is the cup which is poured out..." He is referring to the Cup of Elijah. The Cup of Elijah is the cup of the Covenant. Because this cup is poured out year after year, only 1 of 2 people may drink of this cup: Elijah the prophet, or Messiah Himself.

LEADER: The last four sections of the Hallel (Psalms 115-118) are recited. These Psalms are connected with God pouring his wrath out prior to the coming of His Messiah. At the conclusion of this part of the Passover Seder, the Cup of Elijah is poured out. In this we see God pouring His wrath out upon all the world, and upon the sin in the world. This is not just a time of judgment but a time of salvation.

In Hosea 5:15, it is written, "In their affliction, they will seek me early."

In Joel 3:14 it is written, "Multitudes, multitudes in the valley of decision."

Finally, God is reminding us in Psalm 115-118 that during the tribulation period, those who put their trust in God will see his salvation. Those who put their trust in the world's system will perish.

PSALM 115

- **LEADER : Not to us, Lord, but to Your name give glory**
- **ALL : Because of Your love and Your truth**
- **LEADER : Why do the nations say, "Where is their God now?"**
- **ALL : Our God is in heaven; He does what He pleases!**
- **LEADER : The idols of the nations are silver and gold**
- **ALL : The work of men's hands**
- **LEADER : They have mouths,**
- **ALL : But they cannot speak**
- **LEADER : They have eyes,**

- **ALL :** But they cannot see
- **LEADER :** They have ears,
- **ALL :** But they cannot hear
- **LEADER :** They have noses,
- **ALL :** But they cannot smell
- **LEADER :** They have hands
- **ALL :** But they cannot feel
- **LEADER :** They have feet
- **ALL :** But they cannot walk
- **LEADER :** They cannot make a sound in their throats
- **ALL :** Those who make them and trust in them will become like them
- **LEADER :** Oh, Israel, trust in the Lord
- **ALL :** He is their Help and their Shield
- **LEADER :** Oh, house of Aaron, trust in the Lord!
- **ALL :** He is their Help and their Shield
- **LEADER :** Oh, you who fear the Lord, trust in the Lord!
- **ALL :** He is their Help and their Shield
- **LEADER :** The Lord remembers us
- **ALL :** He will bless us
- **LEADER :** He will bless the house of Israel
- **ALL :** He will bless the house of Aaron
- **LEADER :** He will bless those who revere the Lord
- **ALL :** Small and great alike
- **LEADER :** The Lord will be with you
- **ALL :** Both you and your children
- **LEADER :** You are blessed by the Lord, the Maker of Heaven and earth
- **ALL :** Heaven is the Lord's heaven
- **LEADER :** But the earth He has given to human beings -- the children of Adam
- **ALL :** The dead cannot praise the Lord
- **LEADER :** Nor can those who sink into silence
- **ALL :** We will bless the Lord from now and forever. Hallelujah!

PSALM 116

- **LEADER :** I love the Lord, because He has heard my voice and my prayers
- **ALL :** Because He turned His ear toward me, I will call on Him all my days
- **LEADER :** The sorrows of death enclosed me; the distress of Sheol overshadowed me
- **ALL :** I encountered distress and grief
- **LEADER :** I called out the name of the Lord
- **ALL :** Please Lord, preserve my soul
- **LEADER :** The Lord is gracious and righteous
- **ALL :** Yes, our God is compassionate
- **LEADER :** The Lord watches over the simple
- **ALL :** I was brought low, but He saved me
- **LEADER :** Return, oh my soul, to your rest
- **ALL :** For the Lord has been kind to you
- **LEADER :** He delivered my soul from death
- **ALL :** And my eyes from tears, and my foot from falling
- **LEADER :** I will walk in the presence of the Lord
- **ALL :** In the land of the living
- **LEADER :** I believed, even though I was greatly afflicted
- **ALL :** It was in haste that I said, "All men are deceitful."
- **LEADER :** What can I render to the Lord for all his kind acts toward me?

- **ALL :** I will lift up the Cup of Salvation, and will call upon the name of the Lord
- **LEADER :** I will pay my vows to the Lord and in the presence of all His people
- **ALL :** Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his saints
- **LEADER :** Oh Lord, I am indeed Your servant;
- **ALL :** I am Your servant, the child of Your handmaid
- **LEADER :** You have removed my chains
- **ALL :** I will offer the sacrifice of thanksgiving to You
- **LEADER :** And I will call on the name of the Lord
- **ALL :** I will pay my vows to the Lord in the presence of all his people
- **LEADER :** In the courts of the Lord's house, in the midst of Jerusalem. Hallelujah!

PSALM 117

- **LEADER :** Praise the Lord, all you nations
- **ALL :** Glorify Him, all you peoples
- **LEADER :** For great is His mercy toward us,
- **ALL :** And the Lord's truth endures forever. Hallelujah!

PSALM 118

- **LEADER :** Give thanks to the Lord, for He is good
- **ALL :** His mercy endures forever
- **LEADER :** Let Israel now say:
- **ALL :** His mercy endures forever
- **LEADER :** Let the house of Aaron now say:
- **ALL :** His mercy endures forever
- **LEADER :** Let those who revere the Lord now say:
- **ALL :** His mercy endures forever
- **LEADER :** Out of distress I called upon the Lord,
- **ALL :** He answered me by setting me free
- **LEADER :** The Lord is with me; I have no fear,
- **ALL :** What can man do to me?
- **LEADER :** The Lord is my Helper;
- **ALL :** I shall see the defeat of my foes
- **LEADER :** It is better to take refuge in the Lord than to trust in man
- **ALL :** It is better to take refuge in the Lord than to trust in princes
- **LEADER :** The heathen were all swarming around me;
- **ALL :** In the name of the Lord, I destroyed them
- **LEADER :** They swarmed like bees about me, but they were extinguished
- **ALL :** Like a fire of thorns
- **LEADER :** In the name of the Lord, I completely destroyed them.
- **ALL :** You did thrust at me that I might fall
- **LEADER :** But the Lord helped me
- **ALL :** The Lord is my strength and my song
- **LEADER :** And He has become my Salvation
- **ALL :** A joyful shout of salvation rings in the tents of the righteous:
- **LEADER :** The Right Hand of the Lord works wonders!
- **ALL :** The Right Hand of the Lord is exalted!
- **LEADER :** The Right Hand of the Lord works wonders!
- **ALL :** I will not die
- **LEADER :** But I will live to recount the deeds of the Lord
- **ALL :** The Lord has indeed punished me

- LEADER : But He has not left me to die**
- **ALL : Open for me the gates of righteousness**
 - **LEADER : That I may enter them and thank the Lord**
 - **ALL : This is the gateway of the Lord**
 - **LEADER : The righteous alone may enter**
 - **ALL : I thank You because You have answered me**
 - **LEADER : And have been Salvation for me**
 - **ALL : The stone which the builders rejected**
 - **LEADER : Has become the chief Cornerstone**
 - **ALL : This is the Lord's doing**
 - **LEADER : It is marvelous in our eyes**
 - **ALL : This is the Lord's doing.**
 - **LEADER : This is the day which the Lord has made;**
 - **ALL : We will rejoice and be glad in it**
 - **LEADER : We implore You, Save us!**
 - **ALL : We implore You, O Lord, make us prosper!**
 - **LEADER : Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord**
 - **ALL : We bless You from the house of the Lord**
 - **LEADER : The Lord is God, Who has given us light**
 - **ALL : Tie the sacrifice with cords unto the horns of the altar**
 - **LEADER : You are my God, and I thank You.**
 - **ALL : You are my God and I will praise you**
 - **LEADER : Give thanks to the Lord, for He is good**
 - **ALL : His mercy endures forever**

PSALM 136 - THE GREAT HALLEL

- **LEADER : Give thanks to the Lord, for He is good**
- **ALL : His mercy endures forever**
- **LEADER : Give thanks to the God of gods**
- **ALL : His mercy endures forever**
- **LEADER : Give thanks to the Lord of lords**
- **ALL : His mercy endures forever**
- **LEADER : For He alone does great wonders**
- **ALL : His mercy endures forever**
- **LEADER : For He made the heavens with wisdom**
- **ALL : His mercy endures forever**
- **LEADER : For He stretched out the earth over the water**
- **ALL : His mercy endures forever**
- **LEADER : For He made great lights**
- **ALL : His mercy endures forever**
- **LEADER : The sun to govern the day**
- **ALL : His mercy endures forever**
- **LEADER : The moon and the stars to govern the night**
- **ALL : His mercy endures forever**
- **LEADER : For He struck Egypt through their first-born**
- **ALL : His mercy endures forever**
- **LEADER : For He brought Israel out from among them**
- **ALL : His mercy endures forever**
- **LEADER : With a strong hand and an outstretched arm**
- **ALL : His mercy endures forever**
- **LEADER : For He split the Red Sea into parts**
- **ALL : His mercy endures forever**

- **LEADER :** And He led Israel through it
- **ALL :** His mercy endures forever
- **LEADER :** And He cast Pharaoh and his army into the Red Sea
- **ALL :** His mercy endures forever
- **LEADER :** For He led his people through the desert
- **ALL :** His mercy endures forever
- **LEADER :** For He struck down great kings
- **ALL :** His mercy endures forever
- **LEADER :** And He killed mighty kings
- **ALL :** His mercy endures forever
- **LEADER :** Sihon, king of the Amorites
- **ALL :** His mercy endures forever
- **LEADER :** And Og, king of Bashan
- **ALL :** His mercy endures forever
- **LEADER :** And gave their land as a heritage
- **ALL :** His mercy endures forever
- **LEADER :** A heritage for Israel, His servant
- **ALL :** His mercy endures forever
- **LEADER :** For we were low, but He remembered us
- **ALL :** His mercy endures forever
- **LEADER :** And He rescued us from our enemies
- **ALL :** His mercy endures forever
- **LEADER :** He gives bread to all flesh
- **ALL :** His mercy endures forever
- **LEADER :** Give thanks to the God of heaven
- **ALL :** His mercy endures forever

ALL : The soul of all life shall bless Your name, oh Lord our God. The spirit of all flesh shall glorify and exalt your remembrance our Eternal King. From eternity to eternity You are God, and besides You, we have no King, Who redeems and saves, delivers and protects, sustains and has mercy in all times of trouble and distress. We have no King but You.

ALL : God of the first and the last, God of all creatures. Lord of all generations, Who is extolled in many praises, Who guides His world with mercy and His creatures with compassion. For the Lord neither slumbers nor sleeps. He awakes those who sleep, and arouses those who slumber, makes the dumb speak, frees prisoners, supports the fallen, raises up the downcast. To You alone we give thanks.

If our mouths were filled with songs like the sea, and our tongues with jubilation like its many waves, and our lips with praise as wide as the sky; if our eyes could shine like the sun and the moon, and our hands were spread like the eagles in the sky, and our feet were swift like deer, we would still be unable to thank You enough, oh Lord our God and God of our fathers, for one-thousandth of the thousands of thousands and myriads of good things which You have done for our fathers and for us.

ALL : From Egypt You redeemed us, Oh Lord our God, and from the house of slavery You saved us. When we were hungry, You fed us, and with plenty You sustained us. From the sword You saved us, and from pestilence You delivered us. You saved us from horrible sicknesses. Until now, Your mercy has helped us, and Your grace has not left us; do not ever abandon us, oh Lord our God.

ALL : Therefore, the limbs which You have formed in us, the breath and soul You breathed into our nostrils, and the tongue which You put in our mouth shall thank, bless, laud, glorify, extol, revere, sanctify, and do honor to Your name, oh our King. For every mouth will thank You, every tongue will swear loyally to You, every knee will bow down to You, every heart will fear You, and every man's inner being will sing praise to Your name, as it is written:

"All my bones will say, 'Oh God, who is like You? You deliver the poor from the one who is stronger than he, the poor and the needy from one who robs him.'" -- Psalm 35:10

ALL : Who is like You? Who is equal to You? Who can be compared to You? The great, and mighty, and awesome God, God most high, Possessor of heaven and earth. We will praise You, laud, glorify, and bless Your holy name, as it is written: "A Psalm of David, 'Bless the Lord, oh my soul, and all that is within me, bless His holy name.'" --- Psalm 103:1

ALL : You are God in the might of Your power, great in the glory of Your name, mighty forever, awe-inspiring through your deeds, the King Who sits upon a high and lofty throne.

ALL : He dwells in eternity on high, and holy is His name. And it is written:

"Rejoice, O righteous ones in the Lord, it is fitting for the upright to give songs of praise." -- Psalm 33:1

ALL : By the mouth of the upright You shall be praised, and by the word of the righteous ones You shall be blessed, and by the tongue of the pious You shall be exalted, and amid the holy ones you shall be set apart.

ALL : And in the assemblies of the thousands of Your people, the House of Israel, with jubilation shall Your name be glorified, O our King, in every generation. For this is the duty of all creatures before You, oh Lord our God and God of our fathers, to thank, praise, laud, glorify, extol, honor, lift up and sing praises with all the words of the songs and praises of David, son of Jesse, Your servant, Your anointed.

ALL : Praise be Your name for ever, our King, the great and holy God and King in the heavens and on the earth. For to You it is becoming, O Lord our God and God of our forefathers, song and praise, hymn and psalm, strength and dominion, victory, greatness and might, fame and glory, holiness and sovereignty, blessings and thanksgivings from now and forever.

ALL : Blessed are You, O Lord, God and King, great in renown, God of thanksgivings, Lord of wonders who delights in the songs of praise, King, God, life of eternity. All Your works shall praise You, O Lord our God, Your pious ones, the righteous who do Your will. And all Your people, the House of Israel, shall joyfully sing thanks, praise, laud, honor, lift up, revere, set apart and crown Your name, our King. For it is good to thank You, and to Your name it is becoming to sing, for from eternity to eternity You are God. Blessed are You O Lord, King magnified in praises!

ALL : I am ready and prepared to keep the Commandment to drink the fourth of the four cups, for the sake of the One God and His Presence, let it be counted as done in the name of all Israel.

LEADER: Baruch Atah Adonai Eloheynu Melech Ha Olam, Boray P'ri Ha Gafen

ALL : Blessed are You O Lord our God, King of the universe, who creates the fruit of the vine

LEADER: Drink the fourth cup. The fourth cup is called the Cup of His Coming or the Cup of the Kingdom. Drink of the Cup while reclining toward the left.

LEADER: Blessed are you, O Lord our God, King of the universe for the vine, the fruit of the vine, and the produce of the field. For the desirable, good, and spacious land that you were pleased to give our forefathers as a heritage, to eat of its fruit and to be satisfied with its goodness. Have mercy, we beg you, Lord, our God, on Israel your people; on Jerusalem, your city; on Zion, the resting place of your glory; your altar, and your Temple. Rebuild Jerusalem, the city of holiness, speedily in our days. Bring us up into it and gladden us in its rebuilding and let us eat from its fruit and be satisfied with its goodness and bless you upon it in holiness and purity. Let us rejoice on this festival of Passover; for You, O Lord, are good and do good to all, and we thank you for the land and the fruit of the vine. Blessed are You, O Lord, for the land and the fruit of the vine.

How great Thou are O Lord for your faithfulness towards the Jewish people by preserving them through the

ages from all nations and people who have attempted to destroy them throughout history. How great Thou are O Lord for bringing the children of Israel out of Egypt and giving them the season of Passover. As nation after nation rose up to destroy the Jewish people, every nation that rose up against the Jewish people eventually were defeated by a stronger nation who subsequently rose up against the Jewish people including Assyria, Babylon, Media/Persia etc. The final nation that will come and the last Kingdom to rise is The Government that you O God shall establish during the Messianic Age when the Messiah, will rule and reign from Jerusalem.

NIRTZAH

LEADER: The order of the Passover Service is now completed in accordance with all its ordinances and statutes. Even as you have been found worthy to follow its order, so may you be worthy to perform it in the future. "O Pure One, who dwells on high, raise up this congregation which is without number. Speedily, lead the offshoots of the stock that You have planted, redeemed in joy to Zion."

LEADER: By now, you should feel as though you have climbed the spiritual ladder and ascended into the throne room of God. God gives the Passover not only for the Jewish believer in God but to the non-Jewish believer in God for you to experience. Passover teaches you of your personal relationship with God and how God spiritually redeems you as He did the Jewish people from Egypt -- an allegorical picture of the world's system of sin and flesh and its influence over your life. You have witnessed how Passover teaches you of the complete redemptive plan of God. It also teaches of the outpouring of His Holy Spirit, the ingathering of the Jews from the Diaspora in the last days, as well as the Gentiles from every nation, tribe and tongue before the coming of the Messianic Age. Passover is a rehearsal of the total redemptive plan of God. Passover ends with the shout, "Next year in Jerusalem". This is a prayer to God, that next year, we may experience the true Passover meal, the Marriage Supper of the Lamb in the city of Jerusalem. This is the ultimate desire and proclamation of our hearts. Therefore, these words are shouted with expectancy and joy!

L'Shanah Ha Ba-a Birushalayim !

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DID THE GENTILE BELIEVER OBSERVE THE FESTIVAL OF UNLEAVENED BREAD?

In the Bible "leaven" represents sin. The very nature of leaven is said to be that which corrupts. In Ex. 23:14-15 the people are told to fast from anything which contains leaven, but not only to fast, but not to allow any leaven in their houses for seven days. This seven-day fast is called the **"Feast of Unleavened Bread."**

For seven days no chametz (leaven) is to be found in the house. Anyone who was found with leaven would be taken out, beaten with 39 stripes and cut off from the community. The commandment to abstain from leaven is found in The Book of Exodus 12:19, ***"...Seven days shall there be no leaven found in your houses;"***. Therefore, traditionally on the 13th day of Nisan the head of each household makes a search for chametz (leaven). It is customary to place a few pieces of bread in a strategic location, so that when the search is made, leaven is found. Afterwards the following blessing is recited: ***Blessed art Thou, Eternal our God, Ruler of the universe, any leaven that may still be in the house, which I have not seen or have not removed, shall be as if it does not exist, and as the dust of the earth.*** In Exodus 12:20, we read, ***"...Ye shall eat nothing leavened; in all your habitations shall ye eat unleavened bread"***. The head of the household will take a piece of leaven that he has brushed with a feather into a wooden spoon which has been wrapped in a cloth. Then it is taken to a prescribed place and thrown into the fire which symbolically removes all leaven from that household.

Answer for yourself: Is the "Feast of Unleavened Bread" connected to the "Passover"? Yes it is.

Passover is a three in one Feast: or one feast containing three parts which equal one Feast—Passover.

- 1. Passover
- 2. Unleavened Bread
- 3. First Fruits

The Feast of Unleavened Bread runs consecutively with Passover. It was such an integral part of Pesach that the titles were interchangeable almost to the point of being synonymous and we find it mentioned this way in the New Testament. This feast runs from the 14th of Nissan to the 21st. The Jewish Encyclopedia states that the feast of Passover consists of two parts: The Passover ceremony and the Feast of Unleavened Bread. **Originally both parts existed separately; but at the beginning of the Exile they were combined.**

Seven is a number significant of fullness and completion; also spiritual perfection. It is also the number associated with sanctification. On the 7th day God rested, wherefore the Lord blessed the Sabbath day and hallowed it. Ex. 20:11.

Exod 20:11 11 For in six days the LORD made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is, and rested the seventh day: wherefore the LORD blessed the sabbath day, and hallowed it. (KJV)

The Feast of Unleavened Bread is considered a Sabbath or a Holy Convocation and this also means that no work is to be done for it is a time of rest.

Answer for yourself: In light of what we have learned previously concerning the Sabbath and how the non-Jew was commanded to rest on this day in the Hebrew Scriptures, how the non-Jew was according to Isa. 56 told "to choose those things that please God and thereby choose to observe His 'Sabbaths'", and that there are many references to the non-Jew observing Passover in the Hebrew Scriptures and did so for hundreds of years following the first century then does it not stand to reason that since the Feast of Unleavened Bread is part of Passover that this would mean to a "thinking believer" that the non-Jew was to 'choose' to observe the Feast of Unleavened Bread and learn the spiritual meanings connected with this holy 'appointed day' of the Creator? It sure would seem that to me.

FEAST OF UNLEAVENED BREAD WAS KEPT BY NEW TESTAMENT CHURCH

More than 20 years after the crucifixion of Jesus Christ as described in the New Testament we find described in the texts of the New Testament that the church still kept the Feast of Unleavened Bread.

Act 20:6 And we sailed away from Philippi after the days of unleavened bread, and came unto them to Troas in five days; where we abode seven days.

Notice the time frame of the verse we just read. Conservative estimates by scholars is that the events described in Acts 20:6 occurred at least 20 years following the death of Jesus as described in the New Testament. Now 20 years is a very long time to be keeping a feast which had been allegedly "nailed to the cross"! **The crystal clear truth is, Paul, the apostle to the Gentiles and his Gentile companions kept the Feast of Unleavened Bread while at Philippi some 20 or so years following the death of Jesus as detailed in the New Testament.** It is beyond me how any critical thinker can read these texts possessing understanding of the Biblical Festivals and not see that the non-Jewish believers in the God of Israel observed and kept the Feasts of the Lord along with the Jews following the death of Jesus as recorded in the New Testament. These Feasts and Festivals of the Lord were not abolished by Jesus or his death and any how say they were are terrible confused about what they are reading and teaching and literally teaching lies.

Answer for yourself: Would the Holy Spirit have impressed Luke to write and mention the Feast of Unleavened Bread if it was abolished?

Let's read of a historical reference to the New Testament church keeping of the annual Holy Days and Sabbaths....

"Nothing could show better than these scanty notes of time how deep-rooted the custom was, how the feast was observed as regularly as the year came round. Men spoke naturally of 'the days of unleavened bread' as a significant point in the calendar.... Ordinary dates dwindle into insignificance beside these fixed, outstanding seasons.... The question arises, as in the matter of keeping [the] Sabbath on the seventh day, whether the early Christians continued to observe these festivals.... In all probability they went on for years observing the festivals" (Hastings' Dictionary of the Apostolic Church, article "Passover", pages 132-133) It seems the New Testament church kept the feasts for quite some time!

Notice the Passover and Unleavened Bread reference made by Paul when writing to the Gentile Church at Corinth in the following verse.

1 Cor 5:6-8 6 Your glorying is not good. Know ye not that a little leaven leaveneth the whole lump? 7 Purge out therefore the old leaven, that ye may be a new lump, as ye are unleavened. For even Christ

our passover is sacrificed for us: 8 Therefore let us keep the feast, not with old leaven, neither with the leaven of malice and wickedness; but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth. (KJV)

Answer for yourself: Does it not seem somewhat unreasonable for Paul to mention "leaven" to this non-Jewish Church in Corinth if they were unfamiliar with the Festival of Unleavened Bread?

THE MESSAGE OF COLOSSIANS CHAPTER 2

Colossians 2 is used by most Christians to "prove" that the feasts has been abolished. Let's examine this chapter in detail to see if that is the truth.

Answer for yourself: Are these Colossians in Greece Jews or Gentiles? They were Gentiles.

Col 2:13 And you, being dead in your sins and the uncircumcision of your flesh, hath he quickened together with him, having forgiven you all trespasses;

But they were obedient Christians.

Col 2:5-7 5 For though I be absent in the flesh, yet am I with you in the spirit, joying and beholding your order, and the steadfastness of your faith in Christ. 6 As ye have therefore received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk ye in him: 7 Rooted and built up in him, and established in the faith, as ye have been taught, abounding therein with thanksgiving. (KJV)

So we see the Colossians were Gentiles, meaning, before becoming Christians they had nothing to do with the feasts and Holy Days. Since they weren't Jews, they would not have been observing Jewish traditions or Festival days which leads us to a very important question.

Answer for yourself: So why did Paul bother writing to them about the Holy Days?

Answer for yourself: What was the only "Bible" these Colossian believers had access or knowledge of in their day? We know today that the ONLY Scriptures the New Testament Christians had were the Hebrew "Old" Testament (the Hebrew Scriptures). There were no New Testament available at that time. So those Gentile Colossians needed to rely on the Old Testament for their guidance.

So being obedient, they would have read the Old Testament and found they needed to keep the Sabbath and the Holy Days as I have shown you in the prior articles on this website. Since they were followers of "the Christ" and called Christians then they would have also been familiar with the words of "the Christ" as passed on through Paul and probably other Christians.

Answer for yourself: Would they have not heard the words of this "Christ" if he had said that Sabbaths and the Holy Days has been abolished? How could "the Christ" abolish however what God the Father wrote in passages in the Hebrew Scriptures as we have detailed previously in this website? Simply he could not have and did not.

Answer for yourself: Was Paul telling them that the Sabbaths and the Holy Days has been abolished?

Col 2:16 16 Let no man therefore judge you in meat, or in drink, or in respect of an holyday, or of the new moon, or of the sabbath days: (KJV)

Answer for yourself: What was Paul saying here to these Gentile followers of "the Christ"?

Paul here was simply saying to not let their pagan relatives and neighbors judge them on keeping the Sabbaths and the Holy Days which the God of Israel and the Jews taught in the Jewish Holy Hebrew

Scriptures!

Obviously as I have proven on our various websites, they would have been keeping the Holy Days and be subjected to the kind of persecutions from their pagan neighbors as we are today from "Christians" who worship on a pagan day of the sun and keep the pagan festivals of Christmas and Easter and accuse those of us who observe God's Appointed Times of "[Judaizing](#)".

Paul was NOT telling them to NOT keep the Holy Days. He was just telling them to not let any man judge them on keeping the Holy Days of Godthe Jewish Feasts and Festivals and Sabbaths

The Christians at Colosse were criticized for not keeping the Greek customs such as the pagan holidays. The Christians were eating meats that were prohibited by the Greek religions, and drinking prohibited drinks. And they also kept the Sabbath and the Holy Days. The "new moons" refers to the observations made necessary by the Jews in order to discern the correct dates of the Holy Days - we no longer need to observe "new moons" since we already have the Sacred Calendar.

So we see Paul was NOT saying it was "ok" to keep the pagan festivals if we wanted to. He was saying to IGNORE the criticisms by their pagan relatives and to continue in their Christian way of life as taught by the Church and this consisted of keeping and observing the Jewish Holy Days of Leviticus 23 as well as the other "Sabbaths" of the Lord.

Now let's see WHO can judge us on the Holy Days.

Col 2:16-17 16 Let no man therefore judge you in meat, or in drink, or in respect of an holyday, or of the new moon, or of the sabbath days: 17 Which are a shadow of things to come; but the body [is] of Christ. (KJV)

Answer for yourself: What is the importance of the underlined word "is" in the above quote?

The word "is" is in [] here and usually in **italics in the Kings James Version** because the word "is" simply is NOT in the original Greek, it has been added by the human translators. So the above phrase should really read **"but the body of Christ"**.

The "body of Christ" is the Church. So looking at verse 16 and 17 together, we have Paul saying the pagan worldly people have no right to judge us on keeping the Sabbaths, Holy Days, kosher laws, etc, but the Christian Church DOES have the right to "judge" us on these things.

But there is a big, big problem. The Christian church has a responsibility to teach us from the Bible about the Sabbaths and other areas of God's laws. **Of course when we have churches that keep the pagan festivals of Christmas and Easter, and tell us that the kosher laws has been abolished, and that the Gentile Church as replaced Israel and we can do whatever we want, such a church by definition is pagan and therefore that church has no right to judge us on keeping the Sabbaths, Holy Days, etc.**

As thinking believers if you search the Bible for yourself you will find a completely different message from the ones being taught from the pulpits of our churches in America. You will find as I and millions of others have found and are finding that we DO need to keep the Sabbath, that God's laws has NOT been abolished, and that we do need to keep them.

So naturally we would want God to lead us to a true Christian church that also teaches such things. But sadly few if any Christian Churches have this understanding and if you find Messianic Christian Churches that do teach the Sabbaths and Festivals of God they are corrupted to the core by a idolatry by teaching that the Jesus of the New Testament is God and preach a Christology that comes right from the Sun Worship of Constantine in the 4th century when he made Jesus God and had 50 bibles written to include this hideous doctrine and the

rest is history.

Answer for yourself: And when you as good Bereans check out the church's doctrines against the Scriptures and find it is not consistent with the Scriptures then what are you to do? Do you then we place yourselves under the authority of such a church? My advice is to remember that worship is of the Heart and Soul of man and you need not a building full of compromise to validate your proper worship of the Creator. It would be better for you to begin a home fellowship where you are free to study and learn the truths of God's word and model them freely to your family and like-minded friends.

Answer for yourself: So why should we keep the Sabbaths and Holy Days?

Col 2:17 17 Which are a shadow of things to come...(KJV)

Answer for yourself: What is to come? What does this mean? Well lets see shall we?

The first reason why we keep the Sabbaths and Holy Days is because God tells us to do so!! We do not need a reason why we obey the commandments of God, we just go ahead and obey them!! However, after we start to obey the commandments, God gives us an understanding of WHY!!

So looking at the above Scripture, we see that the Sabbaths and Holy Days are a "foreshadow" of things to come.

In studying the Feasts and Festivals and Sabbaths of God you learn that these Holy Days are a foreshadow of God's plan of salvation for mankind. Once you learn the spiritual messages in these Holy Days of God then it dawns upon you that these truly are "rehearsals" of how our lives are to be lived and patterned whereby we consistently live a life of faith and repentance (Passover), thereby consistently removing the sin from our lives (Unleavened Bread) whereby we become a worthy vessel for the Word of God to live in and through our lives (Pentecost...the giving of the Word of God to mankind). Between the Early Rain Festivals (Spring) and the Latter Rain Festivals (Fall) we have a long dry season which is a perfect picture of our life with all of its hard ups and downs where we get to live out what we believe and have learned. This is where the rubber really meets the road so to speak. Then we all reach the end of our lives and the judgment. These Festivals, when properly understood, prepares us to not only learn how we are to live holy lives but also prepares us for the end of our life whereby we learned to observe in our own lives not only the Spring Festivals (Passover, Unleavened Bread, Pentecost) but in so doing this assures us that we will have a successful Rosh HaShannah (the resurrection), Yom Kippur (the final atonement) and thereby are certain that we will prepared to live in the Presence of God for Eternity (Tabernacles). **It is that simply but yet so hard for so many because they have lost their Jewish Roots to their faith.**

The Christian Church having failed to maintain the connection with her Jewish Roots has completely lost this precious information and teach a substitute false gospel and message today and are simply not aware the forged texts in their Bibles has blinded them to their true origin and plan of God for her. There is no greater example that could be given than those above as you see the non-Jews being taught long after the death of Jesus as depicted in the New Testament of the facts that the non-Jews observed the Biblical Feasts and Festivals like Passover and Unleavened Bread.

So here we see that far from abolishing the festivals, Collosians 2 actually confirms that we MUST keep God's Holy Days and not the pagan festivals



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THE ORIGINS OF THE FESTIVAL OF SHAVUOT - PENTECOST & THE ROLE OF THE GENTILE

In the Bible, the Feast of Weeks plays a somewhat minor role beside the major seasonal festivals of Passover on the one hand and Booths (Tabernacles or Ingathering) on the other. **The Festival of Pentecost, Week, or Shavuot** as it is known is simply the end of the barley harvest, and its distinctive feature is the presentation to Jehovah (apart from special sacrifices) of an offering consisting, according to one version of the Law (Deut. 16:10-11), of whatever one feels prompted to give, or, according to another (Lev. 23:17), of two loaves made out of the new corn.

*Deut. 16:9-11 9 Seven weeks shalt thou number unto thee; from the time the sickle is first put to the standing corn shalt thou begin to number seven weeks. 10 And thou shalt keep the feast of weeks unto the LORD thy God after the measure of the freewill-offering of thy hand, which thou shalt give, according as the LORD thy God blesseth thee. 11 And thou shalt rejoice before the LORD thy God, thou, and thy son, and thy daughter, and thy man-servant, and thy maid-servant, and the Levite that is within thy gates, **and the stranger**, and the fatherless, and the widow, that are in the midst of thee, in the place which the LORD thy God shall choose to cause His name to dwell there.*

Answer for yourself: For our purposes in this study did you notice the inclusion of the "stranger" which by now you have come to understand is reference to the "non-Jew"? I would hope so and knowing this it sure appears that God desires that all His children, both Jew and non-Jew keep and observe this special "appointed time" with Him. Now all we have to do as non-Jewish believers in God since knowing this is to now search out the true meaning of this Festival and then begin to "choose those things that please God" as instructed by Isaiah 56. But before we do let us look at the other passage references above.

Lev. 17:15-16 15 ¶ And ye shall count unto you from the morrow after the day of rest, from the day that ye brought the sheaf of the waving; seven weeks shall there be complete; 16 even unto the morrow after the seventh week shall ye number fifty days; and ye shall present a new meal-offering unto the LORD. 17 Ye shall bring out of your dwellings two wave-loaves of two tenth parts of an ephah; they shall be of fine flour, they shall be baked with leaven, for first-fruits unto the LORD.

The festival, we are told as seen above, is to take place a full seven weeks after the sickle has been first applied to the standing grain (Deut. 16:9).

It is easy to dismiss this early phase of the festival as nothing but the product of a crude, unsophisticated age, and to think one has explained the presentation of firstfruits by collecting parallels from other parts of the world, without stopping to penetrate to their significance. **The truth is, however, that even at this primary stage, though the form of expression may be primitive, the underlying meaning of the festival is at once subtle and profound. Unlike other here with Israel we find TWO IDEAS are combined, and each is capable of an extension and development of far-reaching import.**

THE TWO IDEAS INHERENT IN SHAVUOT

This "First Idea" is based on the common Oriental principle that land belongs to him who "quickens" it, or brings it under cultivation. Since, it is here affirmed, the earth obviously depends for its fertility not only on the labors of men but also on the cooperation of God, who furnishes it with rain, wind and sunlight, He too is necessarily a part owner of it. The presentation of firstfruits is thus no mere token of thanksgiving or mere submissive rendering of tribute, although, to be sure, by a blunting of religious sensitivity, it may (and often does) degenerate into this. The firstfruits offering to God is the payment to God of the dividend on His investment. To withhold that payment is an act not of impiety but of embezzlement.

Translated into broader terms, what is here proclaimed is that the relation between God and man is not one of master and servant but of mutually dependent partners in a joint enterprise of continuous creation. This idea gives new validity to human existence and at the same time provides a signal and momentous alternative to that more common conception which, projecting the image of God from the model of kings and magicians, regards Him merely as a supernal lord and benefactor of mankind. For the conventional attitude of subservience, worship and adoration there is substituted a concept of God which is at once more robust and more mystical and which, indeed, modern religion might do well to recapture (Theodor H. Gaster, Festivals of the Jewish Year, William Sloan Associates Publishers, New York, 1952, p. 60).

The "Second Idea" which underlies this early phase of the festival stems from the fact that primitive man regards anything new and unused as being fraught with potential peril, much as an infant might regard a new toy. The firstfruits of the harvest (and likewise the firstborn both of men and of beasts) are therefore consigned to the gods or spirits so that the newness may be taken away and the rest thereby rendered "safe." The important thing, however, is not so much the *why* as the *how* of the ritual; the danger of a new thing is removed by bringing it into contact with some eternal being to whom it is *not* new, inasmuch as he transcends the limitations of our own temporal existence. Behind the symbolism of the primitive procedure, therefore, there lies once again a permanent, universal message: the only immunity against the terror of new things is to try to see them in the light of eternity, and the only protection against the perils of human existence is to dedicate the prime portion of it to God.

Thus, even in its rudimentary stage, the Feast of Weeks possessed its own spiritual values. For Judaism, however-especially after it had outgrown its Palestinian origins-these alone were not sufficient. The presence and activity of God had to be recognized at this season not only in the phenomena of nature but also, and on parallel lines, in some crucial event of Jewish history. Accordingly, in the first centuries of the Common Era, inspiration and ingenuity combined to produce the necessary development.

THE GIVING OF THE TORAH AT MOUNT SINAI

The Scriptural narrative states clearly (Exod. 19:1) that the children of Israel reached Mount Sinai in the third month, to the day, after their departure from Egypt. This, it was now argued, does not mean that a full three months elapsed, but only that the event took place *in the third month of the year*, and in that case the giving of the Ten Commandments might (with a little latitude and fancy) be made to coincide with the Feast of Weeks. The festival thus became the birthday of Israel, the anniversary of the day on which the Covenant had been concluded between God and His people and the Law first revealed. Such, ever since, has been its primary significance; it is known, in fact, as "the season of the giving of our Law". Shavuot is the two day festival which celebrates the giving of the Torah (The five books of Moses) on Mount Sinai. Shavuot differs from every other Jewish festival that marks an historical event. There is no special Mitzvah (commandment) through which the original event is created. This is because the giving of the Torah

was so overwhelmingly important that there is no action which could recapture it. In the Shavuot prayers, one thanks God for having given the Torah.

The parallelism between the historical and agricultural aspects of the festival is far closer than might at first be suspected, and is carried through with rare ingenuity and resource. According to Jewish teaching, the important thing about the session at Sinai was not only the giving of the Law but also the receiving of it, the two acts of offer and acceptance constituting a Covenant (or contract) between God and Israel. Here too, therefore, the idea of collaboration is involved: if the Law issues from God, its fulfillment lies with Israel. Inspiration and aspiration, revelation and perception, are the two sides of a single coin: on the one side is the face of God; on the other, that of man. What Saint Theresa said of the relation of the Christian to Christ was expressed by Judaism, many centuries earlier, in its concept of the covenantal partnership of God and Israel: In the world of men, Israel is God's hands and feet and eyes.

Nor is it only in this major respect that the natural and historical aspects of the festival run parallel to each other. For if the former marks the end of seven weeks' collaboration between God and man in the reaping of the material harvest, what the latter celebrates is the end of a corresponding **spiritual harvest**, which began with the deliverance from Egypt and reached its climax with the conclusion of the Covenant. **And just as the ingathering of the crops is the necessary condition of life and prosperity during the ensuing year, so the event at Sinai is the necessary condition of Israel's continuing existence and fortune.** **Futhermore, if, in the primitive agricultural rite, man offers to God two loaves of the new bread as a symbol of cooperation, in the historical counterpart-by a fine and inspired inversion-God offers to man the two tablets of the Law (His Word...God's bread that comes down from Heaven)!**

Lastly, as the harvest is renewed from year to year, so too is the historic experience of Sinai. We make a renewed commitment to God at Shavuot each year by pledging our allegiance to the Covenant we have entered into with God through faith and obedience. Jewish teaching is insistent on the point that the festivals are not mere commemorations. All the generations of Israel, say the sages, were released from Egypt, and all were present at the mountain. By this they did not mean, as is so often supposed, that all of time was telescoped into a single moment, but rather that a single moment was projected into all of time. Both the revelation of God and His covenant with Israel are essentially continuous and are no more confined to the single event at Sinai than is the process of nature to a single harvest.

The twofold character of the festival finds eloquent expression in the services of the synagogue:

- on the first day, the lesson from the Pentateuch (Exod. 19-20) deals with the declaration of the Ten Commandments;
- on the second day, with the institution and observance of the Feast of Firstfruits (Deut. 15:19-16:17);]

While on both days an extra portion is read describing the special sacrifices which were anciently presented on this occasion (Numb. 28:26-31). **The dominant theme is, however, the Giving of the Law.** Interspersed throughout the morning prayers are elaborate medieval poems (*piyyutim*) in which the Scriptural account of that event is paralleled.

Furthermore, a standard element of the traditional liturgy is the recital of rhymed versions (*Azharoth*) of the 613 commandments contained in the Pentateuch; while in Reform congregations it is customary also to "confirm" adolescents on the Feast of Weeks, the confirmands thereby pledging adherence to the Covenant which was then concluded with their forebears.

But it is not only as a historical event that the revelation at Sinai figures in the services of the festival.

Supplementing the lessons from the Pentateuch are others from the Prophets, and in these the truth is brought home that inspired men in all ages can obtain a vision of God, and that the wonders wrought when Israel was delivered from Egypt will be repeated in the future when she is at last redeemed from the dark night of her present existence.

On the first day, the Lesson from the Prophets (*haftarah*) is taken from the opening chapter of the Book of Ezekiel, where the prophet relates how, when he was "among the captives" in Babylon, he was granted a vision of the heavenly creatures adoring God in the firmament and how, by progressive stages, his vision penetrated to the very "Glory of the Lord" surrounded by the same radiance and holding the same promise as "the bow which is in the cloud in the day of rain." Similarly, on the second day of the festival, the lesson is taken from the great Prayer of Habakkuk (Hab. 3), in which that prophet, writing during the difficult days of the Assyrian Exile, recalls the historic revelation of God at the time of the Exodus and expresses the conviction that such deliverance will always be granted to His people and that the divine providence will never fail.

Here, too, the God of history is also the God of nature, and His bounty consists not only in the deliverance of His people from their assailants but also in the provision of increase upon earth.

The same message is conveyed also by the choice of the Sixty-eighth Psalm as the special "anthem" of the festival. For the purpose of that psalm (one of the most difficult and obscure in the entire Psalter) is, once again, to universalize the events of the Exodus and Revelation and to rehearse them as an assurance of God's continuing providence and bounty; and here, too, the divine salvation is said to be made manifest not only in history but also in nature.

THE BOOK OF RUTH...A GENTILE CHOOSES THE GOD OF ISRAEL

Lastly, the double-sidedness of the festival is brought out by the custom of reading the Book of Ruth as a prelude to the afternoon service. It is in this reading from the Book of Ruth that we have a very important message for the non-Jew. For the two dominant features of this Biblical portion are:

- first, that it plays against the background of the barley harvest; and
- second, that it relates how a woman who was formerly a pagan non-Jew came to embrace the faith of Israel and to throw in her lot with Jehovah's people (*1:16, "And Ruth said, Entreat me not to leave thee and to turn back from following thee, for whither thou goest I will go, and where thou lodgest, I will lodge; thy people shall be my people, and thy God my God."*).

The story thus epitomizes the two main features of the Feast of Weeks: the ingathering of the harvest and the acceptance of the Law and Revelation of God (not only by Jews but by non-Jews as well....ALL OF MANKIND)!

In the early centuries of the Common Era element, scarcely less interesting, was injected celebration of the festival; it became, to a certain extent, a conscious counterbalance to the Christian festival of Whitsun, with which it approximately coincides.

In Christian tradition, Whitsun is the birthday of the Church, the anniversary of the date on which Spirit was miraculously poured forth upon the disciples of Jesus. The event is narrated in second chapter of the Acts of the Apostles, in the New Testament. At Pentecost, we read, "*. . . they were all accord in one place. And suddenly there came from heaven, as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting. And there appeared unto them cloven tongues, like as of fire, poised above each of them. And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance.*"

To this Christian version of Pentecost, Judaism opposed its own. Not the Church, but the community of Israel had been founded on that day. Not to a select few, but to a whole people had come the revelation of God. Not over the heads of favored disciples had the tongues of fire appeared; *"... all the people (a mixed multitude of Jews and non-Jews) saw the thunders and the flames"* (Exod. 20:18). Not the astonished onlookers, but God Himself had spoken in a multitude of tongues; for, so the sages asserted, every word uttered from the mountain had been pronounced in seventy-two languages of the world at the same time! Furthermore, if Christianity emphasized at this season the figure of its resurrected saviour, Judaism replied by giving prominence to that of David, the messianic king. Feast of Weeks, it was maintained, was the anniversary of David's death. The Book of Ruth, which (as we have seen) was prescribed reading for the festival, ends with the genealogy of that monarch (4:13ff.); and on the second evening the pious would stay up late into the night reading the Psalms of David.

Nor this alone. If, according to the dominant faith, Christ would return at the end of days and fight the great Dragon of the Deep and bring renewed salvation to men, so too, in the equally fervent conviction of the Jews, would David or his scion appear to usher in the Messianic Age. In the twelfth century this belief found eloquent expression in the liturgy of the festival, for into the morning service of the first day, immediately after the reading of the first verses from the portion of the Law, there was introduced the famous Aramaic poem, *Akdamuth*. Written by a certain Meir ben Isaac Nehorai (probably of Orleans), this poem described, in highly fanciful terms, the ultimate victory of God over the monsters Leviathan and Behemoth, and the lavish banquet at which He would regale the faithful in heaven.

The usages of the Church (themselves borrowed from earlier pagan custom) seem likewise to have been imitated by the synagogue. In many parts of Europe, for instance, it is customary to deck the churches at Whitsun with wreaths and bunches of flowers; in Catholic districts of Germany, even private dwellings are adorned with green twigs on this occasion. In Italy, rose leaves are often scattered from the ceilings of churches during the progress of the services; they are popularly explained as representing the "tongues of fire" which the original disciples beheld at Antioch when the Holy Spirit descended upon them. Similarly, in Russia it is (or was) customary to carry flowers and green twigs on Whitsun; and in many Latin countries, the festival is known as *Pascha Rosatum*. All of this appears to be but a Christian transformation of the ancient Roman festival of Rosalia, celebrated in the preceding month. At this festival it was the practice to adore Venus by decorating her images with roses.

The Jewish form of this common custom is to adorn the synagogue with flowers on the Feast of Weeks, and the lilies which are used for this purpose are sometimes taken (by an inspired sublimation) to symbolize that "lily of the valley" which, in the allegorical interpretation of the Song of Songs, is none other than Israel itself.

Another Pentecost custom which has its counterpart in Gentile usage is that of eating dairy dishes, especially those made with cheese. The usual explanation of this custom is fanciful enough. In Psalm 68—which is prescribed as the "anthem" of the festival—the mountain on which the Law was given is described (vs. 15) as "a mountain divine, a Bashan-like mount, a mount of *gabnunim*, a Bashan-like mount." The word *gabnunim* (which does not recur in this form elsewhere in Scripture) really means "gibbous, many-peaked," but it was fancifully connected with the Hebrew *gebinah*, "cheese," the conception of a mountain made of cheese being a commonplace of folktale. **Accordingly, it was maintained that the eating of cheese was a reminder of the giving of the Law at this season! In reality, cheese and dairy dishes are eaten at this time because the festival has a pastoral as well as an agricultural significance.** Thus, at the analogous Scottish celebration of Beltane, on May 1, dairy dishes are commonly consumed, and churning and cheese-making are a common feature of spring harvest festivals in many parts of the world. In Macedonia, for instance, the Sunday before Lent is known as "Cheese Sunday"; in several districts of Germany cheese and dairy dishes are (or were) standard fare at Whitsun. **Also we must mention that once the Jews accepted the Torah, they became obligated in the laws of kosher. But since they were not yet familiar with the laws regarding animal slaughter, they ate dairy. Receiving the Torah was a form of rebirth. We celebrate this newness by consuming baby food. Namely, milk. Shavuot coincided with the time**

when the lambs and calves born in the spring would be suckling. Therefore an abundance of dairy products were available. Legend has it that the Jewish people were at Sinai for so long that all their milk soured and turned into cheese. In the Torah the Jewish people are promised a "Land flowing with milk and honey." Dairy meals recall this lyrical description of Israel. The Hebrew word for milk, chalav, has the numerical value of 40, symbolizing the number of days Moses was on Mt. Sinai. Chalav is spelled chet (numerical value, 8), lamed (30), and vet (2).

That such usages are extremely ancient is shown by the fact that at the Roman rural festival of Parilia (April 21), which fell at the same time of year as marks the beginning of the barley harvest in Palestine, milk and must were drunk, and the image of the pastoral god Pales was sprinkled with the former. Moreover, that a rite involving the seething of a kid in milk was part of the Canaanite prototype of Pentecost is strongly suggested by the fact noted already by Maimonides—that in two passages of the Pentateuch (Exod. 23:19, 34:26) where this practice is prohibited to the Israelites, it is somehow connected with the offering of firstfruits; and the rite of seething a kid in milk seems actually to be mentioned in a recently discovered Canaanite text possibly designed for a spring festival.

BUT WHEN?

If, however, anthropology and comparative religion throw light on many features of the festival, there is one which still remains a puzzle, namely, its precise date. In the earlier code of the Pentateuch, it is said, quite vaguely, that it is to take place seven full weeks after the beginning of the harvest. This is the kind of vague and general dating which one would naturally expect in a primitive agricultural society unconscious of a fixed and stable calendar. Later, however, the date is given more precisely: the festival is to be celebrated seven full weeks *"after the morrow of the sabbath"* (Lev. 23:15).

Scholars have long disputed the meaning of this term:

- According to the Sadducees and the Samaritans, the word "sabbath" is here to be taken literally and refers to the first sabbath in Passover. Pentecost would therefore always fall on a Sunday.
- The Pharisees, on the other hand, contended that "sabbath" was but a loose term for "festival," and this interpretation has prevailed in Jewish usage. The counting of the fifty days therefore begins with the second day of Passover.

"You shall count for yourselves...seven weeks, they shall be complete, fifty days." (Leviticus 23: 15-21)

"On the day of the first fruits, when you offer a new meal offering on your festival of weeks, it shall be a holy convocation to you, you shall not do any manner of work." (Numbers, 28: 26-30)

"You shall count seven weeks for yourselves...then you shall observe the festival of Shavuot." (Deuteronomy 16: 9-12)

Shavuot commemorates the giving of the Torah on Mount Sinai, seven weeks after the departure from Egypt. Most accept the interpretation of the Pharisees. From the second day of Pesach until Shavuot, by which time the wheat harvest will have started, we count 49 days. This is known as the counting of the Omer, since during this period an Omer of barley was offered in the Temple. An Omer is a measure of barley, equivalent to approximately 2.25 litres. Counting 49 days determined when Shavuot should occur.

What matters is not the origin of the festival, but the meaning and value which it has acquired in the course of its subsequent history. And these are values which transcend any single date or, for that matter, any single epoch.

DEVELOPING CUSTOMS

Shavuot is a joyous occasion and many synagogues and homes are decorated with flowers for the event, in order to remember the flowers that bloomed all over Mount Sinai. In many communities, there is a custom to stay up the whole of the first night of Shavuot to study the Torah, and to commence the daily prayers at the first light of dawn. This is to show how eager we are to learn the Torah and to hear of its bestowal at the earliest possible opportunity. There is the custom to eat dairy foods, especially cheesecake. This is because once the Israelites received the Torah, they were then given the laws concerning the preparation of meat and thus avoided meat until they had fully learnt these laws.

One begins the celebration by saying the blessing over candles:

Blessed are you, Lord, Our God, King of the Universe, who has made us holy with commandments and has commanded us to light candles for the holiday.

One continues the celebration by saying the blessing over wine:

Blessed are you, Lord, Our God, King of the Universe, who has brought forth the fruit of the vine.

The she-he-chi-ya-nu blessing, which is commonly said to celebrate reaching life's milestones, is said at candle lighting and after the holiday wine blessing has been recited:

Blessed you are, Lord, Our God, King of the Universe who has let us live and sustained us and has brought us to this time.

After the meal you will read from the book of Ruth which details is the story of a young Moabite woman, who after various trials and hardships, accepts the Jewish faith and becomes instrumental in the founding of the Davidic dynasty. Ruth is the most celebrated Jew-by-choice. Her story is recounted in the Scroll of Ruth. One of the reasons this story is read on Shavuot is because the day the Jewish people received the Torah was a sort of mass conversion of a People. The book is one of the five "Megillot" (scrolls) and is read on the morning of the second day of Shavuot. The Book of Ruth is read on Shavuot for several reasons:

- King David, the great grandson of Ruth, is believed to have been born and died on this festival. The book ends with a reference to King David and his genealogy.
- The central part of the book takes place at the time of the wheat harvest and recounts the acceptance by Ruth of the Jewish faith and the Torah.
- Ruth's loyalty is symbolic of Israel's loyalty, through every kind of difficulty, to the Torah.
- At the beginning of the book, we read that Ruth chose not to stay in her own land and not to continue worshipping her gods. If she had wished only to believe in Judaism she could easily have followed in this belief in her own land of Moab. If she wished to maintain her connections with Naomi, her mother-in-law, then she could have continued her former religious practices in Judea. Ruth realized, however, that before accepting the God of Israel, she must first become a part of Israel. *"And Ruth said ...Your people shall be my people and your God shall be my God"* (Ruth 1:16)

In closing there are six names of the Festival:

- **Shavuot... "weeks":** The feast of weeks occurs seven full weeks after the festival of Pesach, which commemorates the Exodus.
- **Zeman Matan Torateinu:** This means "the time of the giving of the Torah" and refers to the giving of the Torah on Mount Sinai. Seven weeks after the Exodus from Egypt the Israelites assembled at the foot on Mount Sinai, and the Torah, together with the Ten Commandments, was proclaimed by God.
- **Atzeret:** This means "conclusion". Shavuot is regarded as the conclusion of one uninterrupted period, which begins with Pesach. The name "Atzeret" indicates that Shavuot, the time of giving the Torah, was

the real purpose and goal of Pesach, as Pesach was the time of the Exodus of the Jewish People from Egypt and freedom from bondage. To have the Torah without freedom is pointless and vice versa.

- **Chag Ha'Katzir:** This means "the festival of the wheat harvest". Shavuot is the climax of the harvest season.
- **Chag Ha'Bikurim:** This means "The Feast of the first fruits" and refers to the first fruits of the seven species associated to the Land of Israel: (wheat, barley, grapes, figs, pomegranates, olives and dates). These fruits were a gift to the priest who could not own land of their own. In Biblical times the first fruits were brought to the Temple on Shavuot.
- **Pentecost:** This is the Greek name for Shavuot. The meaning of the word is "fifty" and the name originates from the fifty days between Pesach and Shavuot.

Let it be said in closing that we don't lose sight of the fact that at the giving of the Torah we find a "mixed multitude" of peoples who stood at Mount Sinai and who entered into a Covenant with God. This "mixed multitude" was a mixture of Egyptian gentiles and Israelites who had been followers of Pharaoh Akhenaton of the 18th Dynasty whom many believe to have been the Biblical Moses. So we have a clear picture that not only Moses, himself a half-Hebrew/Egyptian, but many, many followers of his who were non-Israelites and non-Hebrews accepting the Torah of God and who accompanied him to Sinai and entered into Covenant with God. This is the group of people called "strangers" in the above verse taken from Deut. 16:9-11 which observed the first Shavuot.

Much of this article was adapted from Theodor H. Gaster's Festivals of the Jewish Year.



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WAS THE FESTIVAL OF SHAVUOT - PENTECOST OBSERVED IN THE GENTILE CHURCHES OF ASIA MINOR?

The Biblical memorial days were instituted by God as an integral part of the divine worship system in the church (both O.T. and N.T.). They are part of the "Pattern of Worship" that has come down to us from the ancients and over time various historical emphasis have emerged that sheds light of deeper Divine truths within these "appointed times with God". They are not a matter of salvation or acceptance before God. Therefore our motive in celebration should be as God originally intended; remembrance and honor for what He has done. God said his feasts were "Forever Feasts" and times of memorial (Ex. 12:14, Lev. 23:21, Lev. 23:41). If God never changes, and we have His word on that He does not (Mal. 3:6), it is obvious that He still desires to be honored in this manner. Jesus, as depicted in the New Testament, is made to say that the time has come to worship the Father "In spirit and in truth". Surely God is worthy. Indeed prophecy indicates that the feast days will continue to be celebrated even in the Kingdom age (Zech. 14:16). The feast days, when properly understood by the Gentile Christian, not only retain a deep abiding meaning for the Christian but open for him the hidden truths and messages from the Creator that are inherent in God's salvation plan as found in the Biblical Festivals. The feast days contain more divine information of spiritual and prophetic value than perhaps any subject of scripture. It is through our deliberate recognition and celebration of them that the riches of truth contained in them is released for our understanding.

Let us look at examples in the New Testament whereby we can see the importance for Paul and the Gentile churches of Asia Minor of keeping and observing the Festival of Shavuot...Pentecost.

One finds a reference to Pentecost in 1 Corinthians, where Paul says: *"I will stay in Ephesus until Pentecost, for a wide door for effective work has been opened to me"* (1 Cor 16:8-9). This is a surprising time reference, since both the Ephesian and Corinthian churches were predominantly Gentile.

Answer for yourself: Can we then conclude from such a passage that the early Gentile churches of Asia Minor observed the Jewish festival of Shavuot - Pentecost? I believe so.

Pentecost was not connected to any of the pagan feasts of the Roman and Greek society. Paul could hardly have used "Pentecost" as a time reference unless the feast was known in Gentile Christian churches.

Paul's casual mention of "Pentecost" in a letter written to a predominantly Gentile church suggests that the feast was well known to the Corinthians. In his commentary on The First Epistle to the Corinthians, Gordon D. Fee points out: "Such a casual mention of it [Pentecost] in this way (cf. Acts 20:16) may suggest that the church very early saw Christian significance to this feast, probably as a result of the birth of the church on the Day of Pentecost" (Gordon D. Fee, The First Epistle to the Corinthians (Grand Rapids, 1987), p. 820).

Another reference we need to mention is the New Testament reference to Pentecost which is found in Acts 20:16, where Luke informs us that Paul sailed directly from Assos to Miletus, bypassing Ephesus, *"for he was*

hastening to be at Jerusalem, if possible, on the day of Pentecost." This text raises an important question.

Answer for yourself: Why was Paul eager to reach Jerusalem in time for Pentecost? Several suggestions have been made.

The Scriptures record that, on at least these two occasions, Paul carefully arranged his schedule according to where he wanted to be on the Festival of Pentecost. The only logical reason for Paul to "tarry in Ephesus until Pentecost" would be to observe this feast day with the gentile Christians there. As with Paul's instruction to gentile Christians in Corinth to keep the Feast of Unleavened Bread, here we again find an obvious indication that early Christians, Jew and gentile alike, observed God's annual festivals.

Some maintain that Paul was eager to observe Pentecost in Jerusalem to prove to Jewish Christians his respect for Jewish traditions. For example, The Interpreter's Bible says: "Paul was hastening to be at Jerusalem, if possible on the day of Pentecost, probably because he wished to vindicate his loyalty in the eyes of Jewish Christians who would be attending the feast" (The Interpreter's Bible (Nashville, 1989), vol. 9. p. 269). Similarly, William Neil writes: "His [Paul's] attendance at the festival would demonstrate to the Jerusalem Christians his loyalty to Jewish tradition" (William Neil, The Acts of the Apostles (London, 1973), p. 212).

There is no doubt that Paul was eager to prove to his Jewish brethren that he was not a renegade of the law. Luke tells us that when Paul arrived in Jerusalem, he participated in a rite of purification at the Temple in order to show that, as stated by the church leaders, ***"there is nothing in what they have been told about you but that you yourself live in the observance of the law"*** (Acts 21:24).

It is possible, however, that Paul was eager to be in Jerusalem for Pentecost, not only to vindicate his loyalty to Jewish traditions in the eyes of his Jewish brethren, but also because he found profound meaning in the feast. In The Life of Paul, Benjamin Robinson observes: "This day [Pentecost] was not only a Jewish celebration, but an anniversary of the outpouring of the Spirit described in Acts, chapter 2. It would be a particularly opportune and appropriate occasion for presenting the contribution of the Gentile churches to the Jewish Christians" (Benjamin Willard Robinson, The Life of Paul (Chicago, 1928), p. 183).

In a similar vein, G. T. Purves writes: ***"Among the early Jewish Christians observance of the Hebrew feasts continued, doubtless with fresh significance derived from the new revelation. So it is noteworthy that Paul earnestly desired to present the gifts of the Gentile Churches to the saints in Judea at Pentecost (Acts 20:16)"*** (G. T. Purves, "Pentecost, A Dictionary of the Bible", ed., James Hasting (New York, 1900), vol. 3, p. 742) . Gifts can be presented at any time, but Paul may have wished to present the generous gifts contributed by the Gentile churches to the distressed believers in Jerusalem on the day of Pentecost, because that was the day that commemorated God's generous gift of the Holy Spirit to His children. What better way to commemorate God's bestowal of spiritual gifts upon the church on the day of Pentecost than by offering material gifts to needy fellow believers!

Paul also may have wished to be in Jerusalem on the day of Pentecost because of the opportunity the feast provided to meet with a larger number of brethren who would be attending the feast. Eduard Lohse suggests this possibility. "It is quite possible," Lohse writes, "that the first community in Jerusalem took part in the Jewish Pentecost. For when Paul was in a hurry to be at Jerusalem for Pentecost (Acts 20:16), the apostle must have expected to meet a larger number of brethren than usual on the feast day" (Eduard Lohse, "Pentecost," Theological Dictionary of the New Testament, ed., Gerhard Friedrich (Grand Rapids, 1973), vol. 6, p. 50).

No one can tell all the reasons for Paul's eagerness to be in Jerusalem on the day of Pentecost. Yet all the reasons just mentioned presuppose that the Feast of Pentecost was important for Paul. Whether he wanted to be in Jerusalem on the day of Pentecost to show to his Jewish brethren his respect for Jewish festivals, or because

he viewed the feast as an appropriate occasion to present the gifts which had been contributed by the Gentiles, or because he expected to meet a large number of brethren that would be attending the feast, the fact remains that all these reasons presuppose that Pentecost was significant for Paul.

We see the importance of Pentecost for Paul because he shortened his stay at Ephesus, because "he was on his way to Jerusalem to celebrate the Feast of Pentecost" (Ellen G. White, Redemption: Or the Teaching of Paul, and His Mission to the Gentiles (Battle Creek, 1878), p. 65). In this statement Ellen White explicitly speaks of Paul "on his way to Jerusalem to celebrate the Feast of Pentecost." The implication is clear. Ellen White believed Paul celebrated the Feast of Pentecost.

The same view is expressed by The Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary: "Even Paul, least interested in observances as such (Rom 14:5), was eager to celebrate Pentecost at Jerusalem in spite of his missionary journeys in Asia and Greece (Acts 18:21; 20:16)" (The Seventh-day Adventist Commentary (Washington, D. D., 1957), vol. 6, p. 134). **If the Feast of Pentecost was important for Paul, known for his indifference to observances as such (Rom 14:5), we have reason to believe that it also must have been important for Gentile Christians at large.**

Unfortunately, the New Testament does not tell us how Paul or the Apostolic Church observed the Feast of Pentecost. The few incidental references to Pentecost in the New Testament suggest that the feast was important for the Apostolic Church.

WHAT DID THE GENTILE CHURCH UNDERSTAND ABOUT SHAVUOT THAT WE HAVE FORGOTTEN TODAY?

"The LORD our God made a covenant with us [ancient Israel] in Horeb ... The LORD talked with you [ancient Israel] face to face on the mountain from the midst of the fire" (Deuteronomy 5:2, 4).

On Pentecost, according to a respected Jewish tradition, God established Israel as His holy people-through His covenant with them-after He spoke the Ten Commandments from the top of Mount Sinai. A special relationship between Him and the Israelites was sealed at that time. They then became known as the "congregation of the LORD" (Numbers 27:17).

As Gentile believers we are taught that we are "grafted" into the spiritual vine of Israel. That being so then we as non-Jewish believers in the God of Israel need to reaffirm and take notice that our position of engrafted believers in the Israel of God.

Rom 11:17 17 And if some of the branches be broken off, and thou (non-Jewish believers), being a wild olive tree, wert grafted in among them (the Jews), and with them partakest of the root and fatness of the olive tree; (KJV)

That says it all in my opinion. We share in the receiving of God's Word as did Israel at Mount Sinai and we have been given the opportunity to affirm our acceptance of God's Word in our lives annually as we celebrate and observe the giving of the Torah at Mt. Sinai with our Jewish brothers and sisters. Paul, as you can see, thought that this affirmation of receiving God's Word was important not only for the Jew but the non-Jews in his Gentile churches as well. Jewish tradition asserts that God wrote the Ten Commandments on tables of stone with His own finger and gave them to humanity on the day of Pentecost. This should tell us something about the Holy Spirit whose work it is to write the laws of God upon the tables of our hearts (2 Corinthians 3:3).

Here is another invaluable truth to be learned from this agricultural feast. God said, *"Ye shall bring out of your habitation TWO WAVE LOAVES (wheat bread)....they are the firstfruits unto the Lord."* **The spiritual and prophetic lesson to be learned from this demonstration of the Old Testament concerns**

the Jew and Gentile people. The body of people that God will harvest out of these two nations is represented in the two loaves (1 Corinthians 10:17; James 1:18). The first century church was predominantly Jewish. The last century church will be predominantly Gentile. Knowing this, we can better understand the apostle's statement that the blessings of God were *"to the Jew first and also the Gentile."*

Feast days are not Jewish in an ethnic sense. They are divine in a Biblical sense and therefore eternal.



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THE EARLIEST ACCOUNTS OF THE PRAYERS OF MANKIND

When researching prayer and the origin of prayer one finds that he has to start with Egypt for several reasons; not the least of them is the fact that the Jews of the Bible come from the intermarriage of Egyptians and Semites but that Egypt was a nation that was a praying people and left abundant testimony to the importance of prayer in their lives.

Egyptians were eminently a praying people. No one can say the same for either Greeks or Romans. As the home life was so superior to that of refined Athens or imperial Rome, so was the spirit of reverence for celestial powers (God). The influence of the creed of immortal life operated in producing a greater respect for gods, and a desire to conciliate them, because they could aid souls passing through the probation after death. Let it be said right now that when we mention "gods" most people without having studied in-depth Egyptian religion are pre-conditioned to think "polytheism" but such is not the case. Egypt understood God as "the many in One" and reflected a vast understanding of the various attributes of this One expressed as "the many". Thus when we see figures of Anubis, Osiris, Thoth, etc., these are but many of the various "jobs" or "attributes" of the One Uncreated Intelligent Energy of the Cosmos which we call "God" today.

The motive for all Egyptian prayer was the procurement of a happy passage through the perils and temptations of *Arnenti* or Hades, so that the soul might reach Paradise in safety. This was the ardent desire of all good and righteous Egyptians and the motive above all for prayer.

Among some peoples, as among some professing Christians, prayers have a decidedly earthly and individual character. They are supplications for health, peace, plenty, and the comfort of families. The higher the civilization, the more developed the personal being, so much higher will be the class of prayers, so much more developed the spiritual wants and entreaties. When a tribe, or members of any community, aspire to something beyond this life, the tone of prayer will be directed toward conditions of existence other than mundane. Tested by these standards, the Egyptians will be found to have occupied a noble position in the very ancient times, and better than what they held in later days of association with other nations. The prayers of the Ptolemaic epoch could not be expected to be equal to those of the early Pharaonic one, as the morals of the country had undergone as much decadence as the arts and sciences.

Without attempting any arrangement of Egyptian prayers, as we have them in tombs upon the steles of the mastaba, on statues of kings, or on the walls of temples, a selection will be thrown out for examination whereby the reader might see for himself the intricate link between righteousness and the quest for Eternal Life which was its own reward as believed by Egypt. Such a quest for Eternal Life is found in the prayers of Egypt.

The great subject of request in the primitive time was for guidance through the halls of Hades, protection against the foes of the underworld, and a supply of heavenly food for the journey there. There is an innocent confession of goodness, after the Job type, doubtless sincere, and evidently meant to gain favour with gods who were, unlike Homeric divinities, the exemplars of virtue themselves, and rewarders of good actions. An entire

confidence in the goodness and integrity of their deities (the many in the One) is the most pleasing attribute of the Egyptian mind. No Greek could trust his lying, treacherous, unstable, and immoral gods.

On a tomb of the eleventh dynasty, B.C. 3000, the deceased is made to say: *"I have ever kept from sin, I have been truth itself on the earth. Make me luminous in the skies! Make me justified! May my soul prosper!"* Upon a papyrus we read this touching appeal: *"My god! my god! O that thou wouldst show me the true god!"*

Prayers for the crown of justification are common. One man exclaims, *"Homage to you, O gods of Tozer, who live in truth each day. I come to you."* Another prays, *"May god put truth in my heart!"* A friend addresses the god on behalf of the deceased: saying, *"Receive this - the truthful. He is united to thy laws. Open to him thy gates."* Rouge quotes this: *"May his soul fly toward the dwelling which it ought to approach, and be able to rejoin his body!"*

On the tomb of the first prophet of Ammon is read this prayer: *"O ye gods and goddesses of the sacred lower region, I am come among you. My heart possesses truth. There is no iniquity in it. I was worthy on earth. Grant that the gods be in my bosom, and in the place where I shall be in the sacred lower region."*

A prophet of Osiris says: *"I have venerated my father, I have respected my mother, I have loved my brothers, I have done nothing evil against them during my life on earth. I have protected the poor against the powerful. I have given hospitality to every one. I have been benevolent, and loving the gods. I have cherished my friends, and my hand has been open to him who had nothing. I have loved truth, and hated a lie."*

Among the prayers for the souls of the departed the following is one: *"Approach thou to him. May he enter thy bosom every day! Give him strength to pass the gates of the inferior heaven! Give him the life which was before thee! the breath of the resurrection which is after thee, the entrance and the departure which are in thy power. He sees in thee. He lives in thee. It is in thee that he will never be annihilated."*

COMPARISONS WITH MATTHEW 25...COINCIDENCE???

A prayer from their Scriptures, the Ritual for the Dead, gives a part of the confession the soul must make after death. It recalls to mind the confession in the 25th chapter of Matthew. The 125th chapter of the Ritual contains this: *"Homage to thee, great god, lord of truth and justice! I am come to thee, O my master. I present myself to thee, and contemplate thy perfecting. I know you, lord of truth and justice. I have brought you the truth. I have committed no fraud against men. I have not tormented the widow. I have not lied in the tribunal. I know not lies. I have not done any prohibited thing. I have not commanded my workman to do more than he could do. I have not been idle. I have not made others weep. I have not made fraudulent gains. I have not altered the grain measure. I have not falsified the equilibrium of thee balance. I have not taken away the milk from the foster child. I have not driven sacred beasts from the pastures. I am pure. I am pure."*

No bad scheme of morals could be deduced from the above confession. Another person cries: *"I am influenced by my love. I have given bread to him who was hungry, water to the thirsty, garments to the naked, and a home to the forsaken ones."* One under the eighteenth dynasty says: *"Place me among thy followers like the spirits who pass the gate; living in truth daily, I am one of them. Hateful is sin. I*

have acted in truth when on earth, not turning away from it."

A soul is represented saying, *"Permit me to go into the way of darkness that I may join thy servants who are in the lower heavens, that I may enter and go forth into Rosia, into the great chamber of double justice."* Another asks that the god may grant that he arrive at *"the country of eternity."*

Many prayers are for purification and light. One prays: *"Bring forth my righteousness-search out my sins."* A friend lovingly prays, *"Leave him (deceased) not alone."* Another tells the god, *"Thou hast made my existence in perpetuity, my reign in eternity."*

The water of life, or living water which we find as well in Judaism, is often the subject of Egyptian prayer. A monument has a sort of dialogue between the water and the deceased. He exclaims: *"O water! father of the gods! turn thy face toward me. Thou art the water which makes eternally young again."* To this appeal the water replies, *"I am Atoum (sunset) : I am the preferred of the sun. I am the blessed Ibis. I am the Water."*

Maspero is the authority for the following: A great functionary, contemporary of the kings of the fifth dynasty, said thus: *"Having seen all things, I have left this place (earth) where I have told the truth, where I have done right. Be good for me, you who will come after, render witness to your ancestor-O Lord of Heaven, powerful, universal master! I am (the one) who passes in peace, practising submission, loving his father, loving his mother, devoted to whoever was with him, the joy of his brothers, the love of his servants, who has never rejected complaint."*

Mariette Bey gives some fine specimens of supplication. Thus: *"I come to thee, great god, O Osiris, who dwellest in the West. I am delighted to contemplate thy beauty. My arms are stretched out to adore thy majesty. Accord splendour, power, justification, breathe the delicious breath of air, and to be manifested in Kerneter (Hades) in all the transformations that I love."* Another one prays: *"I ask thy majesty, in my faith, that thou mayst shine on my body, that thou enlighten my sepulchre. Give perfection to my substance, near thy substance. Open to me the doors of the dwelling of thy inferior heaven, that I may go out, that I may approach, that my heart may be pleased, that I may stay in the place that pleases me."*

It was a comfort for the departed to feel the presence of the dear goddesses Isis and her sister Nephthys, so faithful to the dead. A tablet represents these speaking to the human soul: *"I, Nephthys, thy sister, I am near thee. I place my arms about thee to give thee a serene and lasting life. Isis, thy sister, she brings to thee the breath of happiness in her nostrils."*

Anubis was, perhaps, the earliest to whom prayers were addressed; or, rather, whose addressed supplications have been preserved. One prayer is engraved in large, deep hieroglyphics over the door of a very ancient tomb, and has been thus rendered: *"To Anubis, he who is the divine door. Let a sepulchre be given him (the deceased) in Amenti, the west country, the ancient, the good and great, to him who is devoted to the great god. May funeral offerings be made at the beginning of the year, at the feast of Thoth, at New Year's Day, at the feast of navigation, at the feast of heat, at the appearances of the god Khem, at the feast of the holocaust, at the fetes of the months, and half months, and every day."*

In the mastaba of tombs there is, sometimes, besides the prayer, an address to the dead, or by the dead to the living. One of the oldest is supposed to be spoken by Antef of Thinnis, the ancient capital. From his stele the copy was obtained : *"O you who live on earth, men, priests, scribes, singers, who enter into this funeral building; you who love life and repel death, who praise the gods of the country, and have not tasted*

the food of the other world; when you repose in your tombs, may you be able to transmit your dignities to your children! In reciting the words given upon this stele, as it suits a scribe, or in hearing them, say thus: Adoration to Ammon, Lord of the thrones of the World, in order that he may grant funeral gifts," etc.

Three women have their names inscribed upon a tombstone and make their address to visitors of their tomb. *"O you,"* say they, *"who live upon earth, and will come after us during thousands of years! May you be favoured by the gods of your country, pass your lives in happiness, and peacefully repose in your tombs!"* After these good wishes, the trio earnestly entreat of such visitors prayers to Ptah, etc., on their behalf. A prophet of Osiris asks for the benefit of his friend's supplications; saying, *"Make for him your prayers, you who love Osiris, the eternal king, and say thus: 'May the delicious wind in the north (that is, spiritual blessings) be in the face of the first prophet of Osiris, Neb-oua, the proclaimed just one near Osiris.'"*

The dead are themselves addressed on some steles. Thus: *"May the children of thy children remain near thee, and eternity never fail thee!"* Another says: *"Ra give thee light, and may his rays be absorbed by thine eye! May the god Seb give thee all that which fructifies in him in order that thou mayest live! May the god Osiris give thee the Nile (water of life) that thou mayst live, and be young again!"*

Professional prayers were liberally engaged. Then, as now, particular unction was supposed to rest upon the words uttered by priests. As the Holy Scriptures of Egypt give prayers for daily use, prayers at table, prayers in the field, prayers to be engraved on inkstands, prayers for all occasions of church and home, so do they give prayers for the dead, or Masses, after the fashion of some Christian communities. Money was then, as now, left for the payment of so many masses. Sir Gardner Wilkinson reminds us that such prayers for the dead were duly said "so long as the family paid for their performance." But what the reader must not miss here is that there was existing in Egypt a "Pattern of Prayer" not only for private but corporate worship as well that covered the whole of life and existence. We find this same "Pattern" imparted to the children of the intermarriage of Egyptians and Semites whom the Bible calls "the Jews" and we find this same existing "Pattern" enumerated for us today in the various Siddurs in Judaism. I see in this an unbroken chain with the revelation of Prayer given mankind in the beginning of time; especially in light of what archeology has shown us in these last 200 years regarding the connection of the Biblical Patriarchs and the Pharaohs of Egypt.



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PRAYER AS WORSHIP

As a religious people, the Jews have sought to express in worship and prayer their most cherished beliefs, their fondest aspirations, their deepest sorrows and joys, and, above all, their abiding faith in God. Through worship, they strove to sanctify life and to imbue themselves with love and goodness. Prayer, therefore, has been a daily Mitzvah to Jews for countless generations. At all times, they looked upon prayer as a bond uniting them with members of their race in every part of the world, and as an act of loyalty to Israel and its heritage.

Indeed, the Jews were the first people to worship without sacrifices and gifts to God, to set aside regular hours for prayer, and to designate specific prayers not only for the Sabbath and holidays but for every day of the week. Special prayerbooks, containing services and selections for every occasion, were composed in the course of time. Laws and customs arose governing individual and public worship. A prayer shawl, phylacteries and other articles of ritual were adopted. Even more important, a special institution, the synagogue, came into being partly out of the urge to worship together with fellow men.

FROM SACRIFICES TO PRAYERS

There probably never was a time when Jews did not pray. They learned it from their Egyptian parents. Abraham, who would later invade Lower Egypt and take upon himself a pseudo-Pharoanic status, prayed that God spare the cities of Sodom and Gamorrah. Jacob (Pharaoh Jacob) prayed before the meeting with Esau when he returned to Palestine (an Egyptian province at the time). Moses, himself a Pharaoh, prayed on behalf of the Israelites after they had made the golden calf, and on other occasions. David, Tuthmose III, petitioned God for the privilege of building the Temple at Jerusalem (an Egyptian province at the time as well). Throughout the early books of the Bible, we find many prayers of an individual character not only from these great Egyptian leaders but later their children...called the Jews today.

For many centuries, however, sacrifices rather than prayers were considered the highest form of worship. This was true before the erection of Solomon's Temple at Jerusalem, well as during the existence of the First and Second Temples. Ancestors of the Jews believed that God would be pleased most with sacrifices of animals, fowl or cereals. The sacrificial ceremony was to them an act of homage to God and of thankfulness for His bounties. There were sacrifices offered by the priests on behalf of the whole nation, and they were also brought by individuals to express thankfulness, or remorse, or for some other personal reason. The prophets and sages taught the people that worship was acceptable only if it inspired righteous living.

The sacrificial rites in the Temple were accompanied by the chanting of prayers and hymns and by instrumental music, which lent beauty and awe to the ceremonies. However, the sacrifice was the important element of the worship of these Gods (Elohim), the prayers only an accompaniment. Outside of the central sanctuary, no regular worship was expected in ancient days, although people naturally could and did pray privately.

ROLE OF THE SYNAGOGUE

It was in Babylon, at the time of the first exile, that Jews began to depend on prayer as the sole form of worship, for they could not bring themselves to erect a Temple anywhere but in Jerusalem, and sacrifices were permitted only in the one Temple. In Babylon, it is believed, Jews gathered to pray and study and thus the synagogue originated. When they returned to Palestine and the Temple was rebuilt, sacrifices were restored to their former place as the chief form of worship. But as the number of synagogues increased and Jews in ever greater numbers assembled in them on the Sabbath and holidays as well as daily, prayer became an accepted method of paying homage to God. In time a regular service, consisting of the Shema and the Shemoneh Esreh, developed.

With the destruction of the Second Temple, sacrifices ceased completely and prayer took its place as the one and only form of public worship. At first this was accepted as a matter of necessity, since sacrifices were allowed only in the Temple; but soon after, the rabbis concluded that prayer was preferable to sacrifice. This belief has been held by Jews ever since, although descriptions of the ancient sacrifices have been part of the traditional prayerbook to this day.

IMPORTANCE OF PUBLIC WORSHIP

If the duty of worship had been an individual matter, perhaps prayer would not have become so significant. But Jews learned early in their history the value of public or communal worship. While yet in the desert, the ceremonies at the portable Mishkan or Tabernacle served to unite the tribes and to give them common ideals and hopes. The Temple at Jerusalem, over a period of a thousand years-, imprinted this idea indelibly upon the minds of the Jews. On Pesach, Shavuot and Succot, when they gathered at Jerusalem from all sections of the country, everyone felt part of a unified nation and of one faith. They also discovered that worshipping together with fellow Jews gave each person more confidence in himself and in the effectiveness of his prayers. Moreover, the knowledge that a sacrifice was offered daily in the Temple on behalf of the whole country caused every man, woman and child to feel more secure and more hopeful.

With the rise of synagogues, public worship grew even more popular. The people enjoyed coming together for study and prayer in the synagogue. Unable to read, they welcomed the opportunity to have psalms and benedictions read to them, as they welcomed the lessons from the Torah and the prophetic writings taught by the scribes. The leaders, in turn, must have encouraged the people to assemble regularly for study and worship, since they were anxious to spread a knowledge of Judaism among the farmers and workers. Without such education, they realized, Israel could not survive, and Jewish faith and culture could not mean much to the people.

The need for public worship became much greater after the Jewish state was destroyed and the Jews dispersed over the known world. Jews felt the need of assembling together to pray for safety from enemies, to thank God when they were left in peace, and to petition the Almighty for a speedy return to Palestine. No less did they feel the necessity of meeting frequently and regularly to study the Torah, the prophetic books, and the other literary treasures. Prayer became a religious duty and an act of loyalty. A person was not considered a devoted Jew if he did not participate in public worship.

PRAYERS AND PRAYERBOOKS

As long as the Jews lived as a nation in Palestine, it did not seem necessary to make a record of the prayers, or to compile prayerbooks since the frequency of worship weekly easily committed these prayers to memory. In the beginning the Shema and the Shemoneh Esreh (the Amidah) were the only regular prayers in the synagogue. The leader of the service was free to change the wording and to add selections of his own. The prayers were usually few and brief.

With the dispersion, arose the need of writing down the prayers and of specifying the occasions and

hours for worship. The Rabbis knew at now, even more than ever, that unless all Jews followed the same services and "Pattern of Worship" then the sense of unity among them would grow weaker. If each Jewish community did as it pleased in religious matters, there would soon develop many separate Jewries, strangers to one another. In order to survive without a country and government of their own, all Jews must be as one in their worship, beliefs, customs and aspirations. This principle of the loss of unity with the development of separate factions of faith is clearly seen today in Christianity in the proliferation of over 2000 different denominations; many with contrasting and opposing religious doctrines which arose from such deviations from the "faith once given" to the Saints.

Then, too, ignorance of the Hebrew language was increasing outside of Palestine. Diaspora Jewries could not be expected to transmit the Hebrew prayers from one generation to another without a knowledge of the language among the people. They firmly believed, of course, that public worship must be in Hebrew, so that the language of the prayers, as well as their contents, might serve as a bond uniting all Jews and as a symbol of loyalty to Israel.

Some of the learned men of the time were opposed to the recording of prayers. A person should worship in his own words when he feels like it, they argued. To this the majority answered that the average person is unable to express himself properly. How can an ignorant cobbler, for example, find the right words to describe the greatness of God and the beauties of nature? Very few are so educated as to understand thoroughly the ideals of the Jewish people. They must be provided with prayers composed by poets, prophets and scholars.

REGULAR SERVICES

Public worship, the Jewish authorities decided, is to be held daily, on weekdays as well as on Sabbaths and holidays. Each day three services are to be held:

- **SHAHARIT in the morning,**
- **MINHAH in the afternoon, and**
- **MAARIV in the evening.**

Answer for yourself: But where does this tradition get its earliest beginning?

The practice of daily morning personal prayer (including Shabbat) is traditionally ascribed to Abraham. Afternoon prayer and evening prayer are traditionally ascribed to Isaac and Jacob respectively. The SHARAHIT and MINHAH were in keeping with Temple ritual where a morning and afternoon sacrifice was offered daily. "The prayer services were decreed to parallel the sacrifice of the continual-daily offering" [Talmud Bavli, Brachot 26b]). The MAARIV or evening service was an innovation. Tradition has it that Abraham originated the morning service, Isaac the MINHAH, and Jacob the MAARIV. When the Temple was destroyed in 70 C.E., the structure of the thrice-daily prayer events were patterned after the discontinued sacrificial processes, resulting in the basic core of the liturgical structure we have today.

EARLY PRAYERBOOKS

The first prayers to be written down were the Shema and Shemoneh Esreh, which had been in common use during Second Temple days. The earliest parts of Jewish prayer are the "Shema Yisrael" (Hear O Israel) (Deut. 6:4) and the set of 19 blessings called the Shemoneh Esreh or the Amidah (Hebrew, "Standing Prayer".) The name Shemoneh Esreh, literally "eighteen," is a historical anachronism, since it now contains nineteen blessings. It was only near the end of the Second Temple period that the 18 prayers of the weekday Amidah became standardized. Even at this time their precise wording and order was not yet fixed, and varied from local to local. Many scholars now believe that parts of the Amidah came from the Hebrew apocryphal work Ben Sirah. According to the Talmud, soon after the destruction of the Temple in Jerusalem a formal version of the

Amidah was adopted at a rabbinical council in Jabneh, under the leadership of Rabban Gamaliel II and his colleagues. However, the precise wording was still left open. The order, general ideas, opening and closing lines were fixed. Most of the wording was left to the individual reader. It was not until several centuries later that the prayers began to be formally fixed. By the middle-ages the texts of the prayers were nearly fixed, and in the form that they are still used today.

Readings from the Torah (five books of Moses) and the Prophets form part of the prayer services. To this framework were fitted, from time to time, various prayers, and, for festivals especially, numerous hymns. The earliest existing codification of the prayerbook is the Siddur (order) drawn up by Amram Gaon of Sura about 850 C.E. Half a century later the famous Gaon Saadiah Gaon, also of Sura, issued his Siddur, in which the rubrical matter is in Arabic.

To these, many new prayers were added constantly. In each generation, Jews found need to express their religious beliefs in new ways. Not only did the daily services continue to grow but special prayers were composed for the holidays. Unfortunately, copies of the early prayerbooks are no longer in existence. The earliest one extant is from the ninth century, compiled by Amram Gaon in Babylon. The second one to be discovered was composed by Saadyah Gaon, also of Babylon, a hundred years later. The best known of the early prayerbooks is called Mahzor Vitri and was written by one of Rashi's disciples in the eleventh century.

SPECIAL OCCASIONS FOR PRAYER

Prayers were also composed for special occasions: for circumcision, Pidyon Haben (redemption of the first born), weddings, burial ceremonies; prayers upon waking in the morning and before retiring at night; grace after meals; midnight prayers or Hatzot; prayers when leaving on a journey and upon arrival; readings at a housewarming party; prayers upon being saved from danger; prayers for the sick and confessions for the dying; prayers when a tombstone is placed on a grave; memorial services for the dead. To these must be added the numerous Berachot or benedictions.

MANY PRAYERBOOKS

These early prayerbooks, written by hand, differed greatly, with the exception of the Shema and the Shemoneh Esreh which were common to all. After the invention of printing, prayerbooks became more uniform. The Jews of Germany, Poland and nearby countries began to use the same version. The Jews of Spain printed their own services, which were somewhat different. Until recently, practically all prayerbooks were either the German-Polish version (Nusah Ashkenaz), or the Spanish version (Nusah Sefard). Descendants of Spanish Jews use the latter, while nearly all other Jews employ the former.

A traditional Jew who wants to be prepared for every occasion of worship will possess several rather than one prayerbook. He will have:

- First, **the daily prayerbook called Siddur. In it he will also find the Sabbath and festival services, the Berachot, and the prayers for special occasions.**
- Second, for the **High Holy Days, he will own a Mahzor which contains the special hymns for Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur.**
- He will also possess the Kinot or **Book of Lamentations for the Fast of Av; Selihot or Prayers of Forgiveness for the days before Rosh Hashanah, and, of course a Psalter**

STUDY AND WORSHIP

Lessons from the scriptures were part of public worship among Jews from the beginning, and in the Temple, too portions of the Bible were read on certain occasions. When regulations for worship were issued by the Sanhedrin, it was specified that **reading from the Torah and Prophets shall be part of the services on the**

Sabbath and on holidays. Later, the exact portion and chapter for each Sabbath and festival were prescribed. This custom has continued ever since. Study of the Bible and sermons by learned men are part of public worship in every synagogue whether Orthodox, Conservative or Reform.

WHAT JEWS HAVE PRAYED FOR

Prayer having always been a constant companion of the Jew in his daily life, it was natural that he should have expressed in prayer his feelings and ideas about everything that he treasured in life: God, nature, family, country, Torah, peace, freedom, justice. Jews have prayed because they strove to sanctify life, to make living worthwhile and beautiful. As a religious people, they sought to communicate with God and to receive His love and protection. The prayerbook is a mirror which reflects the soul of the Jew, his beliefs and hopes.

Jewish prayers may be divided into three categories:

- **Prayers of thanksgiving,**
- **Praise to God,**
- **Petition or supplication.**

THE SHEMONEH ESREH

Shemoneh Esreh is a prayer both of petition and thanksgiving. It is one of the earliest prayers, dating back to the times of the Maccabees, and is repeated at every service.

Shemoneh Esreh means eighteen and is so called because it contains eighteen parts. It is also known as **Amidah**, since the congregation is expected to **stand while reciting it**. Each part begins with a supplication or request and concludes with a benediction of thanksgiving.

In the Shemoneh Esreh the Jew supplicates God and thanks Him for knowledge and understanding, for repentance and forgiveness, for health and prosperity, for protection from enemies and traitors, for support of community leaders and teachers; for a return to Palestine, the rebuilding of Jerusalem and its Temple, and the restoration of the Jewish government; for justice and everlasting peace. The Shemoneh Esreh contains also the Kedushah hymn in which the name of God is sanctified. On the Sabbath and on all holidays, only the first three and the last three parts of the weekday Shemoneh Esreh are retained, while in place of the omitted sections special prayers pertaining to the occasion are recited.

THE BENEDICTIONS

Thankfulness has been one of the chief traits of the Jew. The pious Jew thanks God for the bread he eats and the water he drinks; for lofty mountains, great deserts and wide seas; for lightning, thunder and the rainbow; for beautiful trees and animals; for fragrant spices, plants and fruits; for giving wisdom to man; for life and for death. These are the **Berachot or benedictions** to be recited in connection with each of the foregoing. The best known Berachah of thanksgiving, known as **Shehecheyanu**, is:

"Blessed art thou, O Lord our God, King of the universe who has kept us in life, and has preserved us, and hast enabled us to reach this season."

Most prayers are hymns in praise of God. The Jew has felt that by praising and exalting God he was exalting himself. By describing the greatness of the Almighty, man has sought to impart greatness to himself. By ascribing to God the qualities of love, mercy, justice, kindness and forgiveness, man has striven to make these traits part of himself.

THE KADDISH

Kaddish is the great hymn of praise to God, and has become the most sacred prayer in the Jewish liturgy. Originally, it was recited after studying a selection of the Agadah (interpretation). Later, it became customary to say Kaddish upon the death of a great scholar. During the terrible persecutions in the Middle Ages, particularly in Germany, its use increased and spread. It would seem that the Jews could best express their feelings in times of greatest catastrophe by exalting God. This explains why the Kaddish has become the prayer of mourning, recited at the burial, when laying the tombstone, and at memorial services. It is said by the Hazan, however, at each and every service. The Kaddish speaks of the greatness of God, of redemption from exile, and of everlasting peace in Messianic times.

THE SHEMA

The famous Shema prayers, which begin with the words *"Hear O Israel, the Lord our God, the Lord is one,"* give voice in beautiful language to the belief in one God and in love of God; to the importance of Torah and learning; to the idea of holiness, or the sacredness of life; to the significance of light as indicating the divine power in nature. Three times daily these prayers taught the Jew that good conduct is essential for happiness; that the Tzitzit or fringe stand for the universality of God; that the Tefillin are worn on the head and next to the heart so that the teachings of Judaism may be *"in your heart and in your soul."* The Shema also repeats the belief in redemption from exile and a return to Palestine. Like the Shemoneh Esreh, the Shema is an old prayer recited as far back as Second Temple days. All of the selections were taken from the Torah.

Other prayers, too, contain the beliefs and principles of Judaism. The famous **Yigdal** is a poetic version of Maimonides' "Thirteen Principles of Faith." The **Adon Olam**, composed by Solomon ibn Gabirol, is a beautiful poem voicing Israel's faith in God. Then there are the many psalms, those beautiful religious poems exalting God and the divine power. We find such psalms originating as far back as the Egyptian Religion which are carbon copies of what we later find in the Hebrew and in our Judeo-Christian Bibles. Of course for those who have done the study this is not surprising once one learns that important characters depicted as "Jews" in the Old Testament are in reality Pharaohs.

The **Hallel prayer**, chanted on Rosh Hodesh, Hanukah and the three pilgrimage festivals, consists of some of the most inspiring psalms in the Bible. For every holiday, there are special prayers which pertain to the occasion and explain its significance. Many selections of the Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur liturgies are particularly poetic and inspiring.

PRAYERS IN THE PLURAL

Because the Jews have emphasized public or communal worship from ancient times on, Jewish prayers, with few exceptions, are worded in the plural rather than in the singular. It was natural when praying together to say: "Our God" rather than "My God"; "Grant us peace" instead of "Grant me peace." The Jew has prayed not merely for himself but for his fellow men as well. Since it is within the power of every person, says the Talmud, to beseech God on behalf of another individual, not to do so would be wrong, for "all Jews are responsible for one another." Reciting these prayers on behalf of all Israel, every day without exception, has served to maintain the sense of unity and of mutual responsibility among the Jewish people throughout the ages. It is this concept of prayer that was shared with the non-Jew as he learned of the God of the Jews when attending synagogue with them; not only in Palestine but in Asia, Minor, as well.

PRAYING IN HEBREW

With the exception of a few prayers in Aramaic, until recent times, all public worship among Jews was

exclusively in Hebrew. In their own privacy, men, women or children would naturally petition God in the language they knew best. But in the synagogue only Hebrew was permitted as the language of communal worship. Praying in one common language has given the Jews of each generation the feeling of being part of one united people. The Hebrew prayers, in turn, have helped preserve the language and to assure a knowledge of Hebrew among the Jews of every community on earth.

In modern times Jews have begun to translate the Hebrew prayers and to introduce these translations into the service. Reform Jews of America now use more English than Hebrew in their worship, claiming that people should pray in the language they understand best. To this argument orthodox Jews reply: "Go and learn" Hebrew, pointing to the importance of Hebrew in the past and asserting that Hebrew is equally indispensable today.

SYMBOLIC ARTICLES OF PRAYER

Praying has been considered a sacred obligation. *"Remember that you stand before God when you pray,"* says the Talmud. Maimonides explained this to mean that one should be free of all petty thoughts and regard himself as if the presence of God were before him. *"He who prays must direct his whole mind to Heaven,"* and recite each prayer with real **Kavanah or intention**. This does not imply solemnity or sadness. **On the contrary, prayer is a Simhah shel Mitzvah, a commandment to be performed in a spirit of joy and gladness.**

Prayer has been a sacred and joyous act because it is considered one of the **highest forms of worship, "a service of the heart."** The beautiful language of the prayers and the great ideals of their contents inspired the Jew with hope and confidence. The manner in which he has prayed - with deep concentration and even abandon - enabled him to perform the Mitzvah with religious fervor. The sacred objects and symbols in the synagogue helped create the necessary atmosphere for devout worship.

When the Orthodox Jew puts on the Tallit and Tefillin for the morning service, he feels so much more in the mood of worshipping and is able to concentrate the better on his inner purpose. The Tallit with its Tzitzit or fringes, and the Tefillin with their contents, are in themselves symbols of ethical ideals and Jewish aspirations.

THE TALLIT

The Tallit or prayer-shawl recalls the style of upper garment worn in ancient Palestine. Even today one sees white abayahs or robes with wide stripes worn by the Arabs. It was customary for the rabbis in those days to wear special robes as a sign of distinction. After the dispersion, Jews usually adopted the dress styles of the peoples among whom they lived, while the ancient Palestinian garment and particularly the honorary robe of the rabbis, the Tallit, came to be used as a sacred vestment for ritual purposes.

The religious significance of the Tallit lies especially in the Tzitzit or fringes at each of its four corners. The Bible prescribes "that they make them a fringe upon the corners of their garments ... that ye may look upon it and remember the commandments of the Lord." In olden times, these fringes were worn on the outer garments in daily use. Later on, due to fear of persecution, perhaps, a small undergarment with fringes was substituted for the old custom. Known as Tallit Katan or small Tallit, and also as Arba Kanfot or four corners, it has been worn by Jews unto this day. The Tzitzit, being a symbol and reminder of the commandments, were adopted also for the Tallit.

While the Arba Kanfot is part of the pious Jew's daily clothes, the Tallit is worn only at prayer at all morning services on week-days, Sabbath and holidays, and also on the eve of Kol Nidre. The Tallit may be of any cloth, provided the fringes are of the same material. Today the Tallit is either of wool or silk. The stripes are usually blue, although some have black bands as a sign of mourning after the fall of the Jewish state and the destruction of the Temple. Along the upper part, just across the neck, the Tallit is decorated with an embroidered ribbon.

While use of the Tallit is not obligatory until after marriage, most American boys begin wearing it upon becoming Bar Mitzvah.

Another ritual garment is the long white robe called the Kittel. In the Middle Ages, when most Jews appeared in black, this white robe was worn all day on Saturdays in honor of the Sabbath. Later its use was limited to the "Seder" on Pesach and to the High Holy Days in the synagogue. It was also worn by the bridegroom at his wedding. Today, many Jews wear the Kittel on Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur in the synagogue, and at the Seder. It is also used as Tachrichin in which the dead are buried. Having lived as a Jew, it is natural to be buried in a distinctive Jewish garment.

THE TEFILLIN

Upon reaching the age of thirteen, boys put on Tefillin during morning week-day prayers. This custom also is based on a Biblical commandment, which says: *"And thou shalt bind them for a sign upon thy hand and they shall be for frontlets between thine eyes."* The phylacteries too were part of daily dress in ancient times, and were later adopted for ritual purposes. One Tefillin is worn on the head, the other on the left-hand bicep, pointing to the heart, reminding the Jew to observe the laws and customs with all one's heart and mind.

Each of the two Tefillin consists of a little square box with a long strap attached to it. In the head phylactery are found four strips of parchment, each in a separate compartment. On one strip, written in Hebrew, is a quotation from the Bible bidding the Jews to remember their liberation from slavery and to celebrate the Passover; on the second, a quotation regarding the redemption of the first-born; the third and fourth strips contain two Shema prayers. The arm phylactery has only one strip. Each of the two phylacteries has a Hebrew letter stamped on it, a SHIN on the head-piece and a YAD on the arm-piece; while the strap of the head phylactery is tied in the back into a knot shaped like the Hebrew letter Dalet. The three Hebrew letters spell the word SHADDAT which means Almighty.

The skull-cap, worn by traditional Jews at prayer, has also evidently come down to us from ancient times. While in Western countries, taking off the hat is considered a sign of respect, Arabs and other Oriental peoples cover their heads on occasions when they wish to show respect and also at prayer. This was evidently true among the ancient Jews too. The usual head-dress being too heavy and warm to wear at services, a small light skull-cap was introduced in time. Pious Jews never go hatless because they consider man to be at all times in the presence of God. The skull-cap worn by the Hazan adds much to the dignity of his appearance.

Prayer has been a constant companion of the Jewish people from earliest times because as a religious people the Jews have sought to sanctify life and to imbue themselves with the spirit of God. They were the first people to discover a form of worship which did not depend on any designated place, on priests, or on sacrifices.

It took many centuries to develop the prayer services. The emphasis on public worship, and later, the necessity of keeping the Jewish people united, gave rise to regular services at stated times in every Jewish community. When the art of printing was invented, standard, uniform prayerbooks were adopted voluntarily by world Jewries.

The Jewish prayers are literature, composed by poets, prophets and scholars over a period of three thousand years. In beautiful language, they express the beliefs of the Jewish people and their hopes for Israel and for all mankind. Morning, afternoon and evening, on the Sabbath, on holidays, and on many special occasions as they arise, the Jew has given voice in prayer to personal and communal needs, to his feeling of thanksgiving for the good things in life, and to his praises and exaltations of God. Prayer has been indeed a welcome Mitzvah to be performed with reverence and joy.

Now many of these above "commandments" given the Jew were not required of the non-Jew yet Isa. 56 teaches the non-Jew the principle of "choosing those things pleasing to God." Likewise although none of the member of Bet Emet ever said the blessings and wore Tefillin many did however wear the Kippa and the Tallit as they

represented to us our very faith that the Commandments of God frame our very Covenants with God.

As God's "Holy Nation and Royal Priesthood" Israel serves as a witness and example of how mankind should pray.



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BEFORE THERE WAS A JEWISH PRAYER BOOK...THERE WAS A PATTERN TO PRAYER

The Jewish Prayer Book has a long history. It was not composed by one man, even by a single authority. It took centuries to complete. The Shema Yisrael (Hear O Israel, the Lord our God, the Lord is one) and the Ten Commandments are very ancient. The earliest Psalms go back to David's time and the ten commandments go back to Egypt and long before Moses. Yet, the whole Siddur (prayer book) covers a span of close to three thousand years! Naturally, its form and its contents reflect and represent the long religious history of the Jewish people.

Prayer is probably as old as man. But early worship all over the world, certainly formal worship, consisted chiefly of sacrifices. Sacrificial services were conducted by members of a priest-class especially trained in the intricate ceremonies established by Biblical tradition. But among the Jews, the people, too, had some share in the services. They brought their sacrifices to the Temple, the meal and grain offerings and the appropriate animals; they recited a simple formula of confession, and they responded to the songs and praises of the Levites with "Amen," "Selah," or "Hallelujah." The evidence seems clear that even in the days of the First Temple, prayers as well as sacrifices were part of the regular Temple service. The Levites sang and probably composed many of the Psalms, and many of these would find their way into the Prayer Book in later times. The most famous prayer of all, the Shema Yisrael, and the Ten Commandments were also recited daily. Now so many generations later, all of these are still found in the Prayer Book.

Besides the Temple prayers, the Bible itself records many personal prayers from the earliest days of Israel's history. Of all the personal prayers recorded the most important are the Psalms, many of which are of very early origin. It is no accident that these Psalms are the backbone of the prayer books and hymnals of almost every Protestant Christian sect.

THE SYNAGOGUE...A NEW HUMAN INSTITUTION

It is difficult for us to imagine how radical a mere prayer service must have seemed (like what we do at Bet Emet) to men in ancient times when every one knew that to worship God adequately one had to go to a temple or an altar and there offer up a proper sacrifice. At that time the very notion that a service of prayer and Torah might be real worship was daringly new. Yet it was this revolutionary idea that the Jews embodied in an institution when they created the synagogue.

We can trace the origin for this "pattern" for worship back to King David when he was given the "pattern" for the service of God (worship). I Chronicles, chapter 28, verses 11-21 describe in detail how David was given the "pattern" for worship. In the text it is called "the service of the house of the Lord." The Hebrew word for "service" is "avodah" meaning "ministry" or "service unto God." This simply is the pattern of the "worship of God." David was given a "pattern" for worship that would be followed by all of God's children, even up to, and past the time of Yeshua; even up to the destruction of the Temple in 70 C.E. In fact, it would be this pattern that would be adapted to the Synagogues, both in Israel and Asia

Minor in Gentile lands where the Gentiles were taught of God by the Jewish sages. That has terrific implications for the Christian today. It would be this "pattern" that would be given to his son Solomon which began to be implemented in the First Temple which was built during Solomon's reign. This pattern would be retained during the First Temple period, as well as during the Babylonian captivity, as well in the return of the exiles and the re-institution of this "pattern" during the Second Temple period. It was the pattern given by the "Spirit of God" (see verse 12 to verify) to all God's children...forever. Again let me stress that it was this pattern was followed in the days of Yeshua, even after his death up to the destruction of the Second Temple in 70 C.E. Even following the destruction of the Temple, this "pattern" of worship continued in the synagogues all over the world. It would be these institutions that preserved the ways of God which He desired His children to follow. **In fact, Romans 9 informs us that this "pattern" was given to the synagogues in Rome, but sadly they would later depart from it and substitute their own brand of sun worship!** Let me remind you that the term "Christians" was first applied to the believers in Antioch, and it was only the Jews to whom the "Gospel" was preached at this time. Therefore, these "Christians" were Jewish believers and not Gentiles. Furthermore, it was these "Christians" who maintained and kept the "pattern" of worship. About five hundred years later the Christians, and then the Moslems, modeled their religious institutions (the church and the mosque) after the synagogue. Thus arose the primary social form of worship known to modern man.

Exactly when the change from sacrifices to a service of speech alone first occurred, on one knows. There are two main theories, each supported by some facts and each apparently reasonable.

The first theory supposes that while the Jews were in exile in Babylon, with no Temple of their own and therefore no place in which to offer sacrifices, they must have gathered for some kind of religious expression or they would have perished as Jews. But they did not perish. This was the first instance in history of a people's surviving exile and maintaining its identity in a foreign land. What held them together was their religious tradition, for their teachers and prophets did not allow them to forget their God and His promise that they would surely return to their land to rebuild God's Temple in Jerusalem. It seems natural therefore to assume that they must have come together occasionally, or regularly at least on the Sabbath, to hear the Torah read, to recite some Psalms. In other words, they met to continue the "pattern" of worship given to David by God.

The other theory supposes that after the return to Palestine, in Ezra's time, when the Second Temple had already been rebuilt in the fifth century B.C.E., representatives of each hamlet and village in a district would gather in a central town to choose from among their number one man to go up to Jerusalem to represent Israel at large at the offerings of the daily sacrifices, offered up daily in the Temple in the name of the people of Israel. While they awaited the return of their representative and his report that he had satisfactorily completed his mission, they would meet to read Torah, recite Psalms, other prayers, and from this nucleus the service developed. This may be the correct account of the origin of the synagogue, or perhaps both theories are right. Not enough facts are known for anyone to be absolutely sure, but we can be certain it was either one of the above ways, or a combination of both.

Nevertheless, the development of either or both of these institutions into the synagogue we know occurred largely during the day of the Second Temple. Thus, by the time the Temple was destroyed again in 70 C.E., the habit of meeting for prayer and for the reading of the Torah had already become an established custom which the Jews could draw when the need for a service without sacrifices became urgent (following the destruction of the Temple in 70 C.E.). This ancient pattern was established before the Second Temple was destroyed, and has determined the unique character of the Jewish worship service to this day. This "pattern" of Jewish worship is best understood as an interweaving of **prayer and study**; and it was this "pattern" of Jewish worship that was taken into all the Gentile world with the Great Commission. Let us not forget that Yeshua instructed his disciples saying: "teach them (both Jews and Gentiles spread throughout the world) to observe all things, whatsoever I have commanded you." These "all things" included the "pattern" of worship that had been given to David by the Spirit.

THE NEW TESTAMENT AND WORSHIP TODAY

To this truth the New Testament verifies. God is restoring long hidden truths to multitudes of Christians that is enabling them to return to the original faith of Jesus and the Early Church. The book of Acts records the Jerusalem Apostolic Decree which gave the requirements for membership in the Jesus Messianic Movement of Palestine. These statutes reiterated by the Apostle James clarified what Gentile had to do before he or she could become part of Jesus' movement.

Let us begin our examination of this "pattern of worship" in the Book of Acts with the Jerusalem council in Acts 15.

Acts 15

28 For it seemed good to the Holy Ghost, and to us, to lay upon you no greater burden than these necessary things; 29 That ye abstain from meats offered to idols, and from blood, and from things strangled, and from fornication: from which if ye keep yourselves, ye shall do well. Fare ye well.

This official decree was issued by the people who personally knew Jesus, people who were taught by Jesus for 3 years. A Gentile could not just say a prayer and become an instant "church member." Having spent the majority of the last fifteen years studying the original church of the first century I believe that after having examined all the evidences the only choice we have, if we are ever going to return to the faith and power of the original church, is to go back to the roots of our faith! These roots are Hebraic. To this end, Jude has a word for us to consider:

Jude 1

3. Beloved, when I gave all diligence to write unto you of the common salvation, it was needful for me to write unto you, and exhort [you] that ye should earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints (this faith consisted of the "pattern" of worship given by the Spirit unto David as seen in I. Chron. 28).

The word "once" in the text means "once for all". Let us not forget that we are to continue in this "once for all" faith. We must continue as the Early Church in the Apostle's doctrine. The only question is "what was it?" I have endeavored these last several years to rediscover the original faith of Jesus. Below is where we begin by rediscovering the "pattern of worship" in the Scriptures as given by God unto all His children, both Jewish and Gentile.

Acts 10:2

2 [A] devout [man], and one that feared God with all his house, which gave much alms to the people, and prayed to God always (Cornelius, a Gentile, was taught many of the same prayers you and I pray at Bet Emet).

Acts 13

43 Now when the congregation was broken up, many of the Jews and religious proselytes followed Paul and Barnabas: who, speaking to them, persuaded them to continue in the grace of God (these religious proselytes were Gentiles who practiced Messianic Judaism, and notice that they were meeting with Jews in the Synagogue, and not a church).

Acts 15

19 Wherefore my sentence is, that we trouble not them, which from among the Gentiles are turned to God: 20 But that we write unto them, that they abstain from pollutions of idols, and [from]

fornication, and [from] things strangled, and [from] blood. 21 For Moses of old time hath in every city them that preach him, being read in the synagogues every Sabbath day (notice in the preaching of Moses, the Gentiles were indoctrinated with the "pattern" of worship that continually went on in the synagogues). Also of note, is that this occurred "in every city," in other words, the "pattern of worship given to David by the spirit" was universally practiced by both Jew and Gentile in every city.

Revelation 14

7 Saying with a loud voice, Fear God, and give glory to him; for the hour of his judgment is come: and worship him that made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and the fountains of waters.

Revelation 15

4 Who shall not fear thee, O Lord, and glorify thy name? for [thou] only [art] holy: for all nations shall come and worship before thee; for thy judgments are made manifest. Understand that the worship we are to give God comes from the "pattern" given to David for all men. This pattern if for all time!

Isaiah 14

1. For the LORD will have mercy on Jacob, and will yet choose Israel, and set them in their own land: and they shall be joined with them, and they shall cleave to the house of Jacob. (Again let me say that if Gentiles "cleaved" or joined the house of Jacob, as they did, then they followed the "pattern" or worship given to David for all of God's children).

Isaiah 56

3. Neither let the son of the stranger, that hath joined himself to the LORD, speak, saying, The LORD hath utterly separated me from his people: neither let the eunuch say, Behold, I [am] a dry tree. 4 For thus saith the LORD unto the eunuchs that keep my Sabbaths, and choose [the things] that please me, and take hold of my covenant,

These two scriptures drive home the point that when Gentiles (called strangers in the text) took hold of God's covenant, they also took hold of and adhered to the "pattern" of the worship involved in the keeping of the covenant. Such worship consisted of prayers and ceremonies that had come down to them from the Holy Spirit as was given to David as the "pattern."

Let us examine Isaiah 56: 6 once again: *"Also the sons of the stranger (Gentiles), that join themselves to the LORD, to serve him, and to love the name of the LORD, to be his servants, every one that keepeth the Sabbath from polluting it, and taketh hold of my covenant"*. Let us not fail to understand that if we Gentiles (called "strangers") kept the Sabbath from polluting it, it would necessitate our compliance with the "pattern" of accepted worship given by God for the Sabbath. Such worship consisted of the prayers we pray at Bet Emet Ministries and the Psalms we read. We at Bet Emet Ministries are dedicated at restoring the worship of the true church of Yeshua.

Paul, writing to Gentile believers in Ephesus, writes for us in Ephesians, chapter 2:19: "Now therefore ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellow citizens with the saints, and of the household of God; Did you hear that? We are fellow citizens of the household of God." That being true, we are expected to worship according to the "pattern" given to the household of God. That "pattern" is easily ascertained by the study of history and language of the Bible.

Leviticus 18

26 Ye shall therefore keep my statutes and my judgments, and shall not commit [any] of these abominations; [neither] any of your own nation, nor any stranger (Gentile) that sojourneth among you:" If we as Gentile believers in Yeshua are to keep God's statutes and His judgments, that necessitates obeying the statutes concerning worship, in particular the "pattern" for worship given to David.

Leviticus 24

22 Ye shall have one manner of law, as well for the stranger (Gentile), as for one of your own country: for I [am] the LORD your God.

The word "law" means commandment. I find it hardly conceivable for someone would try to say that the commandments given to David concerning the worship of God **would not apply** equally for both the Jew and the Gentile "stranger." **History teaches us that this "one Law" did apply to both, for both Jews and Gentiles worshipped together, prayed the same prayers, observed the same Festivals, read the same Psalms, and sanctified the Sabbath day together. This cannot be proven incorrect!**

The foundation for the teaching of the Gentile the "pattern" of worship (service of God) was the Sabbath service in the synagogue. We find that the Gentile was instructed to be taught the Word of God beginning in Old Testament. Let us examine some Scriptures.

Exodus 20

10 But the seventh day [is] the Sabbath of the LORD thy God: [in it] thou shalt not do any work, thou, nor thy son, nor thy daughter, thy manservant, nor thy maidservant, nor thy cattle, nor thy stranger (Gentile) that [is] within thy gates:

Exodus 23

12 Six days thou shalt do thy work, and on the seventh day thou shalt rest: that thine ox and thine ass may rest, and the son of thy handmaid, and the stranger (Gentile), may be refreshed.

Leviticus 25

6 And the Sabbath of the land shall be meat for you; for thee, and for thy servant, and for thy maid, and for thy hired servant, and for thy stranger (Gentile) that sojourneth with thee,

Deuteronomy 5

14 But the seventh day [is] the Sabbath of the LORD thy God: [in it] thou shalt not do any work, thou, nor thy son, nor thy daughter, nor thy manservant, nor thy maidservant, nor thine ox, nor thine ass, nor any of thy cattle, nor thy stranger (Gentile) that [is] within thy gates; that thy manservant and thy maidservant may rest as well as thou.

Isaiah 56

3. Neither let the son of the stranger (Gentile) , that hath joined himself to the LORD, speak, saying, The LORD hath utterly separated me from his people: neither let the eunuch say, Behold, I [am] a dry tree. 4 For thus saith the LORD unto the eunuchs that keep my Sabbaths, and choose [the

things] that please me, and take hold of my covenant;

Acts 15

19 Wherefore my sentence is, that we trouble not them (Gentile believers), which from among the Gentiles are turned to God: 20 But that we write unto them, that they abstain from pollutions of idols, and [from] fornication, and [from] things strangled, and [from] blood. 21 For Moses of old time hath in every city them that preach him, being read in the synagogues every Sabbath day.

Having come to the understanding that Sabbath observance was intended for both Jews and Gentiles, it is easy to see that on the Sabbath, during the synagogue services, the Gentiles would not only be instructed about God's commandments, many of which involve for them the "pattern" for the service of God and the worship of God, but begin the actual observance of the worship of God. In only a short time, **this practice of the "pattern" would have become a life-style.** This is what we are attempting to do at Bet Emet Ministries. We realize that we are attempting something on a grand scale, since most of us grew up void of this truth and experience in your life. Nevertheless, once you come to the understanding that there was a "pattern for worship, and that "the pattern" can be discerned today, it seems to me only reasonable and necessary that we begin to practice the "pattern" as God originally intended. Can you not agree? Shalom!

Your responses welcome....



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THE JEWISH PRAYERBOOK AND WHY A CHRISTIAN SHOULD USE IT

The siddur is the Jewish prayerbook. "Siddur" is pronounced "see-DOOr" (rhymes with "tour") in Hebrew or "SIDDer" (rhymes with "bidder") in Yiddish. The word comes from a Hebrew root, meaning "order"; and indeed Biblical worship [which follows the pattern of worship given to David and which was subsequently handed down over the centuries] occurs at fixed times, with fixed prayers, in a fixed order. Once you are comfortable with the siddur, you can be comfortable at any Biblical (Jewish) service anywhere, for the liturgy has varied only slightly around the world and over the last 1,000 years.

The first impression of a service is that it is a confusing hodgepodge of activity. At first, the various tunes and events are indistinguishable from each other, but after sitting through several services, the melodies and events will become distinct. It is possible, however, to attend service for years, become completely familiar with the sequence events, become comfortable pronouncing the prayers and performing the tasks that congregants are called upon to publicly perform, and yet not perceive that there exists an underlying structural pattern common to every service!

This is because the service was not designed all at once. Some of its contents are 2,400 years old. The basic framework was fixed in the first century. The service started out simple, but steadily gained appendages and insertions. Over time, these additions masked the simple underlying form. But once aware that a form is present, you will readily notice it, and appreciate the systematic logic behind the pattern of the liturgy. From then on, you will have a roadmap good for every type of service, rather than just a set of specific directions.

Although the order of worship was defined in the first century, it was forbidden to put the liturgy into written form. People knew the prayers because they recited most of them frequently. The learned knew more than the unlearned. The first siddur was written in the eighth century. The prior development of the liturgy is deduced from the discussions among sages reported in ancient collections of rabbinic teaching.

The siddur is more than an order of worship. It is also collection of great Hebrew literature. For at least 3,000 years religious themes have been central to Jewish culture. Some of the best sacred poetry has found its way into the siddur. In the siddur, one finds the experiences of Jewish hearts from many lands and times.

THE LANGUAGE OF THE SIDDUR

Hebrew is unlike any modern language. Its grammar renders rhyming trivial. Therefore Hebrew poetry is often more concerned with recurring patterns of sound within the lines. Consonants are used to construct tempos that ebb and flow.

Furthermore' it is common to build communication into the poetic form itself, by using number harmonies, acrostics, and calligraphic techniques.

In Hebrew, words and numbers are written with the same symbols. Numbers are not represented using places

held by zeros, but are formed by adding the values of all the symbols that appear in the representation. (This is like Roman numerals rather than Arabic.) Therefore every Hebrew word can also be interpreted as a number. Conversely, almost every number can be represented by many different ways and so become associated with words. By extension, different words having the same numerical value become related to each other. These correspondences between words and numbers are used to extract additional meaning from the text. The application of these ideas is called gematria. Gematria is a fertile playground for mental gymnastics.

The most widely known gematria is that eighteen is "life." Chat is the Hebrew word for "life," as in the toast, "L'Chaim (To Life!). Chat is spelled in Hebrew with two letters. They are the eighth and tenth letters of the alef-bet (Hebrew alphabet) and are the symbols commonly used to repress the numbers 8 and 10. Hence the word chat and the number eighteen look identical. (This correspondence is why Jews frequently give donations in multiples of \$18.). Why associate giving charity with 'life?' Because "charity saves from death," (Proverbs 10:2).

In Hebrew, hidden communication can be built into poetic form by using particular quantities of sentences, words, and letters to represent, through gematria, a message beyond the simple meaning of the words.

Acrostics are messages that are formed when letters are plucked out of context, based on a pattern. Acrostic messages are found throughout the siddur. Messages may be formed from the first letters of each stanza, or sentence, or even every word. They are also sometimes found based on the last letters, or on every seventh, fiftieth, or 613th letter. Messages are also sometimes formed by skipping fixed numbers of words rather than letters.

Calligraphic techniques include changing the sizes of letters or changing the shapes of letters in certain contexts for emphasis.

In Jewish mystical tradition, each letter has its own personality, and the shapes of letters have significance. Religious exegesis (homiletical interpretation of scriptural and liturgical texts) can be based on the shapes of letters and their juxtaposition, as though the plain meaning of the text had not required this arrangement.

Hebrew is a very compact notation compared with any modern language. It can be more ambiguous than any translation can be. (For all its rich poetry, the Tanach [the Jewish Bible] only has a vocabulary of about 7,000 words.) This compactness also has another result: words are rich in value-laden conceptual interconnections.

LITURGY AS PERFORMATIVE SPEECH

In traditional Jewish thought, words and reality are inter-twined, utterances have a material substance. The Hebrew word for "utterance" and "thing" are the same. All that we say is critically important and irrevocable.

Speech does not merely describe something. We do not merely agree or disagree with the words as a depiction of reality. Speech establishes a transformation of reality by its affirmation. A classic example is a wedding ceremony. After the words are spoken, nothing has really changed. But every thing has changed.

Nearly all of the siddur's contents are performative speech rather than descriptive speech. If you are experiencing difficulty relating to certain contents, don't try to evaluate the accuracy of the text as a description, for that is not how the words are spoken. Try to see what the worshippers are using the text to do.

DIVINE NAMES IN THE SIDDUR

In the Bible, several names are used for the Deity. One name is usually translated as "Almighty," another is usually translated as "God," and so on. Jewish tradition associates the various names with the exercise of different divine attributes.

The most personal Name is the one that is represented by four Hebrew letters. This is what Jews simply call "the Name." It is more widely known as the Tetragrammaton, from the Greek language, meaning "four letters." In ancient times, the Name was pronounced only by the High Priest, and only within the Holy of Holies within the Temple, and only once a year on Yom Kippur (the Day of Atonement) in the context of prayer. Today, and for at least 1,000 years, no one knows how it was pronounced.

Because of the holiness ascribed to the Name, media on which the Name is written (including prayerbooks) are treated in special ways. Many prayerbooks print widely recognized conventional codes rather than the Name itself. This makes it easier to properly dispose of the writing when it has outlived its usefulness. You will notice this only by examining the Hebrew text of the siddur. It does not affect the translation.

In English translations of the Bible and of the siddur, the divine Name is usually translated either as "the Lord," or as "the LORD," or as "Hashem" (pronounced hah-SHEM). "HaShem" is Hebrew for "the Name." The word "Lord" appears in the Bible and siddur with reference both to the Deity and to others. Full capitalization of "LORD" is used in some translations to distinguish the Name from the word "Lord." Idiomatically' it would be better to translate the divine Name as "LORD" rather than "the LORD)" since it is a personal name, but this is not done. Those who translate the Name as "Hashem use Hashem as a personal name, preserving the Hebrew idiom.

Since we do not know how the Name was originally pronounced' there is a conventional substitute pronunciation used during prayer. For all intent and purposes this unique word is treated as the divine Name. Observant Jews do not use the Name to refer to God in conversation, only in prayer. Observant Jews are very careful not to pronounce this word in other contexts. The pronunciation is a unique variant of the Hebrew word for "lord." It bears no relationship to the four Hebrew letters on the printed page, nor to any conventional printers' substitution. If you are following the progress of a service in Hebrew rather than in transliteration, you will notice this convention.

During prayer, occurrences of the Name are pronounced: A-do-nai.

Most Orthodox Jews treat the Hebrew word for God as a Name warranting similar respect. Unlike the four-letter Name, the correct pronunciation of this word is well known, but is used only in prayer. The pronunciation in prayers is: "E-lo-hei." When not praying, the respectful pronunciation is "E-lo-kei." This may be compared to the habit some people have of spelling the English word "God as "God."

HANDLING AND USING A SIDDUR

Because a siddur contains the Name of God, it is treated with reverence. Do not carry a siddur with you into a bathroom. Do not put it on the floor. If you drop a siddur, pick it up immediately. After dropping it, the tradition is to kiss it as you pick it up. Close the siddur before leaving it unattended. Some people also kiss the siddur as they finish using it, and take care to always put it down with its front cover up. When a siddur is worn beyond repair and has outlived its usefulness, it is not thrown away. It is buried respectfully, like a human corpse.

In Jewish services, a single prayer may be used on several occasions. A prayer may even recur within the same service. Many prayerbooks require you to flip around to find the right prayers at the right times. They do this to reduce the number of pages that must be printed. The newer prayerbooks do this less than the older ones. Because so much of the service is said silently, and because the sounds of the language may be unfamiliar to you when chanted rapidly, it is possible that you will lose your place at times. It may help to look over a neighbor's shoulder.

THE ORGANIZATION OF THE SIDDUR

When you must use a siddur with which you are not familiar, start by assuming that the most frequently

occurring events are treated first. Next, assume that events having similar frequency appear in the order they occur. (This organizational principle is found throughout Jewish tradition; the siddur is just one example.)

First come the daily morning, afternoon, and evening services. Then come the weekly Sabbath evening, morning, and afternoon services. Judaism has three annual festivals, called Pesach (Passover), Shavuot (Weeks), and Sukkot (Booths). All three festivals use the same liturgy, so the next items in the siddur are the thrice-yearly festival evening, morning, and afternoon services. Next come the annual services for the High Holy Days, first Rosh Hashannah then Yom Kippur. Lastly come services for even less frequent occasions.

Many of the services share common components. To save pages, the less frequent services often consist mostly of references to various components of the more frequent services. To avoid having to skip around, many Jews use separate special prayerbooks organized for each festival or High Holy Day. Such a prayerbook is called a machzor.



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THOUGHTS ON THE JEWISH PRAYER BOOK AND THE "PATTERN OF WORSHIP"

THE HISTORY OF THE JEWISH PRAYER BOOK...THE SIDDUR

Many prayers of our Siddur are as old as Solomon's Temple if not older. The Psalms were the "prayer book" of Israel in the days of the kings and the prophets. The Sh'ma was taught to Israel by Moses himself! However, it was only after the Exile that the prayer service as we know it began to take shape.

During the Exile, Jewish people were dispersed all over the world. It was impossible for many Jews to come to the Temple. So the Jewish communities formed assemblies, or synagogues, in which to pray. The priests of each community went up to Jerusalem to serve their course in the Temple twice each year. They brought the sacrifices and offerings of their community with them. The rest of the people gathered to pray in the synagogue at the times when their sacrifices were being offered in the Temple (Mishnah Ta'anit 4:2). The priests would then return to their respective lands and teach the people the prayers from the Temple. This enabled the synagogue service to develop parallel to the Temple service.

When the Temple was destroyed in 70 C. E., the rabbis decided that the synagogue services would take the place of the sacrifices and this will bond the people together as had the Temple. The services were named after the sacrifices they were replacing:

- **Shaharit: the morning service;**
- **Minhah: the afternoon service;**
- **Ma-ariv: the evening service; and**
- **Musaf: the additional service.**

EACH PRAYER SERVICE FOLLOWS THE SAME BASIC PATTERN:

1. **Psalms and/or preliminary blessings**
2. **Sh'ma, with blessings before and after (morning and evening only)**
3. **Amidah, or Sh'moneh Esrei (Eighteen Benedictions)**
4. **Reading of the Torah (Monday, Thursday, Sabbath and festivals, morning service only, often followed by a sermon)**
5. **Musaf (Sabbath and festivals only)**
6. **Aleinu (praising God as King)**
7. **Mourners' Kaddish**
8. **Closing Hymn**

(Evelyn Garfiel, Service of the Heart (North Hollywood, CA: Wilshire Book Co. 1958), p. 51).

This outline has been the basis of virtually all Jewish worship since the time of the Second Temple! Now let's

take a closer look at the main parts of the Jewish liturgy.

THE SH'MA

"Hear O Israel, the LORD is our God, the LORD is one!" The Sh'ma ("Hear!") is recited each evening and morning, according to the command in Deuteronomy 6:7 to speak of these words: ***"when you lie down, and when you rise up."*** It consists of three passages from the Torah which contain some of the basic principles of the Jewish faith:

Deuteronomy 6:4-9 declares that the Lord God of Israel is the only God. There is no other. The passage commands us to love Him, to meditate on His words at all times, and to allow Him to rule every aspect of our lives. When we confess the Sh'ma, we do much more than merely state the fact that there is only one God. Our rabbis say that when a person recites the Sh'ma, he takes upon himself the yoke of the kingdom of heaven (Mishnah Berokhot (Blessings) 11:2). That is to say, he submits himself to God's sovereign rule and authority. The Sh'ma has been described as the "first and greatest commandment" (Mark 12:28-30).

Mark 12:28-30 28 And one of the scribes came, and having heard them reasoning together, and perceiving that he had answered them well, asked him, Which is the first commandment of all? 29 And Jesus answered him, The first of all the commandments is, Hear, O Israel; The Lord our God is one Lord: 30 And thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and with all thy strength: this is the first commandment. (KJV)

Deuteronomy 11:13-22 tells us that our health, safety and prosperity—even favorable weather!—are dependent on our love of God, and how we obey His commands. This idea horrifies the "modern" mind! Evelyn Garfiel writes, "This section of the Sh'ma has therefore been omitted from the Prayer Books of several large sections of Jewry" (Garfiel, p. 88. Note that Gates of Prayer: New Union Prayer Book (New York: Central Conference of American Rabbis, 1975), leaves out this section (notice, for instance, pp. 57-58). But Moses warns us each time we recite the Sh'ma that we must love and obey God if we want His favor.

Numbers 15:37-41 commands us to wear tzitzit or fringes, on a four-cornered garment (tallit) to remind us to obey all of the commands of God. There are 613 knots tied in the fringes of the tallit, which remind us that we are tied to God by 613 precepts of the Law. This section gives the reason for our submission to God—because He brought us out of slavery in Egypt.

THE EIGHTEEN BENEDICTIONS

The Sh'moneh Esrei ("eighteen") is also known as the Amidah ("standing") because during the Eighteen Benedictions we stand before God as one would approach a king. These ancient prayers, which were set in a prescribed order by the end of the Second Temple period, were offered three times a day in the Temple when the sacrifices were made; now they are the heart of the Jewish liturgy. We praise God for choosing Abraham, Isaac and Jacob and the people of Israel, we extol Him for His gracious care for us, and we exalt Him for His holiness. During the public recital of the Amidah, a prayer called the Kedushah ("holiness") is added before the third benediction. This is one of the high points of the service. Using the language of the angels we enter into the courts of heaven, and praise God as Isaiah heard the angels praise Him in the Temple: ***"Holy, Holy, Holy (Kadosh, Kadosh, Kadosh) is the LORD of Hosts. The whole earth is filled with His glory!"*** (Isaiah 6:3). Standing in His presence, we humbly ask for forgiveness, healing, provision for our needs, the restoration of Israel and the Temple service, and the coming of Messiah (altogether, twelve of the eighteen benedictions). Our audience with God then closes with words of thanksgiving.

THE KADDISH

This ancient Aramaic prayer is best known as the prayer that is said by mourners. Actually, the Kaddish is not a prayer for the dead, but a proclamation of the sovereignty of God. Those who pray the Kaddish acknowledge that God is in control, and that—even as we grieve over the death of a loved one—we know that God is the Giver of life.

All three of these central elements of the Jewish liturgy declare that God is King of the Universe, and that our purpose in life is not merely to do good but to make ourselves subject to God, to love and serve Him.

PLEAS FOR THE COMING OF MESSIAH

The fifteenth and seventeenth benedictions of the Amidah are pleas for the coming of Messiah and the rebuilding of the Temple. The Rabbis teach that God accepts the synagogue services in place of the Temple sacrifices (Midrash Leviticus Rabbah 8:22; Aboth d'Rabbi Natan IV, 11a (Montefiore and Loewe, A Rabbinic Anthology (New York: Schocken Books, 1974), pp. 317, 430). This becomes all the more apparent once one understands just how the Sacrificial System operated and that "atonement" was procured actually through repentance, prayer, confession, alms, etc., before the animals's blood (soul/life) was spilt and actually placed on the altar. If this is new information to you then it would behoove you to study the dynamics of the Sacrificial System and Atonement for yourself. But since our atonement is secured for us by virtue of our worship, then why do our people fervently pray for the restoration of the sacrifices? Why do we cry out to God daily for a deliverer, for Messiah? It is clear from these and many other prayers that the rabbis felt that prayer replacing the sacrifices was only at best a temporary arrangement—until the Temple is rebuilt or the Messiah comes, or both. Unfortunately, many Jewish people today are not waiting for Messiah or Temple. Attempts are being made to "update" the Siddur to take this into account.

The new versions of these prayers make no mention of the Messiah, the Temple or the sacrifices. Instead they make only vague references to "deliverance" and "acceptable worship," implying that deliverance is something that would be nice, but that we can live without, and presuming that our present worship is acceptable.

Answer for yourself: Why, then, should we pray for a deliverer and for the restoration of sacrifices? Only when the Messiah comes, and God's Kingdom on earth becomes a reality will we be able to truly serve Him.

Meanwhile we pray daily in the Amidah, *"O our King...bring us back in perfect repentance unto thy presence"* and *"Forgive us, O our Father, for we have sinned"* (Joseph Hertz. The Authorized Daily Prayer Book (New York: Bloch Publishing Co., 1948), p.139). The problem is that sin keeps us from serving God the way He wants us to serve Him. Sin "unplugs" us from the Source of our life—it disconnects and separates us from God. That is why we must pray, *"purify our hearts to serve thee in truth..."* (Hertz. p. 459). The problem is in our hearts. But there is hope, because God can purify our hearts. The Psalmist says, *"Create in me a clean heart, O God..." and then, "O Lord, open thou my lips, and my mouth shall show forth thy praise"* (Psalm 51:10,15). God must cleanse our hearts, so we can serve Him in truth!

In the Gospel of John, Yeshua (Jesus) makes the bold claim. *"the hour is coming, and now is [emphasis mine], when the true worshipers will serve the Father in spirit and in truth"* (John 4:23).

It is our hope at Bet Emet Ministries that you not only become familiar with this "Pattern of Worship" and this "Pattern of Prayer" which was taught to the God-fearers and non-Jews in the Synagogues in the First Century as well as afterwards but adopt it in your lives today as well.

I can honestly say as a Pastor that in was through adopting this "Pattern of Prayer" in my life as well as in Bet Emet Ministries that I found not only my prayer life enriched but I was amazed at the depth of prayer to which I entered which I had never experienced before in my life. Truly Israel is the "light unto the nations".



Shalom.

Craig Lyons M.Div.





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THE LORD'S PRAYER...IS IT A SHORTENED AMIDAH?

It is remarkable that on an Erev Shabbat (Friday evening) or on Sabbath (Saturday morning), anywhere in the world where there are Jews, you are likely to find a congregation reciting Hebrew prayers that are several thousand years old. On the Sabbath, the Torah has been read in the Synagogue for well over 20 centuries. The Amidah is the central element in every prayer service and is recited while standing with one's feet together. It is also referred to in the Talmud as Ha-Tefillah, **"the Prayer"** par excellence.

We have written in other articles about the factual evidence concerning how the New Testament's depiction of Jesus shows him living by the Torah, teaching the Torah and expounding upon it, as well as other Hebrew scriptures, prayers and customs. Yeshua, being a Jewish Rabbi or teacher, exhorted with Jewish interpretation and understanding. Yeshua himself lived a life of prayer. It is through prayer that man receives strength, comfort and spiritual direction. Yeshua's disciples came to him and asked him **"...teach us to pray..." (Luke 11:1).**

Luke 11:1 1 And it came to pass, that, as he was praying in a certain place, when he ceased, one of his disciples said unto him, Lord, teach us to pray, as John also taught his disciples. (KJV)

Again, the same instruction were given them in Matt. 6:9-13.

Matt 6:9 9 After this manner therefore pray ye:(KJV)

Answer for yourself: In all the years we have read this "Lord's Prayer" have we missed that fact that this is possibly a shortened version of a long-standing prayer in Judaism called the "Amidah" or "the Standing Prayer"

If we are able to recognize the setting of these Jewish students (Disciples) as they were coming to this Rabbi for teaching and instructions, we will be much better prepared to understand the teachings of Yeshua. These men had been raised from their youths as Jews. They had studied the Torah. They knew the synagogue prayers, they had been looking for the Messianic Era, and now for them their Messiah had come and they listened to his every word as birds in a nest being fed by a parent.

Answer for yourself: What is the Greatest Commandment and what does this Jesus of the New Testament have to say about it?

Yeshua was asked which was the greatest or first commandment, and his reply was **"Shema Israel"!**

"[Shema Israel]...Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God is one Lord:..." (Mark 12:29-30).

"Shema Israel" is a prayer. It is important to take note of the primacy of the Gospel of Mark since being the earliest Gospel which served as a pattern for all others that came later. That being so this is the earliest recorded answer to the question posed to Jesus concerning what is the Greatest Commandment and he

answered it by teaching "prayer" is the Greatest of all Commandments. But this will change in later Gospels for we see in Matthew Matt 22:35-38

35 Then one of them, which was a lawyer, asked him a question, tempting him, and saying, 36 Master, which is the great commandment in the law? 37 Jesus said unto him, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. 38 This is the first and great commandment. (KJV)

Totally absent from the later Gospel of Matthew account is the answer that prayer "Shema" is the Greatest Commandment. That being so then it is logical that we are to "love the Lord thy God with all thy heart and with all thy soul and with all thy mind". We have in the Gospel of Matthew removed from the readers view the highly Jewish idea of "Shema" which is but another of the dejudiaizing attempts of the New Testament antisemitic writers to obscure the true picture of the Jewish faith to the later New Testament readers. Only in separating Jesus from Judaism can they carry out their plan of Replacement Religion. This is subtle but effective in the long run.

Answer for yourself: Is Jesus teaching us here that the Greatest Commandment is to pray? It would seem so.

This was a Jewish answer!

Answer for yourself: Should you expect anything less? The "Shema" prayer is recited in every synagogue and every day by the faithful, upon rising the morning and before retiring at night.

But the Shema is but one of the two most important Jewish prayers we have today. The other we recognize as The Lord's Prayer which is an abbreviated form of the longer Amidah or Standing Prayer.

THE LORD'S PRAYER....A SHORTENED AMIDAH?

Since the prayer Jesus taught his disciples (The Lord's Prayer) is apparently an abbreviated version of the Amidah ("Standing," in Hebrew) or Eighteen Benedictions, I think it is important for Christians to be familiar with this central prayer of Jewish religious life.* The prayer is very ancient, some of the changes to it being made 200 years before the time of Jesus. The prayer is also very beautiful, full of scriptural quotations and allusions. Every Jew was obligated to pray the Eighteen Benedictions daily; however, in times of emergency, one was permitted to pray a shortened form of the Eighteen, such as the Lord's Prayer. No conversation or interruptions are permitted during the Amidah, and it is forbidden to make any kind of noise that might disturb the concentration of others.

With this thought in mind, let us review the prayer that is sometimes called the Lord's Prayer. Actually, it was Yeshua's instructions on how to pray. He said, *"After this manner therefore pray ye:..." (Matt. 6:9).*

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I would like to point out that in the Lord's prayer we find definite phases or stages to Yeshua's instructions. They can be distinguished as six phases or stages of communication with God. Yeshua's first instruction to approach unto God was:

- first to "worship or praise",
- second to "surrender",
- third to bring your "requests",
- fourth to be in the attitude of "repentance",

- fifth you are to pray for guidance,
- sixth would be to close with "worship and praise."

From Matt: 6:9-13 we read Jesus' answer when asked to teach his followers to pray: *"After this manner therefore pray ye"*. That which follows is a shortened version of the Jewish Amidah. (FROM SHEMONEH ESREH)

| | |
|--------|---|
| #2-3 | 1. Our Father which art in heaven, hallowed be Thy name. (vs. 9) |
| #11-14 | 2. Thy Kingdom come, Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven. (vs. 10) |
| #9 | 3. Give us this day our daily bread. (vs. 11) |
| #5-6 | 4. And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors. (vs. 12) |
| #13 | 5. And lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil. (vs. 13) |
| #18 | 6. For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever. Amen. (vs. 13) |

As I began to study each of these phrases in the New Testament in the light of Hebrew prayers, I found they came from Jewish thought, just like most of the rest of Yeshua's teaching (we have to be aware that the early Gentile church often put certain teachings into the mouth of this "Christ" that were not Jewish due to their antisemitism but for our purposes here these will be addressed elsewhere on our websites). The Lord's prayer is actually a shortened form of the "Shemoneh Esreh", the 18 blessings, or what is also known as the "Amidah" (meaning "standing"). You have to know how the pieces fit together in order to catch the interlocking theme.

THE AMIDAH

Lets get some background on the Amidah. The Amidah is also called the Shemoneh Esreh. This is the heart of every Jewish prayer service. It contains the basic components of prayer: praising God, petitioning Him, and thanking Him. Whenever the Talmud refers to tefilah ("prayer"), it means the Shmoneh Esreh...Shmoneh Esreh means simply "eighteen" (8+10). The prayer is so-called because the original version consisted of 18 blessings. The basic formula is ancient - composed by the 120 Men of the Great Assembly in the fifth century B.C.E. This prayer is called by still another name - the "Amidah", which means "standing". The prayer is called this because it reflects our having stopped to stand in the presence of God.

Answer for yourself: What is the time frame here? This would have occurred as far back at 800 BCE which shows us the antiquity of this "Amidah" which was sacred to the Oral Tradition of Israel.

The Shemoneh Esreh should be said quietly to oneself, based on the example set by Hannah, whose praying lips moved, but her voice could not be heard" (I Sam 1;13). That is why the Shemoneh Esreh is sometimes referred to as the "Silent Prayer".

Inasmuch as we also relate to God as the King of Kings, the Sovereign of the universe, no less courtesy should be shown to Him than to mortal kings. The convention that prevailed in high courts when approaching a king thus became the basis for several customs during worship: for example, three small steps forward are taken before beginning the Shemoneh Esreh.

This prayer is said three times per day, where each prayer service is in remembrance of the temple sacrifices which cannot take place without the temple. In the morning and afternoon service, is said once

individually, and once corporately. The public repetition was instituted for the benefit of those who were not able to recite it properly. By listening attentively and answering "Amen" at the end of each blessing, such worshipers are considered to have fulfilled their prayer obligation.

Although "Shemoneh Esreh" means eighteen (8+10), there are actually nineteen. Number twelve, the prayer against informers, was added during the Roman occupation at the close of the 1st century C.E., yet the name of the prayer was not changed. The first three and the last three berakhot (blessings) are stages of prayer as we approach God, and descend from our petitions. They contain blessings, praise and worship. The middle paragraphs plead for wisdom, repentance, forgiveness, etc.

EIGHTEEN BLESSINGS..(SHEMONEH ESREH)

English translation of original Hebrew Prayers

1. Blessed art Thou, Lord our God and God of our fathers, God of Abraham, God of Isaac, and God of Jacob. The great, mighty and awesome God, God Supreme who extends loving kindness and is Master of all, who remembers the gracious deeds of our forefathers, and who will bring a Redeemer with love to their children's children for His name's sake. King, Helper, Saviour and Protector, blessed art Thou, Lord, Protector of Abraham.
2. Thy might is eternal, O Lord, who revives the dead, powerful in saving, who makes the wind to blow and the rain to fall, who sustains the living with loving kindness, who revives the dead with great mercy, who supports the falling, heals the sick, frees the captive, and keeps faith with the dead; who is like Thee, Almighty, and who resembles Thee, O King who can bring death and give life.
3. Thou art holy, and Thy name is holy, and those who are holy shall praise Thee every day. Blessed art Thou, Lord, the holy God.
4. Thou grantest knowledge to man, and teaches understanding to humans; from thine own self, favor us with knowledge, understanding, and sense. Blessed art Thou, Lord, giver of knowledge.
5. Return us, our Father, to Thy Torah, and draw us closer, our King, to Thy worship, and bring us back before Thee in complete repentance. Blessed are Thou, Lord, who desires repentance.
6. Forgive us, our Father, for we have sinned, pardon us, our King, for we have transgressed, for Thou art a pardoner and forgiver. Blessed art Thou, Lord, gracious One who forgives abundantly.
7. Look upon us in our suffering, and fight our struggles, redeem us speedily, for Thy name's sake, for Thou art a mighty Redeemer. Blessed art Thou, Lord, Redeemer of Israel.
8. Heal us, O Lord, and we shall be healed, save us and we shall be saved, for Thou art our glory. Send complete healing for our every illness, for Thou, Divine King, art the faithful, merciful Physician. Blessed art Thou, Lord, who heals the sick of His people Israel.
9. Bless this year for us, O Lord our God, and all its varied produce that it be for good; provide (dew and rain as a) blessing on the face of the earth, satisfy us with Thy goodness, and bless this year like the good years. Blessed art Thou, Lord, who blessed the years.
10. Sound the great shofar (to proclaim) our freedom, lift up a banner for the ingathering of our exiles, and bring us together from the four corners of the earth. Blessed art Thou, Lord, who gathers together the dispersed of His people Israel.
11. Restore our judges as at first, and our counselors as in the beginning, removing from us sorrow and sighing; rule over us, Thou alone, O Lord, with kindness and mercy, and vindicate us in the judgment. Blessed art Thou, Lord, King, who loves righteousness and judgment.
12. For slanderers let there be no hope, and let all wickedness instantly perish. May all Thy enemies be quickly cut off; and as for the malicious, swiftly uproot, break, cast down, and subdue quickly in our day. Blessed art Thou, Lord, who breaks the power of His enemies and subdues the malicious. (Note: This was written at the close of the first century - it was never used in the days and time of Yeshua)
13. On the righteous and the saintly, on the elders of Thy people, the house of Israel, and on their surviving scholars, on the true proselyte and on ourselves, let Thy compassion flow, O Lord our God. Grant a good reward to all who sincerely trust in Thy name; place our lot with them forever and let us not be shamed,

- for in Thee do we trust. Blessed art Thou, Lord, the support and security of the righteous.
14. To Jerusalem Thy city, return with compassion, and dwell within it as Thou promised; rebuild it soon in our day, an everlasting structure; and speedily establish in its midst the throne of David. Blessed art Thou, Lord, builder of Jerusalem.
 15. The offspring of Thy servant David, quickly cause to flourish, and lift up his power by Thy deliverance; for Thy deliverance do we constantly hope. Blessed art Thou, Lord, who makes the glory of deliverance to flourish.
 16. Hear our voice, O Lord our God, show compassion and mercy to us, accept our prayers with mercy and favor, for Thou art a God who hears prayers and supplications.
 17. Favorably receive, O Lord our God, Thy people Israel and their prayer, restore the worship to Thy temple in Zion, receive with love and favor the offerings of Israel and their prayer, and may the worship of Thy people Israel always be favorably received by Thee, may our eyes behold Thy return to Zion in mercy. Blessed art Thou, Lord, who restores His Divine Presence to Zion.
 18. We give thanks unto Thee who art the Lord our God and God of our fathers for all eternity. Thou art the strength of our lives, the shield of our deliverance. In every generation, we shall thank Thee and declare Thy praise for our lives that are entrusted in Thy hand, and for our souls that are in Thy care, and for Thy miracles that are daily with us, and for Thy wondrous deeds and goodness that occur at all times, evening, morning, and noon. Thou art the Benevolent One, for Thy mercies are never ended. The Compassionate One, for Thy deeds of kindness do not stop, always have we placed our hope in Thee. For all this, O our King, may Thy name be always blessed and exalted forever and ever. All the living will forever thank Thee and praise Thy name in truth, O God, our eternal salvation and help. blessed art Thou, Lord, whose name is goodness; it is pleasing to give thanks to Thee.
 19. Establish peace, well-being, blessing, grace, loving kindness, and mercy upon us and upon all Israel, Thy people for by the light of Thy presence have you given us, O Lord our God, a Torah of life, love of kindness, justice, blessing, compassion, life, and peace, and it is good in Thy sight to bless Thy people Israel at all times and in every hour with Thy peace. Blessed art Thou, Lord, who blessed His people Israel with peace.

Quoting from the Encyclopedia of Jewish Concepts, SHEMONEH ESREH:

"The Shemoneh Esreh prayer is on the central element in the three daily services: Shaharith, Minhah, and Ma'ariv. It is spoken of in the Talmud as Tefillah, the prayer par excellence, on account of its importance and its antiquity. According to tradition, it was composed by the members of the Great Assembly who flourished at the early period of the Second Temple.

Originally, the Shemoneh Esreh, denoting eighteen, consisted of eighteen benedictions; in its present form, however, there are nineteen. The addition of the paragraph concerning the slanderers and enemies of the people was made toward the end of the 1st century at the direction of Rabban Gamaliel II, the head of the Sanhedrin at Yavneh.

The Shemoneh Esreh is now generally referred to as the Amidah (standing), so called because it is recited in a standing posture.

The middle paragraphs of the weekday Shemoneh Esreh contain petitions for the fulfillment of our needs. They plead for wisdom, repentance, forgiveness, deliverance, healing, prosperity, ingathering of the dispersed, restoration of justice, protection of the upright, rebuilding of Jerusalem, the Messianic era, and the acceptance of prayer. All of these petitions are on behalf of the entire community; petitions for personal needs may be inserted in their appropriate place, as when one reaches the eighth benediction which reads: "Heal us, O Lord, and we shall be healed; save us and we shall be saved..."

After the Shemoneh Esreh, the following meditation is added: *"My God, guard my tongue from evil, and my lips from speaking falsehood...Open my heart to Thy Torah, that my soul may follow Thy command...Save with Thy right hand and answer me. May the words of my mouth and the*

meditation of my heart be acceptable in Thy presence, O Lord, my Redeemer."

The following is a brief outline of the Shemoneh Esreh, taken from Back To The Sources by Barry W. Holtz, pg. 415. In addition, we have listed beside the appropriate Shemoneh Esreh berakhot, the corresponding theme and verse of the six stages of the "Lord's Prayer".

Yeshua's Instructions = Shemoneh Esreh
 "The Lord's Prayer" "Eighteen Blessings"

| States of Lord's Prayer (Matthew 6:9-13) | Shemoneh Esreh |
|--|---|
| 1. Worship (vs. 9) | 1. God as the protector of the Forefathers 2. God as the power that makes for salvation 3. God as the source of holiness 4. For knowledge |
| 4. Repentance (vs. 12) | 5. For the strength to repent 6. For forgiveness |
| 3. Requests (vs. 11) | 7. For relief from affliction 8. For healing 9. For bounty of the land and material prosperity 10. For the ingathering of the exiles into the Holy Land |
| 2. Restoration (vs. 10) | 11. For the establishment of the reign of true justice 14. For the rebuilding of Jerusalem 15. For the coming of the Messiah 16. For the acceptance of our prayers 17. For the restoration of the Jerusalem Sanctuary |
| 5. Protection for righteous (#12 was not in original eighteen) | 12. (Against slanderers and informers.) 13. For the support and protection of the righteous |
| 6. Thanksgiving (Praise) vs. 13) | 18. Gratitude as man's response to God's work in the world 19. For peace |

Yeshua, as any typical Jewish boy would, learned the "Shemoneh Esreh" as a young boy, and it was a part of his worship and prayer to his father, God. That is, only the original eighteen. Remember, number 12 was placed in the middle after his death at the close of the 1st century C.E. Some say it was inserted because of the Roman oppression, and there is also the thought that it was also in opposition to the sect of the Nazarenes, which had grown to over one million Jewish believers in the 1st century. For whatever the reason, we #12 was not a part of the original eighteen.

So as we review the original eighteen (Shemoneh Esreh), we see it was from the Jewish prayers and Jewish thought that Yeshua again resounded in his teachings and answers. These original eighteen are beautiful prayers, and give a much fuller sense and meaning to what has been called "The Lord's Prayer".

These blessing are filled with Messianic hope and fulfillment for not only the righteous of Israel, but also for the true proselyte mentioned in #13, as they are part of God's witnesses to the nations.

COMPARISON WITH THE LORD'S PRAYER

Here is what you need to do. Familiarize yourself with the Amidah and then write out the Lord's prayer and compare the sections of worship, requests, repentance, restoration, and thanksgiving and you should see that the Lord's Prayer in the New Testament is but a shortened version of the Amidah. I would hope that many of

our readers will adopt and pray the Amidah as "the prayer" that Jesus and other righteous Jews prayed that was preserved and handed down in "the Pattern of Worship" of Israel as far back as 800 B.C.E. Today it exists going on 3000 years.

WHAT SHOULD THIS MEAN TO ME AS A CHRISTIAN TODAY?

Answer for yourself: What does this mean to me a non-Jew or a Christian today? Simply this; namely, that according to Acts 15 and James' ruling concerning the non-Jews coming to the God of Israel it was necessary that they not only adhere to and observe the Laws of Noah but attend the synagogues where Moses was being taught in order to learn other truths about God and the proper worship of God according to "the Pattern of Worship" given to all mankind. It would be in this synagogue environment that the non-Jew would be introduced to not only the Shema but the Amidah as well and these prayers would become a part of his life and prayer life. Through such instruction the non-Jew would come to love not only the Shema but the Amidah as well. Sadly today we have missed this truth and only are shown this shortened version of the Amidah in the New Testament and in so doing we fail to see the beauty and depth inherent in this prayer that our non-Jewish fathers prayed as part of their coming to God in the first century not only in Palestine but in Asia, Minor. It is our hope at Bet Emet ministries that you see these truths and adopt into your life not only the prayers that Jews like Jesus prayed but the earliest Godfearers as well. Baruch Ha Shem!



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GETTING TO KNOW THE AMIDAH

Next to the *Shema*, the most essential part of the prayer services is the *Amidah*, a series of benedictions expressing praise, thanksgiving, confession and petition. Recited silently three times daily, this prayer is named after the position in which it is recited (since the word *Amidah* means standing). However, it is perhaps more popularly known among Ashkenazim as the Shemoneh Esreh (Eighteen) because of the 18 benedictions it originally comprised. So basic is its position in each of the prescribed daily services that in talmudic sources it is also known simply as Ha-Tefillah, that is, "the prayer" par excellence.

THE MODE OF RECITAL:

The requirement that the worshiper face Jerusalem applies in particular to the *Amidah*. It is said in an undertone; no interruptions of any kind are permitted. At the beginning and end of the first and of the penultimate benediction, the worshiper bends his knees and bows. The prayer is recited by each individual during each of the three daily services:

Shaharit (the Morning Service), *Minhah* (the Afternoon Service) and *Mar'ariv* or *Arvit* (the Evening Service). On Sabbaths, New Moons and the scriptural festivals, furthermore, it constitutes the main element of *Musaf* (the Additional Service); and on the Day of Atonement alone it is recited a fifth time, for the *Ne'ilah* (the solemn Concluding Prayer).

In congregational worship—that is, when there is a *minyan* (ten men in attendance) the reader repeats the *Amidah* aloud and a number of additions are made. The original purpose of the repetition was to enable uneducated persons who did not know the prayers to fulfill their duty by listening to the recital and responding "Amen" after each benediction. In fact, though, it has long been the custom for the reader to repeat the *Amidah* even if all the congregants are able to pray themselves. The *halakhah* originally considered the *Amidah* of the Evening Service to be optional (though it has long become the invariable practice to recite it), and it is therefore not repeated aloud. An exception is the repetition on Sabbath eve of an abbreviated version, in which seven benedictions are telescoped into one single benediction. This was originally seen as a kind of *Kiddush*.

STRUCTURE AND STYLE:

There are various forms of *Amidah* for different occasions. On weekdays, the *Amidah* originally comprised 18 benedictions which later became 19; on fast days one further benediction is added in the repetition by the reader, and in ancient times, on some public fasts, six were added to the regular 19. On Sabbaths and festivals there are only seven benedictions, except in the *Musaf* of Rosh Ha-Shanah, which has nine. In cases of emergency or illness, the intermediate blessings of the weekday *Amidah* may be combined into one. All the various forms have in common the first three and the last three benedictions; the former are devoted to the praise of God, the latter, among other themes, to thanksgiving. On weekdays, the intermediate benedictions are petitions, and the *Amidah* is, therefore, predominantly a prayer of supplication.

Its structure follows the scheme: praise, petition, thanksgiving. The Talmud states that this style is that appropriate to "a servant making requests of his master"; for "a man should always praise God first, and pray (i.e. petition for his needs) afterward."

Throughout the Amidah, with the exception of the first section and some of the concluding formulae, the worshiper addresses God directly, as "Thou"-for the Amidah is the means through which the individual communes directly with God. In the words of the sages, "*the worshiper must turn his heart to Heaven*" and "*must see himself as if he were in God's presence.*" Some rabbis even forbid the recital of the Amidah if the worshiper's mind is not tranquil and if he is not certain of his ability to recite the entire prayer with **kavvanah, that is, with sustained concentration.** Both in praise and in petition, the plural pronoun "we" is used throughout the Amidah even when it is recited silently by the individual, indicating that it was always conceived as **a communal prayer.** Even when the individual worshiper recites it, he prays not on his own behalf but as a member of the congregation.

EVOLUTION AND REDACTION OF THE AMIDAH:

Answer for yourself: When did "fixed" communal prayers become a part of the "Pattern of Prayer" for Israel?

Fixed community prayers gradually came into being during the Second Temple period. People would meet for joint prayers and, in the course of time, orders of prayer developed. At first, these differed widely from group to group and there is no reason to assume that the orders of prayer were instituted at any given time by a central authority. It is, however, almost certain that by the end of the Temple period the recitation of the 18 benedictions of the weekday Amidah had become the general custom. Their exact sequence and the content of the individual benedictions were probably still uncrystallized. In the original Hebrew version of Ben Sira, a book of the Apocrypha also known as Ecclesiasticus, which dates from the second century B.C.E., there is a hymn which some scholars have identified as a quasi-Amidah. However, the **absence of anything resembling the Amidah in the liturgical fragments of the Dead Sea Scrolls found so far may be significant and only reinforces the Essene's distancing from normative Judaism.** There is explicit evidence that the seven benedictions for Sabbaths and the festivals and the nine for Rosh Ha-Shanah were accepted as the norm by the schools of Hillel and Shammai. A few decades later on in the first century C.E., **soon after the destruction of the Temple, the Amidah was edited finally in Jabneh, by Rabban Gamaliel II and his colleagues.** Even then, only the order and general content and the formulae of the actual benedictions were standardized; the wording in the body of the paragraphs was left to be formulated by the individual worshiper or reader.

Attempts to reconstruct the "original" text of the Amidah or to ascertain the date when each section was "composed" are therefore pointless, especially in view of the ancient rabbinic ruling that benedictions were not to be written down. It was probably in the early geonic period, after the seventh century, that definite versions of the Amidah were established and committed to writing; even then, those current in Erez Israel and Babylonia differed widely in their texts, though not, on the whole, in their contents. The former, that of Erez Israel, is known principally through the Cairo Genizah, the ancient storehouse for discarded manuscripts. The latter version, the Babylonian, is basic to all the current recensions. Today, the texts in the traditional rites vary only slightly, and entirely different versions of a benediction are preserved only in rare cases, such as the respective wordings of the last benediction, the prayer for peace:

THE WEEKDAY AMIDAH:

This Amidah falls naturally into three groups of benedictions-introductory, intermediate and concluding-whose contents and sequence are given below.

THE INTRODUCTORY BENEDICTIONS-PRAISE.

1. The Mishnah calls the first blessing *Avot*, "fathers," as God is addressed as the "God of Abraham, God of Isaac, and God of Jacob." This reference to the nation's remote ancestry is an expression of the suppliant's reliance upon the merit of the patriarchs, and thus stresses the continuity of the Jewish people. It extols God as great, mighty, and awesome, and concludes "Blessed be... the Shield of Abraham".

2. The second benediction praises God for His deeds of "power". Among the manifestations of God's power are His provision of sustenance for all living creatures, His healing the sick, and His causing the rain to fall. In addition, there is repeated reference to the resurrection of the dead-an emphasis which points to the controversy on the subject between the Pharisees and the Sadducees in the latter part of the Second Temple period. The benediction, which concludes with "Blessed be... He Who revives the dead" is therefore also known as the "Resurrection of the Dead".

3. The third benediction speaks of God's holiness, which gives it its Hebrew name, *Kedushat ha-Shem*. When the *Amidah* is repeated at public services, it is amplified into the *Kedushah*. The benediction concludes with ("Blessed be... the Holy God").

THE INTERMEDIATE BENEDICTIONS-PETITION.

The 13 petitions (4 to 16) may be subdivided into two distinct groups:

- **benedictions 4 to 9 are concerned with general human, everyday needs, both spiritual and material**
- **benedictions 10 to 15 give expression to specifically Jewish-national aspirations, all concerned with various aspects of messianic redemption.**

4. The fourth benediction is for the gift of wisdom and understanding. It concludes with *Barukh*. ("Blessed be... the gracious giver of knowledge").

5. The need for God's help in the human striving for a conciliation with Him through Torah and worship is the theme of the fifth benediction. It concludes with ("Blessed be... He Who delights in repentance").

6. The sixth paragraph is a request for forgiveness. It concludes with ("Blessed be... He Who is gracious and abundantly forgiving").

7. The seventh benediction is a plea for deliverance from affliction. Appearing in a context of requests for private and everyday needs, this benediction would appear here to be out of place. It is, however, concerned (at least in its original intent) with the saving of individuals or of the community from troubles and afflictions of a transient nature, and not with eschatological salvation. The benediction concludes with "Blessed be... the redeemer of Israel".

8. The eighth benediction is a plea for the healing of the sick. It concludes with "Blessed be... He Who heals the sick of His people Israel".

9. In the ninth benediction God is petitioned to bless the produce of the earth and grant a fertile year. It is, therefore, called "Blessing of the Years" and concludes with "Blessed be... He Who blesses the years".

The following paragraphs, benedictions 10 to 15, deal with national petitions.

10. The tenth blessing is a request for the ingathering of the exiles to the land of Israel. It concludes with "Blessed be... He Who gathers the banished ones of His people Israel".

11. The eleventh benediction appeals to God to restore righteous judges and sovereign courts, and reign Himself over Israel. There are indications, however, that this was originally concerned with the messianic "Day of Judgment," when all evildoers would be punished; the phrase "and to justify us in judgment" (still found in

certain rites) conforms to this notion. The benediction concludes with "Blessed be . . . the King Who loves justice and judgment".

12. The twelfth benediction asks God to destroy the "slanderers" or "informers", all His enemies, and to shatter the "kingdom of arrogance." The text of this benediction, known as "Benediction concerning Heretics", has undergone many changes. It concludes with "Blessed be . . . He Who breaks the enemies and humbles the arrogant".

13. The thirteenth benediction supplicates God to have mercy upon the righteous, the pious, the elders of the people, the true proselytes, and all those who trust in Him. It concludes with "Blessed be . . . the support and trust of the righteous").

14. The next benediction entreats God to rebuild Jerusalem, to dwell there, and to restore the dynasty of King David to Israel. It concludes with "Blessed be . . . He Who rebuilds Jerusalem".

15. The fifteenth benediction seeks the re-establishment of the kingdom of David as part of the national yearning for salvation. It concludes with "Blessed be . . . He Who causes the horn of salvation to flourish".

16. The sixteenth blessing closes the intermediate section of the *Amidah* with a plea for the favorable acceptance of prayer. It concludes with "Blessed be . . . He Who hearkens unto prayer".

THE CONCLUDING BENEDICTIONS-RESTORATION OF ZION, THANKSGIVING, PEACE.

17. The seventeenth benediction begs God to reinstate the "the Temple service", and to return the Divine Presence to Zion. It concludes with "Blessed be . . . He Who returns the Divine Presence unto Zion". The 14th and the 17th benedictions could not have been in their present form before the Destruction of the Temple. This is not to say that they did not exist before that date. The versions preserved in the Cairo *Genizah* might have been used in the days when the Temple still stood, when benediction 17 was evidently a petition that the sacrifices offered in the Temple be favorably accepted.

18. The eighteenth benediction is given in two forms, one to be said silently by the individual when he recites the *Amidah* by himself, the other to be said by the congregation during the public repetition. In both forms it is an expression of gratitude to God for all His mercies. The benediction is called "Thanksgiving" and concludes with ("Blessed be . . . He Whose name is good and to whom it is fitting to give thanks".

19. The last benediction is a petition for peace. It is called "Benediction concerning Peace" and on some occasions is preceded by the Priestly Blessing, recited by the worshipers of priestly descent. The latter concludes with the word *Shalom* ("peace") so that the benediction comes as a kind of response to the blessing. It is, therefore, also called "Priestly Blessing", and concludes with "Blessed be . . . He Who blesses His people Israel with peace".

THE ADDITIONAL Benediction.

The 15th benediction is the later addition to the original 18. In the old Palestinian ritual, no separate benediction was devoted to the re-establishment of the Davidic kingdom, and the petition was included in the 14th benediction, the request for the rebuilding of Jerusalem. (in most present-day rites, it is still mentioned there.) The weekday *Amidah*, as found in the Cairo *Genizah*, does not have this benediction; nor did the Palestinian *paytanim* mention it in their poetic compositions, or *kerovot*, based on the *Amidah*. In talmudic times its recital as a separate benediction became the general custom in Babylonia and from this the present custom developed. Even though it is of Palestinian origin, it was not accepted there as standard practice.

The 12th benediction, *Birkat ha-Minim*, was introduced in the first century in Jabneh by Samuel ha-Katan at the request of Rabban Gamaliel II. The view, voiced already in some late talmudic sources, that this was the

added benediction has been questioned on the basis of the above observations. Nor is there sufficient foundation for the theory that prior to the introduction of this latter benediction the total number was only 17. The sources clearly indicate that Samuel did not add a new benediction, but added either a new point or enlarged on the meaning of an existing benediction previously known as "concerning the dissidents" or "concerning the wicked". This he did by applying it specifically to Jewish heretics and informers. In his age, the generation following the Destruction of the Second Temple, the subjugated people were frequently martyred through the activities of Jewish sectarians and dissidents who acted as informers for the Roman authorities. **Granted this historical context, it is generally assumed that the new foundation was meant to force the Judeo-Christians of that period out of the Jewish community. Indeed, in the version recovered in the Cairo Genizah, the word that recurs is *Nozerim*, literally "Nazarenes," that is, Christians.**

Medieval Christian censorship viewed this paragraph as a malediction directed against Christians in general. This view, however, is rendered absurd by a study of the many metamorphoses which the benediction underwent, both before and after the advent of Christianity. In point of fact, the changing historical situations which produced these varying forms are reflected in the variant readings still extant. To begin with, scholars have traced the origins of this prayer to the period of the Syrian-Hellenistic oppression in the time of the Second Temple, more specifically to the second century B.C.E. **It was then directed against the Jews who collaborated with the foreign invader of that time. A century later it was directed against the Sadducees, and was in fact known as "the Benediction concerning Sadducees." Then comes the stage referred to above, when in the first century C.E.-the prayer was invoked against the Judeo-Christian and Gnostic sects and other heretics, who were collectively known as *minim*, as well as against gentile oppressors.** The phrase "the kingdom of arrogance" in this period was clearly intended to designate Rome. In fact, to avoid any suspicion of heresy, the *Hazzan* leading the public worship had to be certain to recite this prayer. So important was this, that if he omitted it by error, he had to retrace his steps and recite it-a requirement that does not apply to any other benediction. Later national crises and persecutions, in the Dark Ages and in the medieval period, produced new textual variants which in each case likewise reflect the time and the place.

Irrespective of whether their rationale was legitimate or not, however, Christian censors repeatedly tampered with this text so that it could not be construed as referring, however obliquely, to Christianity. In consequence of their misreading, which defies all the historical evidence, certain hypersensitive Jewish editors in recent years have substituted the impersonal terms "slander" and "evil" for "slanderers" and "evildoers." In several Reform rites, the prayer has been further modified, or omitted.

HAVINENU...THE AMIDAH CONDENSED

Many briefer forms of the *Amidah* have been known throughout the ages. One of Ben Sira's hymns is understood by some to be such an abbreviation, and the leading rabbis of the Mishnah and Talmud favored the use of shortened forms of the *Amidah*. The one that achieved general recognition in the liturgy takes its name from its initial word, *Havinenu*, which is Hebrew for "Give us understanding." **This passage may be recited instead of the *Amidah* in cases of emergency, such as when a person is pressed for time because of extraordinary circumstances, or is ill and unable to concentrate for any length of time.** The *Havinenu* prayer consists of a shortened version of the 13 intermediary benedictions of the *Amidah* and concludes with the words "Blessed art Thou, O Lord, Who hearkens unto prayer." It is preceded by the three introductory benedictions of the *Amidah* and ends with the usual three concluding blessings.

There are several versions of the *Havinenu*. The text known from the Babylonian Talmud is ascribed to Mar Samuel, who lived in the second-third centuries, and is the commonly accepted version. A century later Abbaye, also a renowned talmudic scholar, scorned those who substituted the shortened *Havinenu* formula for the full *Amidah*. The law, as finally crystallized, however, permits such a substitution, except during the evening service at the termination of the Sabbath, when the fourth benediction (*Attah honen*) is supplemented by the *Havdalah*, the pronouncement of the separation between Sabbath and weekday, and during the winter season when the petition for rain must be said in the ninth benediction of the *Amidah*.

I suppose the most recognized short version of this Amidah is the Lord's Prayer as found in the Gospels.

IN PRIVATE WORSHIP.

There is perhaps a meaning in the fact that the *Amidah* opens with a verse in the singular ("Open Thou my lips..."), continues throughout the 19 benedictions in the plural, adds the above-mentioned paragraph in the singular, but-as the last word-adds a request for peace, in the plural. **This may be said to reflect the delicate tension between private and communal prayer.** As Godfearers who don't attend the synagogue we at Bet Emet found it especially gratifying to recite and pray "the Amidah" (the Prayer) in our Bible studies and congregational services as we incorporated it as well as the Shema in our worship of God. Having seen the connection between the Lords' Prayer whom billions recite daily it is only fitting that we go beyond "the minimum" and come to the knowledge of not only the source for the Lords' Prayer which is the Amidah but the intricate meanings behind the verses we recite and pray and make our personal praise and petition to God. Such is a deeper prayer than possibly you have ever prayed in your entire life.

Blessings...Craig Lyons M.Div.



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SHEMONEH ESREH—18 BENEDICTIONS

(Hebrew prayer meaning "Eighteen Benedictions"; also known as the AMIDAH-"Standing"-since it is recited while standing) Shemoneh Esreh is the name by which the Ashkenazim refer to this prayer; the Sefaradim call it the Amidah.

The Eighteen Benedictions constitute a central part of the liturgy and are considered of the utmost sanctity. They are recited by the worshipers in an undertone, while standing during all the three daily prayer services as well as during those on the Sabbath and holy days. To extend the benefit of the prayer to everyone in the congregation, the precentor or prayer-leader repeats it in a loud voice, thus acting as the petitioner before God for the blind, the deaf, the mute, and the illiterate. Each time he utters the name of God, the congregation responds with a fervent "Blessed be He and blessed be His Name," and, at the end of each blessing, with a loud "Amen!"

The custom of reciting the benedictions in an undertone was already well-established at the opening of the Talmudic Age. It was instituted in order to permit earnest and intimate communion by the worshiper with his own conscience and with his God. This was in marked contrast to the congregational practice generally followed of reciting the prayers in a loud, emotion-charged voice. Concerning this unusual exception, an ancient rabbi commented that as distant, exalted, and overwhelming as the Ruler of the Universe may be, yet when the most insignificant human being but murmurs a supplication to Him, He turns to listen to him with the affectionate attention of a dear friend to whom one whispers a confidence. The medieval religious authority of Spanish Jewry, Moses ben Nachman (Nachmanides, 1195-1270), counseled his son: "During the recitation of the Eighteen Benedictions, you should erase all worldly matters from your mind. Instead, fix your thoughts on the prayer with the utmost concentration. Prepare and purify your heart and mind before God, blessed be He! Thereby your prayer will be pure, clean, untainted, full of devotion, and acceptable to the Holy One, blessed be His Name. . . ."

Somewhat different was the reason given by the Talmudic Sage, Rabbi Jonah. He was in the habit of reciting the Eighteen Benedictions in an undertone, but he did this only while at prayer in the synagogue because he did not wish to disturb his fellow worshipers. However, when he prayed at home, he recited the Benedictions in a loud voice, for he was anxious that the holy words should penetrate into the consciousness of his growing sons.

There is a Talmudic tradition that the Eighteen Blessings were composed by 120 elders-the Men of the Great Synagogue-beginning with the fourth century B.C.E. The first three blessings, on Messianic themes, were probably drawn up during the Maccabean era; the others, conceivably, in Persian and later Hellenistic times.

While several of the eighteen constituted a part of the liturgy in the Temple, they were taken over into the synagogue prayer service after the Destruction of the Second Temple in 70 C.E. The final editing of all the blessings was done by Simon, the head of the celebrated academy at Yabneh, in Judea, at the bidding of the Patriarch Gamaliel II, about 100 C.E. Curiously, the "Eighteen" Benedictions are really nineteen, the one that is twelfth in the order of recitation having been added at a later time to help counteract the disturbing agitation carried on by so-called heretics (in Hebrew: minim), principally the newly emerging Jewish-Christians and other schismatic sects which departed from some of the basic tenets of Judaism.

The themes of the Eighteen Benedictions, in the religious terms of the age that produced them, are widely inclusive. They praise God's ideal attributes. They plead for the well-being of Israel and for the granting of God's protection against its enemies. They pray for wisdom and repentance, for deliverance from trouble, sickness, and poverty. They give utterance to the unfading dream of the Jewish people for the eventual ingathering in Zion of its scattered remnants throughout the world, for the coming of the Messiah, for Jerusalem rebuilt, and the Temple and its rites restored. Finally, as is characteristic of Jewish prayer, they reach a climax in an ardent expression of longing for peace.

It is our hope and dream at Bet Emet Ministries that we contribute our parts to the ingathering in Zion of history's scattered and lost tribes of Israel and that many of us as descendents of these lost tribes recognize the call of God to "teshuvah" and return home to "the faith once given to the saints" and in so doing come to love and appreciate the depth of prayer expressed in the Amidah and other great Jewish prayers.



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THE AMIDAH...THE STANDING PRAYER

The headings in capital letters (e.g., "THE GOD OF HISTORY") that summarize each benediction or blessing are for reference only, and are not to be recited. The characterizations of God, which always follow "Blessed are you, O Lord"), also can be used to summarize each benediction, and, if strung together, comprise a nice description of God: God is the shield of Abraham, the one who revives the dead, the holy God, the gracious giver of knowledge, the one who delights in repentance, the one who is merciful and always ready to forgive, the redeemer of Israel, the healer of Israel's sick, the one who blesses the years, the one who gathers Israel's dispersed, the King who loves righteousness and justice, the one who smashes enemies and humbles the arrogant, the support and stay of the righteous, the one who rebuilds Jerusalem, the one who causes salvation to flourish, the one who hears prayer, the one who restores the divine presence to Zion, the one whose Name is the Beneficent One and to whom it is fitting to give thanks, and the one who blesses Israel with peace. It is the tradition that one rise when praying the Amidah and utter the words quietly under his breath where only he can hear and when finished one resumes his seat. Now let us pray this prayer like Jesus would have thousands of time in his life and as you do I ask you to think of the scope of this prayer which I find to be astounding.

1. THE GOD OF HISTORY:

Blessed are you, O Lord our God and God of our fathers, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac and the God of Jacob, the great, mighty and revered God, the Most High God who bestows lovingkindnesses, the creator of all things, who remembers the good deeds of the patriarchs and in love will bring a redeemer to their children's children for his name's sake. O king, helper, savior and shield. Blessed are you, O Lord, the shield of Abraham.

2. THE GOD OF NATURE:

You, O Lord, are mighty forever, you revive the dead, you have the power to save. [From the end of Sukkot until the eve of Passover, insert: You cause the wind to blow and the rain to fall.] You sustain the living with lovingkindness, you revive the dead with great mercy, you support the falling, heal the sick, set free the bound and keep faith with those who sleep in the dust. Who is like you, O doer of mighty acts? Who resembles you, a king who puts to death and restores to life, and causes salvation to flourish? And you are certain to revive the dead. Blessed are you, O Lord, who revives the dead.

3. SANCTIFICATION OF GOD:

[Reader] We will sanctify your name in this world just as it is sanctified in the highest heavens, as it is written by your prophet: "And they call out to one another and say:

[Cong.] 'Holy, holy, holy is the LORD of hosts; the whole earth is full of his glory.'" [Isa. 6:3]

[Reader] Those facing them praise God saying:

[Cong.] "Blessed be the Presence of the LORD in his place." [Ezek. 3:12]

[Reader] And in your Holy Words it is written, saying,

[Cong.] "The LORD reigns forever, your God, O Zion, throughout all generations. Hallelujah." [Ps. 146:10]
[Reader] Throughout all generations we will declare your greatness, and to all eternity we will proclaim your holiness. Your praise, O our God, shall never depart from our mouth, for you are a great and holy God and King. Blessed are you, O Lord, the holy God. You are holy, and your name is holy, and holy beings praise you daily. (Selah.) Blessed are you, O Lord, the holy God.

4. PRAYER FOR UNDERSTANDING:

You favor men with knowledge, and teach mortals understanding. O favor us with the knowledge, the understanding and the insight that come from you. Blessed are you, O Lord, the gracious giver of knowledge.

5. FOR REPENTANCE:

Bring us back, O our father, to your Instruction; draw us near, O our King, to your service; and cause us to return to you in perfect repentance. Blessed are you, O Lord, who delights in repentance.

6. FOR FORGIVENESS:

Forgive us, O our Father, for we have sinned; pardon us, O our King, for we have transgressed; for you pardon and forgive. Blessed are you, O Lord, who is merciful and always ready to forgive.

7. FOR DELIVERANCE FROM AFFLICTION:

Look upon our affliction and plead our cause, and redeem us speedily for your name's sake, for you are a mighty redeemer. Blessed are you, O Lord, the redeemer of Israel.

8. FOR HEALING:

Heal us, O Lord, and we will be healed; save us and we will be saved, for you are our praise. O grant a perfect healing to all our ailments, for you, almighty King, are a faithful and merciful healer. Blessed are you, O Lord, the healer of the sick of his people Israel.

9. FOR DELIVERANCE FROM WANT:

Bless this year for us, O Lord our God, together with all the varieties of its produce, for our welfare. Bestow ([from the 15th of Nissan insert:] dew and rain for) a blessing upon the face of the earth. O satisfy us with your goodness, and bless our year like the best of years. Blessed are you, O Lord, who blesses the years.

10. FOR GATHERING OF EXILES:

Sound the great shofar for our freedom, raise the ensign to gather our exiles, and gather us from the four corners of the earth. Blessed are you, O Lord, who gathers the dispersed of his people Israel.

11. FOR THE RIGHTEOUS REIGN OF GOD:

Restore our judges as in former times, and our counselors as at the beginning; and remove from us sorrow and sighing. Reign over us, you alone, O Lord, with lovingkindness and compassion, and clear us in judgment. Blessed are you, O Lord, the King who loves righteousness and justice.

12. FOR THE DESTRUCTION OF APOSTATES AND THE ENEMIES OF GOD:

Let there be no hope for slanderers, and let all wickedness perish in an instant. May all your enemies quickly be cut down, and may you soon in our day uproot, crush, cast down and humble the dominion of arrogance.

Blessed are you, O Lord, who smashes enemies and humbles the arrogant.

13. FOR THE RIGHTEOUS AND PROSELYTES:

May your compassion be stirred, O Lord our God, towards the righteous, the pious, the elders of your people the house of Israel, the remnant of their scholars, towards proselytes, and towards us also. Grant a good reward to all who truly trust in your name. Set our lot with them forever so that we may never be put to shame, for we have put our trust in you. Blessed are you, O Lord, the support and stay of the righteous.

14. FOR THE REBUILDING OF JERUSALEM:

Return in mercy to Jerusalem your city, and dwell in it as you have promised. Rebuild it soon in our day as an eternal structure, and quickly set up in it the throne of David. Blessed are you, O Lord, who rebuilds Jerusalem.

15. FOR THE MESSIANIC KING:

Speedily cause the offspring of your servant David to flourish, and let him be exalted by your saving power, for we wait all day long for your salvation. Blessed are you, O Lord, who causes salvation to flourish.

16. FOR THE ANSWERING OF PRAYER:

Hear our voice, O Lord our God; spare us and have pity on us. Accept our prayer in mercy and with favor, for you are a God who hears prayers and supplications. O our King, do not turn us away from your presence empty-handed, for you hear the prayers of your people Israel with compassion. Blessed are you, O Lord, who hears prayer.

17. FOR RESTORATION OF TEMPLE SERVICE:

Be pleased, O Lord our God, with your people Israel and with their prayers. Restore the service to the inner sanctuary of your Temple, and receive in love and with favor both the fire-offerings of Israel and their prayers. May the worship of your people Israel always be acceptable to you. And let our eyes behold your return in mercy to Zion. Blessed are you, O Lord, who restores his divine presence to Zion.

18. THANKSGIVING FOR GOD'S UNFAILING MERCIES:

We give thanks to you that you are the Lord our God and the God of our fathers forever and ever. Through every generation you have been the rock of our lives, the shield of our salvation. We will give you thanks and declare your praise for our lives that are committed into your hands, for our souls that are entrusted to you, for your miracles that are daily with us, and for your wonders and your benefits that are with us at all times, evening, morning and noon. O beneficent one, your mercies never fail; O merciful one, your lovingkindnesses never cease. We have always put our hope in you. For all these acts may your name be blessed and exalted continually, O our King, forever and ever. Let every living thing give thanks to you and praise your name in truth, O God, our salvation and our help. (Selah.) Blessed are you, O Lord, whose Name is the Beneficent One, and to whom it is fitting to give thanks.

19. FOR PEACE:

Grant peace, welfare, blessing, grace, lovingkindness and mercy to us and to all Israel your people. Bless us, O our Father, one and all, with the light of your countenance; for by the light of your countenance you have given us, O Lord our God, a Torah of life, lovingkindness and salvation, blessing, mercy, life and peace. May it please you to bless your people Israel at all times and in every hour with your peace. Blessed are you, O Lord, who

blesse his people Israel with peace.



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DOES YOUR PASTOR WEAR A TZITZITH?

Answer for yourself: How can we learn to control our passions so that we will rule over them, and not allow them to rule over us?

Answer for yourself: How are we to avoid self-deception which so often tells us that discipline and self-control are not important keys to human happiness?

Answer for yourself: How can we prevent our eyes and our hearts from enticing us into thinking that the goal of life is the pursuit of pleasure; the pursuit of beauty and physical things?

The answer is easy; Deut. 6:4-9 hold the keys to success.

4 But ye that did cleave unto the LORD your God are alive every one of you this day. 5 Behold, I have taught you statutes and ordinances, even as the LORD my God commanded me, that ye should do so in the midst of the land whither ye go in to possess it. 6 Observe therefore and do them; for this is your wisdom and your understanding in the sight of the peoples, that, when they hear all these statutes, shall say: 'Surely this great nation is a wise and understanding people.' 7 For what great nation is there, that hath God so nigh unto them, as the LORD our God is whensoever we call upon Him? 8 And what great nation is there, that hath statutes and ordinances so righteous as all this law, which I set before you this day? 9 Only take heed to thyself, and keep thy soul diligently, lest thou forget the things which thine eyes saw, and lest they depart from thy heart all the days of thy life; but make them known unto thy children and thy children's children;

God gave us the Torah (the "teaching" and "instruction"; otherwise called the "Law") to protect and keep us from self-inflicted suffering and evil. The Torah, God's greatest gift to man, provides a way for man to suppress his carnal passions and harness them to be submitted unto God for His use in building and repairing this world.

The Jewish sages teach us that, *"He who carefully observes the commandment of Tzitzith will be able to behold the 'Face' of the All-Present God"*. As Rashi says, *"The eye sees, then the heart desires, then the body sins."* But God does not want us to be misled by our eyes and our hearts, therefore, He has given us a visible reminder of Himself and His Laws which ensure our safety, peace, and protection. **"Tzitzith" (the tassels on the four corners of the prayer shawl which is called the Tallith), is a word which means to "appear in visible form".** It's intended purpose is to remind us that the animal in us seeks gratification only from physical things which can be seen and felt (the 5 physical senses), while our truest, greatest and most meaningful attainments and relationships in life are with or from God who is unseen and invisible!

The Tzitzith are the tassels hanging on each of the four corners of a garment worn during prayer and religious services. These tassels are made of eight strings, or more accurately, four strings doubled over to make eight. They are usually attached through a small hole near the corner and contain five knots and four groups of windings between the knots. It is important to count the windings. The group nearest the corner has

seven windings, the next, eight, the next eleven, and the last one, thirteen. This should alert us to the fact that the Tzitzith are more than simple strings. More about the numerical significance of the knots and windings will be shared later. There is a set rules as to how the Tzitzith must be made (Paul was a "tent" maker, more correctly a Tallith maker). Each of the rules of manufacture has a reason and are derived from the Torah. Before going on it is important to review the two places where they are mentioned in the Torah. The first, as I have already alluded to is Num. 15:38: *"Speak to the sons of Israel and say to them that they are to make Tzitzith on the corners of their garments for all generations; and they shall place on the corner Tzitzith a twist (Pethil) of blue". The second is Deut. 22:11-12: "You shall not wear a mixture of linen and wool together. But you shall make tassels (Gedilim) on the four corners of your garments, with which you cover yourself."*

The word "Tzitzith" occurs only once more in the Bible in Ezek. 8:3 where it is translated as "lock of hair". From this we learn that the Tzitzith are to be a group of freely hanging strings, resembling a lock of hair. It is commanded that the strings be "twisted" on the corners of the garment. Such "windings" are wound around the freely hanging strings. These strings are "joined" and "bent" which implies a double string. Thus the Tzitzith are made out of four strings, and then doubled over to make eight. These doubled strings or "tassels" are to be worn only on a four-cornered garment that is rectangular in shape. That the Tzitzith are to be knotted to the garment is known from the oral tradition, as handed down from the time of Moses. It is a most ancient custom to include five knots in the Tzitzith. There are many reasons for this custom. Some say they represent the five books of the Torah, thereby recalling all of God's commandments. Others say the five knots speak of man's five senses that are to be dedicated to God. Still others say they refer to the first five words of the Shema: Shema Israel Adonai Eloheinu Adonai (Hear O Israel, the Lord is God, The Lord is...). The final word "Echad" (One) is thus indicated by the windings, which bind all the threads together into "one" unit. Rabbinical law requires that one-third of the Tzitzith consist of windings, and the other two-thirds of it loose strings that are not to be bound together. This teaches us of the unfinished plan of God in which we as co-laborers with the Lord are allowed to complete for God. Since it is customary to have five double knots in the Tzitzith, there are four groups of windings separating the knots. The accepted practice is for the first group to be made with seven windings, the second with eight, the third with eleven, and the fourth will thirteen. From all this, we clearly see that the Tzitzith are much more than mere "strings."

GOD COMMANDS THE WEARING OF THE TZITZITH

There are two ways in which one observes the commandment of the Tzitzith.

- **One is through the Tallith Kattan (a small Tallith which is worn as part of one's clothing).**
- **The second is the Tallith Gadol (the great Tallith which is worn during religious services).**

Of the two, the Tallith worn in the synagogue is by far the most familiar. Praying, while wrapped in the Tallith, is alluded to in the verse, *"The prayer of a poor man, when he enwraps himself (in a Tallith) and pours out his words before God"* (Psm. 102:1). When we stand before God like beggars, in prayer and supplication, **we (as Israel) are to wrap ourselves in a Tallith.** Let me stop for a minute and ask you something: Do you consider yourself "grafted into Israel" as Paul described in Romans chapter 9-11? If you do, then could the commandment to wear the Tzitzith apply to you?

There are a number of other diverse customs regarding the Tallith. In some communities, young men do not begin wearing a Tallith until they are married. In other, the Tallith is worn immediately after Bar Mitzvah. In all such cases, one follows the custom of the congregation. A Tallith should be large enough so that one can drape it over his shoulders, with two corners in front and the other two in back. A good Tallith should measure at least four feet by six feet and be large enough to be worn down to the waist. Although a Tallith can be made of any type of cloth, it is preferable to make it of pure white wool. On weekdays, when Tefillin (phylacteries) are worn, the Tallith is put on first. There is a general rule that the Mitzvah performed most often takes precedence. Since the Tallith is also worn on the Sabbath and Feast days, while the Tefillin are not, then the

Tallith takes precedence and is put on first. Just before you put on the Tallith, one should say, *"I am now about to fulfill God's commandment to wear Tzitzith on my garment, in order that I remember and observe all His commandments."* The Tallith is put on while standing. One should hold the Tallith over one's head and say the blessing: *"Blessed art Thou O Lord, King of the Universe, who made us holy by the giving of the commandments and commanded us to wrap ourselves in the Tzitzith."* The Tallith is draped over your head, and the corners draped over the left shoulder. One should stand wrapped in this Tallith in this manner for at least four seconds. The Tallith is then rearranged so that two Tzitzith are in front, and two in back. You are thus surrounded and protected by the Tzitzith (symbolic of the commandments of God). In order to beautify the Mitzvah, many place a boarder of pure silver on the Tallith. This is done to make the observance as beautiful and meaningful as possible.

WHY THE NEED FOR THE TZITZITH AND THE TALLITH?

The Tzitzith and Tallith are reminders of the fact that clothes are the first visible characteristic which distinguishes man from the animal. Clothes remind us of the need to conceal the animal in ourselves and be constantly aware of the invisible God and His commands. Within us God has instilled the ability to overcome evil and gain mastery over ourselves in order to create a new world in which mankind will rule his instincts, overcome the beast in himself, and create a society of the spirit in which good and truth will prevail and in which war, hatred and evil will be banished forever. Within the accomplishment of such a grand plan is the role of the Tzitzith and the Tallith. One of the most interesting points about the Tzitzith is the fact that they involve a commandment directly related to clothing. Of all living creatures, man is unique in the fact that he covers his body with clothing. The most obvious reason for wearing clothing might appear to be to provide protection from the elements. However, even in the warmest climates people still wore clothing as a matter of course. The human practice of wearing clothing seems to be universal, even when there is no need for protection from the elements. The reason is that people covered their sexual organs in virtually every society. This brings us to Adam's sin.

ADAM'S SIN

We all know the story. The serpent tempted Eve to eat of the Tree of Knowledge, and, as a result, both Adam and Eve were cursed and driven out of the Garden of Eden. The serpent is understood as the very incarnation of evil. In order for man to have a free will, at least the possibility of evil had to exist. Before Adam sinned, evil was not part of man, but something external and represented as the serpent. It was only after man sinned that evil became an integral and internalized part of his being. Adam ate the fruit of "good and evil" and it became assimilated within himself. From then on, man's battle with evil was a **battle within himself** as much as a battle with an external force. Before Adam sinned the Torah informs us that both Adam and Eve were naked and were not ashamed. The sages comment that they were not ashamed because they had no sexual desire. Sex was as natural a body function as eating and drinking. The sexual desire (symbolic of all fleshly drives and desires) was originally under man's control. Sexual pleasure was something that they could enjoy, but it was not the overwhelming passion that it is today, where it drives people to foolish and even destructive acts. Sex, like the serpent, was something external to man. Man could enjoy it when he wanted to, but he was not driven by it. Since sexual desire was not an integral part of man's nature, there was no shame in exposing the sexual organs. They were no different than his eyes, ears, hands, etc. So natural was the sexual act, that Adam and Eve did not even feel compelled to perform it in private.

THE ROLE OF THE SERPENT

The external incarnation of evil that influenced them to sin was represented by the serpent. It is a well know fact that in almost every culture the serpent represents some sort of phallic symbol. Thus, to a large degree, the serpent represents sexual temptation. The sages teach us that the main temptation the serpent used to lure Eve was that of sex. As soon as man sinned and ate from the forbidden "tree", he began to have an "Evil

Inclination" (nature) or "Yetzer HaRa". Evil was no longer something outside of himself, but an integral part of his being. Evil now dwelled inside Adam because he voluntarily took it within himself. It was now a force that man could overcome only with the greatest difficulty. The Evil Inclination exists mainly in the area of sex and sexual temptation and has often led many away from godliness in other areas of their life as well. On the other hand, the individual who can completely control his sexual desires is counted as one who can control his sexual passions. The main path to holiness is through self-mastery, and the most difficult area for such mastery is sex. As soon as man sinned by eating the fruit of "good and evil" and took this inside himself and internalized the cursed fruit of both "goodness and evil", then his sexuality was aroused. Immediately after Adam and Eve ate from the Fruit of Knowledge, the Torah tells us, "The eyes of both of them were opened, and they knew they were naked. They sewed fig leaves and made themselves loincloths" (Gen. 3:7). Now that their sexual desires were aroused, they were ashamed to stand naked. They had begun to view each other as sex objects, and were themselves ashamed to be seen in that light.

THEY MADE LOINCLOTHS: A CRUDE TALLITH?

The Hebrew word for "garment" is *LeBUSH* which comes from the root word *BUSH* which means "to be ashamed." Thus, clothing is worn because of shame. Another Hebrew word for garment is *BeGeD* which comes from the root word *BaGaD*, meaning "to rebel". Thus, man wears clothing because he originally rebelled against God. Before man sinned and rebelled, he was perfectly content and unashamed of being nude. God understood that in his fallen state man had a need for clothing. Before ejecting man from the Garden of Eden, "God made garments of skins for Adam and his wife, and He clothed them" (Gen. 3:21). From all this, we can see that the main function of human clothing is to act as a barrier against sexual desires. As such, it is particularly related to the sense of sight. The purpose of clothing is to cover the body in order that it not be visible as a source of sexual arousal. We can now understand the Tzitzith. The word "TziTzith" has the same root as the word *TzuTz*, meaning "to look". Tzitzith are something that relate specifically to the sense of sight, something to look at. The Torah says of the Tzitzith, "You shall *see* them, and not stray after your heart and after **your eyes, which have led you to immorality.**" We are not to stray "after our eyes" which refers to visual sexual stimulation. Clothing is a natural barrier to such arousal, and the Tzitzith serve to reinforce this barrier. None of this is to imply that sex is something dirty or evil, for on the contrary, God blessed it as something beautiful and pleasurable. Although blessed, when misused, sex can be a most destructive force. Entire civilizations have fallen as a result of sexual corruption. The commandment of Tzitzith was given as a safeguard against such activity. The passage of Tzitzith tells us to **"look at them (Tzitzith) and remember all of God's commandments, and not stray after your heart and your eyes"**, thereby not being tempted to give up godliness for some fleeting moments of sexual pleasure (used symbolically in the story to represent all fleshly desires not submitted to God). Such desires not submitted to the Torah and the will of God has the potential to draw you away from God and eventually to atheism. The verse dealing with Tzitzith then says, **"in order that you remember and keep all My commandments, and be holy to your God."** Here again, the Torah is telling us that the main path to holiness is **mastery of one's sin nature; represented in the text by sexuality.** In protecting one from promiscuity, Tzitzith can lead one to holiness. The verse ends with a reference to the Exodus. The Exodus was both a physical and a spiritual liberation, but in an important sense it was a liberation from domination by one's sexual appetites. When the Torah speaks of forbidden sexual activity, it begins the section with the statement, **"You shall no longer do what was done in the land of Egypt where you dwelt"** (Lev. 18:3). Egypt was known as a place of extreme sexual immorality. When Israel left Egypt, this was one of the things they were to leave behind. In serving to check our passions, the Tzitzith tend to reinforce this aspect of the Exodus.

GOD WEARS A TALLITH AND A TZITZITH

The concept of wearing a Tallith is so important that God the Father wears one. Daniel 7:9 tells us: **"The Ancient of Days sat there, His garment was white as snow, and the hair of His head was like pure wool"**. Closely related to the verse is Psm. 104:2: **"He covers Himself with light as a garment."** This is a

difficult concept to understand because God has no body, shape or form, yet He puts on a Tallith. God is in no way physical, and nothing physical can apply to Him at all. Still, in the Torah, we see that God is spoken of as if He had a human body. All such references are called "anthropomorphisms", expressions where we borrow terms from human experience to explain God. All such expressions must be understood allegorically rather than literally. Understanding God and the reason He wears a Tallith is of great benefit to us. But to fully understand the purpose of the Tzitzith and Tallith we must first consider the problem of Evil.

THE PROBLEMATIC EXISTENCE OF EVIL

If God is all good, why does He allow evil to exist? Why are there such things as war, violence, and crime in a world created and ruled by God? Why did God create the world like this in the first place? Man can never fully answer that question to the fullest. What we can possibly understand comes from the Torah where it says "*God saw everything He had made and it was very good*" (Gen. 1:31). This teaches us that **God's purpose in creation was to do good.** In order to express His love and goodness, God had to create a world. Since God is infinitely and ultimately good, it would stand to reason that if God had wanted to give good to His creation, it would have to be the highest possible good. What is that? This ultimate good is **God Himself. God thus created a world to which He could give of Himself.** How is this possible? How can God give of himself? How can man partake of God? **The best way is to resemble Him to the greatest possible degree. The more we resemble Him, the more we partake of the ultimate good that is God.**

It is for this reason that God gave man free will. **Man was given the ability to choose and a free will, hopefully to choose the "good" & imitate God.** But in order for this choice to be real, God had to create the opposite of good. **He thus created the possibility of evil, so that man would be free to choose between good and its opposite.** God Himself speaks of this when He tells His prophet, "*I form light and create darkness, I make peace and create evil, I am God; I do all these things*" (Isa. 45:7). Although evil does not fulfill God's primary purpose in creation, it does fulfill His purpose in a *secondary* way in that although evil cannot bestow good, it does make possible the choice for good. **God's ultimate purpose is to do good and man was given the task of choosing the "good"; thereby perfecting the world which was given over to his care as stated in Psm. 115:16: "The heavens belong to God, but the earth He gave to the sons of man". It is man's responsibility to use his God-given free will for good and thus bring about a world conforming to God's plan. In so doing man becomes a partner with God, and is thus able to partake of Him in yet another sense.** But God does not leave things to chance. There is an element of Divine Providence. Although God gave individuals free will, He still influences the large scale course of history. Even though He does not determine the conduct of individuals, the collective wills of nations and societies are largely determined by God. God also guides the destiny of each individual to fulfill His purpose. Man might have a free will, but God interacts with him to bring about His goal. God knows how to counter every man's actions to bring about the conclusion He desires. God is constantly guiding the world toward good, despite the presence of evil. **The presence of evil serves God's purpose to cause men to choose the good and thereby cooperate with God in fulfilling the Master's plan and thereby repairing and completing creation.** Even with the presence of evil, God provides man with the power to be able to overcome it. The paradox is that God allows evil to continue to exist, all the while never allowing it to overcome the good. Both of these concepts can be seen in Ezekiel's famous vision.

WHAT DID EZEKIEL SEE?

It is recorded for us in Ezek. 1:4: "*I looked, and behold, a stormy wind came out of the north, and a great cloud, and flashing fire. It was surrounded by a glowing light (Nogath). From its midst was the likes of the Chashmal, from the midst of the fire. And in its midst was the form of our Chayoth...*" In Ezekiel's vision of God he was looking at an allegory and seeing beyond the mere appearances of this world to achieve an understanding of God's hidden purposes; these relate to the Tzitzith. The ***"stormy wind and the***

great cloud and flashing fire" allude to the forces of evil that God allows to exist. These forces separate man from God, and the prophet Ezekiel had to see deeper to actually see a "vision of God". The next thing the prophet saw was a ***"glowing light,"*** (*Nogath* in Hebrew). This alludes to the elements of God's providence and will that sustains evil. Then the prophet describes seeing "*Chashmal*." This word is untranslatable, although most English translations translate it as "amber". The closest thing to it in Hebrew would be "electricity." Thus, it represents a spiritual force, which is involved in the element of providence that protects from evil. The "*Chashmal*" thus stands as a barrier between good and evil, thus separating "evil" from God. God is not evil, but remember He had to create "evil" for there to be the opportunity to choose the "good". The final thing the prophet saw was the "four Chayoth." These "living creatures" are angels associated with God's providence and will.

To understand God's Tallith (garment) we must make parallels to the role of the garment in relation to man. As human clothing is to serve as a barrier against passion which leads to sin, likewise God's Tallith serves to separate the necessary "evil" (that causes the choice of good) from the holiness of God who is not evil. As clothing protects man from the elements and a hostile environment, likewise God's garment (Tallith) serves as protection for God to separate Him from an environment (the existence of evil) which is hostile to Godliness. Thus God's garment is identical to the "*Chashmal*" which separates and protects from evil. It is not surprising that the numerical significance of the word "*Chashmal*" is the same as that of "*Malbush*", the Hebrew word for "garment".

Now we can understand Adam's sin in a deeper light. When the serpent tempted Eve, he said, ***"On the day that you eat of it...you shall be like God, knowing good and evil"*** (Gen. 3:5). We must remember that the goal of man's creation was that he should ***strive to imitate God***. The serpent therefore argued that God Himself was the Creator of evil, and therefore He "knew both good and evil." If Eve were to eat of the Tree of Knowledge, she too, would "know good and evil" (and in this way would resemble God. The serpent maintained that in doing this, Eve would fulfill God's purpose in creation, since she would be ***imitating Him***. The fallacy of such an argument, was that God had specifically commanded man not to partake of the tree. ***One does not fulfill God's purpose by going against His expressed word***. After Adam's sin, the Torah says, ***"God made leather garments for Adam and his wife, and He clothed them. And God said, 'Behold, man has become like one of us...'"*** (Gen. 3:21-22). Notice man had just sinned and been punished, yet the Torah specifically states that he had become like "one of us". This is puzzling. Adam had sinned. How could he resemble God if he carried the guilt of sin? Has God sinned? Of course not! God was saying that, now that man had sinned and was subject to evil thoughts, he needed a protection against evil (just like God had to have). In this respect, he had become like God (needing separation and protection from evil), who wears a "garment" (Tallith) serving similar purposes. What God actually wanted was that man resemble God in overcoming evil, and not that he should succumb to it and need to be protected against it.

GOD'S LAWS...HIS TALLITH AND TZITZITH...A SAFEGUARD AGAIN EVIL

The Torah contains 613 commandments, 248 do's and 365 don'ts. Why is it necessary to have so many laws? Many argue today that we should do away with laws completely or that the laws of the Old Testament have been replaced with the New Testament law of love, as if the Old Testament did not contain admonitions concerning love for God and neighbor. Many say all that is necessary is that people be good and love one another. I think the answer is rather obvious to why we need 613 laws. Evil is in the world. If men were perfect, which they are not, then we would need few, if any, laws. The same was true of Adam before he sinned. He was innocent of any evil, and therefore he did not need a multitude of rules and laws. All that was required of him was that he obey his one commandment and not to eat of the Tree of Knowledge. That one commandment was enough to give him free will to choose the "good" and thus enable him to achieve perfection and a closeness to God. It was only after man sinned that he needed an entire complex of law. The commandments therefore serve as a safeguard against the forces of evil. God's Laws restrict man's relationship with his neighbor so that one

individual does not harm the other. The Commandments and Laws of God are to constantly remind us of our obligation to God, so that we do not become overwhelmed with evil. So you can see that the commandments serve to protect us from evil. They are a barrier against the forces of evil. This is what God meant when He said, *"I have created the Evil Inclination (Yetzer HaRa), but I have created the Torah as a remedy for it".*

The Torah's commandments serve as a barrier against evil. This serves the same purpose as a barrier or a "garment" that separates from evil; regardless if it applies to man or God. **God's Tallith is therefore the sum total of all the commandments of the Torah.** The sages say, *"He who keeps the commandments grabs the Divine Presence. This is the meaning of the Tzitzith..."* This is reminiscent of the woman with the issue of blood that reached up and touched the hem (Tzitzith) of Yeshua's garment and was healed. Thus the commandment of the Tzitzith alludes to all 613 commandments. The sages say *"The commandment of Tzitzith is equal to all the commandments."*

ADAM KNEW HE NOW NEEDED THE TZITZITH

After Adam sinned, the Torah says that, *"They knew that they were naked, and they sewed together fig leaves and made themselves loincloths."* There is a tradition that says that "fig leaves" were a crude attempt to make a Tallith & Tzitzith. They knew that they were naked in more ways than one. They knew that they were "naked" of the **one commandment** God had given them...not to eat of the Tree. As soon as Adam sinned he knew he would need the entire structure of commandments (all 613), alluded to in the Mitzvah of Tzitzith (symbolic of all the Mitzvoth). As soon as he realized that he was naked of the original commandment given to him by God, he made himself Tzitzith (a fig leave Tallith), the one commandment that included all the others!

THE ONE COMMANDMENT THAT REPRESENTED THEM ALL

The Midrash tells us that the first time that God is said to have appeared wearing a Tallith was when He gave Moses the first commandment. In doing so God showed Moses the Tallith that alluded to all the other commandments. Psalm 104:2 states *"He covers Himself with light as a garment"*. Here again, the allusion is to the light of the Torah and its commandments, as we find elsewhere, *"A commandment is a lamp, and the Torah is light"* (Prov. 6:23).

WHY ARE THE STRANDS HANGING LOOSE? IS GOD'S TALLITH YET UNFINISHED?

Even though the commandments in the Torah serves as a barrier against evil, they do not serve their purpose unless they are fulfilled by man. God's Tallith is not whole unless it is completed by man (commandments are to be obeyed, thus fulfilling the plan of God for His world and people). Man's role in completing God's garment of commandments is represented by the Tzitzith on the four corners of God's Tallith. The Tallith is worn only because it is the vehicle for the Tzitzith. Without the Tzitzith, the Tallith is nothing more than a square piece of cloth. The same is true of God's Tallith. **Unless fulfilled by man, the commandments do not serve their purpose.** The loose threads represent the incompleteness in God's garment. This unwoven part is left for man to complete. The main responsibility to complete God's Tallith lies in the hands of man. The sages teach us that the "four-sided" figure of the garment is representative of something that is man-made. Thus you can see easily the need for study in order to correctly understand and correctly obey the Laws of God.

HIDDEN NUGGETS CONCERNING THE TALLITH AND TZITZITH

In Ezekiel's vision, after he saw the "Chashmal", which was God's "garment," he saw the four angels called "Chayoth". These four angels are representative of the four Tzitzith on the corners of God's Tallith. That is

why the prophet saw them attached to the "garment". Let us remember that God's providence & will is directed primarily through angels; therefore, they represent the link between Heaven and Earth, between God and man (remember Jacob's ladder?). Since the Tzitzith (commandments) represent this link between man and God, it is natural that they hang-down like a lifeline that we can grasp hold of. **They reach down to us so that we may complete God's Tallith, while at the same time perfecting and protecting ourselves through obedience to the commandments of God.**

The Tzitzith have five knots, representing the five books of the Torah. The Tzitzith begin with knots, since the first step in bringing the commandments within man's reach is the Torah. These knots bind the Tzitzith to the Tallith, just as the Torah and its commandments bind man to God.

The Tallith teaches us that we are linked with the transcendental and eternal. Through the commandments, man can achieve a unique relationship with God in Heaven. The eight strings (the tassels of the Tzitzith) bind us to God's "garment", and they indicate that we are bound to something that goes far beyond the realms of the physical world. The number eight is a picture of many things in the Bible:

- (1). It speaks of eight day of circumcision. It was circumcision that was a picture of the covenant that God made with Abraham as soon as he was chosen to be the father of the Jewish people. Circumcision was always performed on the eight day. Circumcision is performed on the eight day for the same reason. Circumcision represents God's covenant with Abraham which speaks to us that Abraham and his children are to live on a plane that would transcend the mere physical. From that time on the Children of Israel would be linked directly to the spiritual realm.
- (2). The number eight transcends even perfection; the number seven representing the Sabbath or perfection of the physical world. In resting on the seventh day, God completed and perfected His creation. In choosing the number eight we literally transcend the physical completely and encounter the eternal.
- (3). The number eight is a picture of Chanukah. The fact that one night's supply of oil continued to burn for eight days. This was a miracle that transcended the mere laws of nature. We have gone beyond the physical.
- (4). The same is true of the splitting of the Red Sea, the greatest miracle ever. This also took place on the eight day of the drama that was the Exodus. As we know, one reason we celebrate the seventh day of Passover is that the Red Sea was split on that day. Since the Exodus actually began on the day before Passover, the splitting of the Red Sea was on the eight day of this drama. Again, this miracle is connected with the number eight that transcended the mere physical.

The fact that circumcision was to performed on the male sexual organ is significant. In reproduction man comes into contact with the transcendental in a most unique way. Through the sexual act, one can begin the process of birth, thus drawing a soul down from the highest spiritual realm. The fact that circumcision of the sexual organ is associated with the number eight is indicative of its link to the transcendental. Also circumcision serves as an indelible bodily sign and constant reminder that one must remain master of his sexual passion (which represents one's whole sinful nature). This is the significance of the eight strings of the Tzitzith. Within the Tzitzith is the picture of obedience to the commands of God which ensure that man will rule over his sinful nature and not let it master him. Through the commandments, man can achieve a unique relationship with God. The eight strings (a picture of all the commandments) bind us to God's "garment" and teach us that we are bound to something that goes far beyond the realms of the physical world.

These eight strings are bound by five knots, representing the five books of Torah. The only link that the strings have with the Tallith is through the knots. Thus, there is only one way to achieve the transcendental & eternal; that is through the study and obedience to the commandments within the books of Torah.

We know that circumcision originated with Abraham, but few are aware that the Tzitzith originated with Abraham as well. Genesis chapter 14 records for us Abraham's battle with the four kings of Babylon. Allegorically, this portrays Abraham's fight against all the forces of evil in the world. After the battle, Abraham was blessed by Shem, son of Noah (Melchizedek), who declared, "*Blessed be Abram of the God Most High, Maker of heaven and earth*" (Gen. 14:19). In conferring this blessing, Shem was also ordaining Abraham as the

bearer of all traditions that had been handed down from the times of Adam and Noah. Immediately after this, Abraham was invited to take his share of the spoil from the battle. He states that he will **"not take a thread"** (Gen. 14:22-23). His children were later given the threads of Tzitzith. By rejecting all worldly gain, even as much as a thread, Abraham was demonstrating that his main interest was in the Godly and spiritual. His children were therefore worthy of Tzitzith, which are indicative of this link with the transcendental.

The number thirteen is also important with respect to the Tzitzith in that it contains five knots and eight strings, which total thirteen. The number thirteen as associated with the Tzitzith reveal to us important truths:

- (1). **The thirteen windings speak of the thirteen attributes of God.** Such attributes stand for rules that explain & interpret the Torah. Rabbi Ishmael records these for us and they are included in most prayer books as they are part of the morning service. God's Tallith represents the sum total of the commandments, but only in abstract form. Before they can be fulfilled by man, they must be applied to actual situations. The rules used to apply the commandments to practical situations are the thirteen principles thought which the Torah is expounded. These are therefore represented by the Tzitzith, which link the abstract Tallith of God to the concrete problems of man. In this manner the thirteen knots and strings in the Tzitzith allude to the thirteen principles of Rabbi Ishmael used in explaining the commandments.
- (2). **Thirteen also speak of the attributes of God's mercy.** These are the Attributes proclaimed by God when He forgave the Jews for the sin of the Golden Calf. They are cited in the Torah, "God (1), merciful (2) and gracious (3) slow (4) to anger (5), and abundant in love (6) and truth (7), Keeping mercy (8) to the thousandth generation (9), forgiving sin (10), rebellion (11), and error (12), and cleansing (13)" (Exodus 3:46).

Let us never forget that God's Tallith also represents His providence in protecting against evil. This means more than battling evil. It serves as a link between good and evil, it is the element that allows us to elevate evil and transform it into good. This is the concept of repentance. Despite the sin and evil a person might have done, a lifeline remains whereby he can repent and return to God. The vehicle of such forgiveness of sin is God's Thirteen Attributes of Mercy. Such is represented by the five knots and eight strings of the Tzitzith. This thread links man to God's protection against evil (through God's mercy). Through the Tzitzith of God's Tallith, one can pull himself out of the mire of sin and return to God by obedience of commandments. This speaks of forgiveness as seen when God wrapped Himself in the Tallith when He proclaimed the Thirteen Attributes of Mercy when forgiving Israel the sin of the Golden Calf.

- (3). Lastly, the number thirteen represents the bond between God and man as seen in thirteen special commandments that serve especially to bind us to God. They are:

1. Belief in God.
2. Fear of God.
3. Love of God.
4. Belief in God's unity.
5. Study of Torah.
6. Wearing Tefillin.
7. Wearing Tzitzith.
8. Affixing the Mezuzah.
9. Circumcision.
10. Sabbath observance.
11. Prayer.
12. Festival observance.
13. The Shema.

These are the thirteen commandments that serve as a special bond between man and God. Of course, all other commandments also bind man to God, but they do so in a more general manner. From this we can see why there are 613 commandments. The commandments are to elevate all worldly things to the Godly realm and

make them holy. Everything that exists is either holy or not yet holy. These mundane things of the world are represented by the six days of creation. We, therefore, have 600 commandments, one hundred for each day of creation. We are left with thirteen special commandments whose primary purpose is to link man to God in a special way. The total then is 613 commandments.

As you can see numbers are important in the proper understanding of the Tzitzith. We have already noticed four corners, five knots, eight strings, 39 windings, and 613 commandments. The numerical value of the word "Tzitzith" is 600. Taken together with the five knots and eight strings, this gives us 613, the total number of commandments. Thus, the Tzitzith reminds us of "all of God's commandments" (600 general plus 13 special). The word "Tzitzith" alludes to the general commandments (600). The five knots and eight strings allude to the thirteen commandments that especially serve to bind us to God. This gives us the total of 613.

As stated earlier, the windings allude to the unity of God. It is customary to make 39 windings, the numerical value of "Hashem Echad" (part of the Shema which states - "God is One"). The windings are grouped by groups of 7, 8, 11, and 13 windings respectively. The seven windings speak of the perfection of the creation and the physical world, which was created in seven days. The second group of eight windings allude to the transcendental (above 7 is 8; above the physical is the spiritual & eternal). Together, they total fifteen which happens to be the numerical value of the first two letters of God's Name (YH). The third group of windings total eleven. This is the numerical value of the last two letters of God's Name (VH). Thus we see God's Name is YHVH. The first three groups contain 26 windings, which represents the total numerical value of God's Name: Yod=10, Heh=5, Vav=6, Heh=5. Finally, the last group of windings contain thirteen windings, which is the numerical value of "Echad", the Hebrew word for "one." This again alludes to the Thirteen Attributes of the One God (YHVH). Thus, the Attributes are all manifestations of God's ultimate unity.

Each of the Tzitzith has eight strings. This gives us a total of 32 strings on the four corners. The number 32, written in with Hebrew letters is "Lamed Beth". These letters spell out "Lev", the Hebrew word for heart. Thus, the Tzitzith represents the heartstrings, constantly beating, yearning, and drawing one toward Torah.

SHOULD I WEAR A TALLITH AND TZITZITH WHEN I PRAY?

In the heat of everyday life, there are many things that draw us away from God. There are friends who pull us to conform, good times that call to us, and a desirable world of pleasures that tempts us away from the truths that we all recognize. Above all, there is desire that often carries us against our very will. We may know what is right, but there are so many things that make us forget. God realized this, so He gave His children (Israel) a commandment to serve as a constant reminder of His will for their lives. The Torah says, *"They shall be your Tzitzith, and you shall see them and remember all of God's commandments and obey them, and not stray after your heart and eyes, which lead you to immorality."* The Tzitzith serve as a reminder of all of God's commandments and our responsibility to live holy lives before God and not sin. The Tzitzith are bound to one's garments just as one might tie a string around his finger in order to remember something. Some say that the Tzitzith is to remind us of a lash or whip, thus serving to remind us that we are ultimately accountable for all our deeds and misdeeds. Israel was to wear them as a constant reminder that we must obey God's commandments, and not be led astray by our desires.

Answer for yourself: Are you grafted into the Israel of God? Should you wear a Tallith if you are grafted into Israel?

Answer for yourself: What Did Being Born Again Mean To Jesus? What Should It Mean To Me?

Before going on we must address a very important question that I am sure has already come to you. God gave this commandment to the Children of Israel, the Jew.

Answer for yourself: Did God ever give this commandment to the Gentile who became part of Israel?

In answering this we must deal with a very important issue that is often overlooked. When a Gentile turns from idols, repents, and accepts the faith of the One God of the Universe, he identifies with God. As Gentiles we identify with God through the one He sent to reveal Himself ; namely Yeshua (Jesus). We were buried in the likeness of his death, and raised in newness of life through identification with God through the mikvah (water immersion). Christians call it baptism. The Gentile (in the act of repentance and faith) literally stands at his own Sinai, as did his Gentile forefathers (the Egyptians are a type and shadow of Ephraim, the other house of Israel) and says, like the Jews of old did, ***"All that the Lord has spoken we will do"*** (Ex. 19:8). ***Notice that the Bible say "all" the people said it (this included the mixed-multitude of Gentiles and Jews together)!*** Included in that group were a mixed multitude of Gentiles along with Jews that teaches us a very important lesson for our lives. At Sinai both Gentiles and Jews confessed adherence to the Covenant offered by God. God had previously instructed that they "wash their clothes", which is an idiom for immersion in water of their bodies. This might be startling to you but the concept in the Gospel of John, chapter three, concerning being "Born-Again" is not the invention of Jesus. Being "Born-Again" is a Jewish concept that has existed since the Garden of Eden and Adam. It is not a concept originated by the Gentile church of Jesus. It is a Jewish concept! Amazing! As the repentant person entered into the immersion bath (this "watery womb" and "watery tomb") he would then emerge as if "Born-Again" from a watery grave and a water womb. He is then considered a new creation (2 Cor. 5:17)! If you were Jewish you would have been instructed correctly concerning the mechanics of Biblical Immersion (being Born-Again) since you were a child, and would not have to be like many Gentiles who have not had the truth concerning such an important doctrine that is considered the backbone of the Christian faith. We as the Church should have understood it correctly from the beginning, which we have not. ***A Gentile entered into the watery tomb and watery womb and emerged, no longer considered a Gentile, the old things have passed away, behold God made all things new! He was now Israel! Upon emerging from the watery tomb in which he was "Born-Again" he had the full-status of a Jew. He became Israel! He was considered as if he had always been Israel, for he had no past and it was forbidden to bring up his past for it was as if he had always been Israel.***

ARE YOU GRAFTED INTO THE ISRAEL OF GOD OR NOT?

The Gentile, after immersion in the Mikvah, was grafted into Israel as Paul would later tell us. The repentant Gentile believer chose God and His Torah. He chose to become "chosen". Since he is Israel, then these commandments given to Israel apply to the Gentile Christian who accepts Yeshua, his teachings, and His God. The tragedy of the matter is that the Contemporary Church has not studied to know who they are. They are Ephraim, they are Israel. The commandments of Tzitzith are for them, not just the Jew born in the land! If you desire more information, please see our earlier newsletters dealing with conversion, proselytes, and believers in the Early church published earlier this year.

LET'S MAKE SURE WE UNDERSTAND IT CORRECTLY

A "Gentile" is a term signifying a non-Jew, who is not a "son of the covenant" and is only subject to the seven Noachide Laws. Once a Gentile came to the understanding of the one true God, he would turn from idols and worship the God of Israel. These were the "God fearers", who accepted certain basic Jewish obligations along with the Noachide precepts. According to this, idolatry, shedding of blood, and grave sexual sins were forbidden to Gentile believers. These were originally the Noachide precepts accepted also by the Synagogue on which the Gentiles were obliged. Let me remind you that we see in Acts 15 (at least 25 years after the death of Jesus) the admonition for the Gentiles to adhere to Noachide Laws to be accepted in the believing community of Israel. It is logical that the Apostolic Church of Jerusalem should accept the view of the Synagogue on the conditions which Gentiles needed to fulfill in order to be saved and accepted in the "family of Israel". ***It can be easily shown that the fulfillment of other commandments of Judaism were not prohibited to Gentiles.*** On the contrary, the Noachide precepts were only seen as the minimal condition for Gentiles to be recognized as God-fearers. ***These were so understood by the God-fearers themselves, who were attracted to the Jewish way of life and accepted many Jewish commandments without becoming full proselytes (Sabbath,***

festivals, Tallith, etc). This was also the attitude of Gentile Christian God-fearers, as may be seen from the Epistle to the Galatians; many of them wished to observe as many Jewish precepts as they could. It is evident that, while the leadership of the Mother Church in Jerusalem decided to lay no burden upon the Gentile believers beyond the Noachide precepts, it did not object to their voluntarily observing more (Col. 2:16-17). Among the figures of the early Church who instructed Gentile Christians to observe more precepts than these essential ones was Peter, as we know from Paul's criticism of him for demanding that Gentiles live like Jews (Gal. 2:14). Rather than interpreting the apostolic decree as a minimum, Paul saw in the Noachide precepts the maximal obligations of Gentile Christians. Rather than Peter being incorrect, a more comprehensive understanding of the Bible reveals Paul to be incorrect.

The liberation of Gentile Christianity from the yoke of Jewish commandments was a necessary step in order for Christianity to become a Gentile religion, separate from Judaism. It is impossible to know whether Paul was aware that by his "Gospel" he helped to achieve this aim in that he does not speak explicitly about the necessity of separating Christianity from its Jewish roots and he never says that this was his intention, but it is clear that in fact such was his historical role. Paul taught that the Jewish way of life had no validity for Christians, but the Mother Church in Acts felt differently. For Christian God-fearers it was not easy to accept Paul's demand; the complete rejection of Jewish precepts was for many Gentile Christians a painful operation. But if Christianity was to become a world religion it had to become "free from the Law". Only a Christian free from the law could separate himself from Judaism.

With the rise of Christianity the teachers of Israel sought to distinguish between the heathens of the past and those Gentiles who were subject to religious values and morality. **The very term "Ger Tzedek" (righteous gentile) stands for the gentile who turned from idols and made a sincere conversion to the faith of Jesus in the first century (Biblical Judaism). Such a person was respected and welcomed by the Jewish community. The "ger tzedek" submitted to circumcision, immersion, and brought a sacrifice to the temple. Upon completion of such, he was considered as "one born in the land." He was now considered "Israel"!**

There are two other terms for righteous Gentiles: **Ger Hashar, and Ger ToShav**. In the Bible the Ger Hashar is seen as "the stranger in the gate", and the Ger ToShav was known as "the stranger in the land." **These also accepted the faith of Israel (ethical monotheism) and were immersed, but withheld themselves from circumcision. Such "Righteous Gentiles" had a place in the world to come, and it was believed that in the age of the Messiah all Gentiles would come to recognize the one true God according to Zech 14:9 and follow Torah.**

Once the Ger Tzedek was accepted as a Jew, he was entitled to all the privileges that Jews born into the faith enjoyed. Such converts to Judaism were numerous before the rise of Christianity. Within Palestine and outside, wherever Jews came into contact with pagans, Judaism held a strong attraction. It was expected of the Gentile that given enough time, he would develop from the Ger Hashar to the Ger Tzedek. The later development of Christianity offered the attraction of monotheism and at the same time imposed fewer restrictions on its new adherents than did Judaism. Commencing with the fourth century, when Christianity became the official religion of the Roman Empire, Jews were restricted in their own worship and were no longer permitted to continue their missionary activity and we find the conversion of the Ger Hashar and Tzedek dwindling. In spite of the peril to Jews and proselytes alike, we read throughout history of various instances where Christians joined the ranks of the oppressed Jews.

GOD SAW THAT MAN NEEDED VISUAL REMINDERS

Immediately before God gave the commandment of Tzitzith, the Torah tells of a man who committed a most serious sin (Num. 15:30-36). The Midrash tells explains that God then taught Moses that this man had sinned ***"because he did not have anything to remind him constantly of his responsibility not to sin."*** In response to this, God gave the Mitzvah of Tzitzith (Num. 15:37-41).

In reading the text we see both an immediate benefit and a long-term benefit to the commandment to wear the Tzitzith! Here God speaks to us directly, *"In order that you remember and keep all My commandments, and be holy to your God."* That is, if we allow the Tzitzith to be a constant reminder, keeping us from being misled by worldly temptations, we will form the habit of remembering God's commandments. This in turn will ultimately lead us to become holy; immersed in the Godly, rather in our worldly desires.

The commandment concerning the Tzitzith ends with a mention of the Exodus from Egypt: *"I am God your Lord who brought you out of the land of Egypt, to be your God, I am the Lord your God."* A special bond was forged in the Exodus between God and those He delivered from the "house of bondage". We must never forget that both Jews and Gentiles went out from Egypt under the blood of the lamb. Those Egyptians who came to faith in the God of Israel had said what Ruth would later say, *"your people will be my people, and your God my God"*. These Gentiles became Israel at Sinai! The commandments were given to Israel (believing Gentile Egyptians and Jews), and not to all peoples of the world. Though it was offered in 70 languages to every nation, only Israel said "All that the Lord has spoken we will do" (Ex. 19:8). Thus the special bond between Israel and God at Sinai.

The Exodus was a unique event in the annals of history. It was the only time that God ever revealed Himself to an entire people, literally changing the course of both nature and history. Other faiths began with a single individual who claimed to have a special message. The exception to the above example is Judaism. God brought the entire nation of Israel out of Egypt, and ultimately brought them to the foot of Mount Sinai where they "All" heard His message (both Jew and Gentile). It is because of the unique bond forged at the Exodus that those comprising Israel (believing Jews and Gentiles) must keep the commandments of the Torah, both the "natural born" Jews and the "grafted-in" Gentiles. The Exodus thus places a very special responsibility on those comprising Israel. God rescued Israel from slavery (physical and spiritual) and became her Master. In the Torah He says, *"The Children of Israel are My servants, whom I brought forth out of the land of Egypt, I am the Lord your God"*.

Thus, in a sense the Tzitzith are a symbol that we wear, proclaiming that we are God's subjects. It is because of the Exodus that we are God's subjects in this very special way. In telling God's subjects to wear Tzitzith, the Torah alludes to "holiness". The word "holy" means two things: First that we are close to God; and second, that we are separated from things that are ungodly. The Tzitzith are to be worn as a sign of our special relationship with God, as ones who accepted His Torah. God reiterates the concepts of this relationship when He says, *"You shall be holy to Me, for I, God, am Holy, and I have set you apart from all other peoples, that you should be Mine"* (Lev. 20:26).

You must never forget! Israel's identity is made up of both Jews (born in the land) and Gentiles (grafted into the Olive Tree of Israel). It is these Gentiles, who responded in faith, repented, turned from idolatry, and became "Spiritual Jews". The Bible calls such Gentiles "Israel" after they emerge from water baptism (mikvah). Have you been buried in the likeness of Yeshua's death? Have you been raised in newness of life (a Spiritual Jew, Israel)? If you have, then you are NOW grafted into Israel. You are Israel! The Church of Yeshua has not replaced Israel; the Gentile believing Church has become part of Israel! The tragedy is that since the Church has lost it's Hebrew Roots, she has an identity crisis. She is an orphan and knows not where she has come from. She is Israel!

SINCE I AM ISRAEL..WHAT AM I TO DO?

We must never forget the reason for all this. Why is Israel so unique? Why did God have to choose a particular group of people as His own special servants? Why is Israel the "chosen people" and not the Church? God needed a special group of people who would undertake to lead the rest of humanity and show them the way (Zech. 8:23). Israel, both grafted-in Gentiles who are aware of their Hebrew heritage and Jews are to be a light to the Gentiles who remain blinded both outside and inside the Church (Isa. 42:6). As Israel,

we are to bear witness to God: *"You are My witnesses, says God, "and My servants, who I have chosen" (Isa. 43:10).* Although Israel constantly fulfills this mission, the main time of its fruition will be in the Messianic Age. When all Jews are brought back to God by the Messiah (Mashiach), they in turn will influence all mankind in this direction. This is one of the main prophecies of the Messianic Age (Isa. 2:2-4): *"It shall come to pass in the end of days that the mountains of God's house shall be set over all other nations (Gentiles) and lifted high above the hills and all nations (the Gentiles) shall come streaming to it. Many people shall come and say: Come, let us go up to God's mountain to the house of Israel's God and He will teach us His ways and we will walk in His paths (Torah). For out of Zion shall go forth the Torah and God's words from Jerusalem. And He will judge between nations (Gentiles) and decide between peoples. And they will beat their swords into plowshares and their spears into pruning hooks. Nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither will they practice war anymore."* Since most of the Churches of today accepts Replacement Theology (that God has replaced Israel in Scripture with the Church) they do not accept the truth of Scripture or follow Torah. The truth is painful but true, that in those days that among the nations to be educated by God with His Torah will be the Gentile Churches of today who have missed the mark and see themselves not as Israel, but apart from and separate from Israel and the Jew. From this we learn that Israel (grafted-in Gentiles and Jews who accept the yoke of Torah) will be in a unique position of moral leadership in the Messianic Age.

Answer for yourself: But who among the Children of God will be in a position to exert such leadership? Who will be the ones deemed capable of spreading God's word to the rest of the world? The sages teach us that it will be those who are now careful to observe the commandments of Tzitzith (remember the one commandment represents all the commandments) that will be given responsibility in the world to come to teach Torah to the Gentiles who refuse it now. Regarding this, the prophet foretold, *"In those days, ten men of each language (Gentiles) will grasp the corner (a garment containing Tzitzith, worn by an Israelite) of a Jewish man, and they will say, 'Let us go with you for we have heard that God is with you'" (Zech. 8:23).*

This definitely is prophetic of the coming of the Jewish Messiah and the world to come. I must ask you to be truthful with yourself.

Answer for yourself: Are you going to be the one who does the "grasping of another's Tallith" or are you going to be the one wearing the Tallith and Tzitzith?

Answer for yourself: If you understand what I have shared with you in this article, then is it not about time you begin to live and act like Spiritual Israel?



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THE TORAH INSTRUCTS US HOW AND WHERE RIGHTEOUS GIVING IS TO BE OBSERVED

We learned in the previous article the Hebrew concept of "Tzekakah." If you have not read this article yet you need to do so before continuing in this study.

Adopting a more Biblical life-style often means learning and exploring moral issues that before I would have ignored. One of the most important concepts in the Bible is Charity, called **Tzedakah** in Hebrew. You may not be aware of this but every child of God is obligated according to the Jewish Scripture and the Bible Yeshua used to give between 10% and 20% of his income.

Answer for yourself: But to whom? This is the \$64,000 question.

This article is my attempt to answer this question with halakhic guidelines, with the goal of assisting myself and others in making sure that our giving of alms and our tithes is in obedience to the Word of God.

TO WHOM TO GIVE? THE COMMON APPROACH

Answer for yourself: How do most of us give charity?

If you're like me, you receive dozens of requests, pleas, and sad stories in the mail, and when one of them finally manipulates you out of your complacency, and you haphazardly give \$30 here, \$100 here, \$50 there. You have no overall plan for how you give. Tzekakah (understood as active righteousness), is a concept so important to God that He give His people a plan. Believe it or not God commands that we do not give to certain needs. Let us see why.

In the Sh'ma (Deut. 6:4...), we are directed to love Ha'Shem with all our might or "possessions." **Giving the right amount of charity means nothing or is even harmful if we do not direct it well.** When the poor are not properly supported, they risk death; when education is not supported properly, it also risks death. It also shows a lack of respect to property when money is given away so whimsically.

TO WHOM TO GIVE? TESTING THE WATERS

Answer for yourself: Our question then becomes to whom does the Torah (the Bible used by Yeshua) tell us to give charity?

My American "egalitarian" background speaks to giving to the random homeless person on the street, and equally to both Jews and Gentile. My initial investigation into Biblical and Jewish sources supported this view. Regarding giving equally to Jew and Gentile alike, I found:

- "A Jew should give charity to poor non-Jews." -- Rambam, Mishneh Torah
- "Poor Gentiles should be supported along with poor Jews; the Gentile sick should be visited along with

the Jewish sick; and their dead should be buried along with the Jewish dead, in order to further peaceful relations." -- Gittin 61a

- "The poor of all nations must be supported like poor Israelites, for the sake of peace." --Kitzur Shulhan Arukh

Although these excerpts might lead one to believe there is an equal obligation to Jew and Non-Jew, there is not!

Giving charity to a non-Jew is under a completely different category than giving to a Jew, namely, for the purpose of "darkei shalom" (keeping peace with our neighbors). Giving for the purpose of keeping peace with our neighbors became necessary in the Diaspora to prevent persecution by Gentiles. This is not comparable to the Torah obligation requiring saving/helping our Jewish brethren.

It still seems a little strange in that every man was one of God's creatures whom we must try to save (at Pesach Jews wept for the Egyptians who died in the Red Sea!). But it is an issue of priorities.

TO WHOM TO GIVE? THE TORAH'S PRIORITIES...SHOULD THEY NOT BE OURS AS WELL?

Below is my effort to produce a concise list summarizing many of the halachic decisions regarding the priority with which "Maaser" (the Tithe) should be given. All the people below refer to Jews, and where not stated, assumes all other properties are equal. Food, I believe, refers to any life saving cure and clothing to any semi-basic item that is not exclusively life saving.

1. A person's own essential needs have greater priority than anyone else's, where essential needs are minimum food, shelter, and clothing (Rabbi Yaakov -- Tur, written in the name of Rabbi Saadiah Goan).
2. Within a category a Woman always takes precedence over a Man, a Torah Scholar over a Non-Scholar (Yoreh De'ah 251:9).
3. Redeeming captives (pidyon shevuyim) has the highest priority. This refers to paying a ransom amount (or perhaps a bribe) when someone is kidnapped or wrongly imprisoned. Your wife has higher priority than you in being redeemed, and you greater than your Rebbe or Father (Yoreh De'ah 252). Prisoners in civilized countries also qualify (Rabbi Moshe Feinstein).
4. Based on lineage, the order of priority is Kohen, Levi (teacher/musician), People of Israel, then Convert (Shulchan Aruch -- Horayut 13.a, Yoreh De'ah 251:9)
5. A person who needs food has a greater priority than one who needs clothing (Yoreh De'ah 251:7).
6. Scholarship is more important than lineage, and a Mamzer Torah Scholar has priority over an ignorant Kohen Gadol. A Torah Scholar who needs clothing has greater priority over a Non-Torah Scholar who needs food (Rema -- Horayut 13a, Yoreh De'ah 251:9). [Please notice the importance given to attaining Biblical knowledge for blessing].
7. Relatives only have priority over others in the event there is no Imminent Danger to Life (HaRav Unterman, Former Chief Ashkenazic Rabbi of Israel). When there is Imminent Danger to Life, priority is not given to Relatives but to Lineage and Torah Scholarship (Talmud -- Horayut 13a).
8. A Relative's or a Rebbe's (teacher's) needs are greater than anyone else's needs (Matanot Aniyim 7:13). [Should we not support those who teach the truth of God's Word before we support those in other nations?]
9. Based on relationships/geography, the order of priority is Parents, Children, Brothers, Other Relatives, Neighbors, Locals, and then Other Non-Locals (Yoreh De'ah 251:3). [Should we not support with out giving our parents before we support strangers?]

10. **Brothers on the father's side precede those on the mother's side and the poor of Israel before the poor of other towns (Rema -- Yoreh De'ah 251:3).**
11. **The poor of Jerusalem have precedence over all other towns in Eretz Israel (Rabbi Moshe Sofer, Responsa Chatham Sofer 233, 234).**
12. **Today the poor of Old and New Jerusalem have the status of citizens of Jerusalem (Rabbi S.Z. Auerbach)**
13. **A Relative has priority over all persons (Ramban -- Matanot Aniym 7:13). The poor Relatives take priority even over the local poor who have greater needs (Panim Yafot, Deuteronomy, Parashat Re'eh, also cited by Responsa Chatam Sofer, Yoreh De'ah 231).**
14. **Non-Locals who need Food have greater priority than Locals who need clothing (Sifre, Baal HaFla, Chofetz Chayim, Chatam Sofer).**
15. **A Neighbor must refer to one with whom there has been a personal relationship, not to just a spatial Residential Proximity (Rema -- Chosen Mishpat 253:29).**
16. **In order of priority, your House, Parents, Brothers and Sisters, Relatives, Neighbors, and those who live on the Same Street (Midrash Tana Devei Eliyahu Ch. 27).**

From this I learn that the term Neighbor refers to two different people: a Friend (emotionally a Neighbor), and someone who lives nearby (geographically a Neighbor), with the first having greater priority. Additionally, we see that your entire household has priority over your Parents. The exception seems to be Maintaining Children. Maaser money may not be used for the purpose of Maintaining Children, who are dependent, unmarried, and live with their parents (Rabbi Moshe Feinstein, Maaser Kesafim p. 100).

17. The needs on one who previously extended graciousness to a person has priority even over the request of a Torah Scholar who is a stranger (HaGoan Rav Yitzchok Hutner -- Pachad Yitzchok; Rosh HaShannah -- Maamar 3:1).

This seems to be putting friends above Torah Scholars who are strangers, and can be resolved by breaking Torah Scholars and Neighbors each into two categories: Torah Scholars into those who are Known and Unknown; and Neighbors into those who are friends and those who live nearby. The priority for these four groups would then be: Known Torah Scholars, Friends, Unknown Torah Scholars, and then Geographical Neighbors.

18. If there are no other funds available to him, a child not only has a halachic permission to utilize his charity funds to support his Parents but is under a mandatory obligation (Chatam Sofer of Pressburg). However, it is humiliating to the child to have to use charity funds to support Parents (Rabbi Yaakov -- Tur, written in the name of Rabbi Saadiah Goan).

HOW MUCH TO GIVE: THE TORAH'S PRIORITIES

Below are some guidelines summarizing how much Maaser [that portion of the Tithe destined for the poor] should be given, to each category, assuming of course that there is a need. If there is no need in a particular category, Maaser should be given to the next lower level.

- **One should not give all one's charity funds to only one poor person (Yoreh De'ah 257:9).**
- **Though a large percentage may be given to a poor Relative or to a Rebbe, it is best to give to other charities, other poor people, including support of Yeshivot (HaGaon R. Moshe -- Iggerot Mosheh, Yoreh De'ah I, Responsum 144).**
- **When one category has precedence over another, something must be left for the lower category (Rabbi Yechiel Michal Epstein).**
- **Only one half of the Maaser should be used for a Relative. Allocate a larger portion to poor of Relatives, than to non-Relatives, other categories of priority should be treated in the same way (Chatham Sofer Responsum 231).**

- **An individual is not obliged to provide all the needs of a poor person but he should give publicity to his situation in the community (R. Moshe Isserles)**

The major aim of the institution of Maaser Kesafim was to help Torah Scholars and therefore a person should endeavor to use at least half of his Maaser for this purpose, provided the needs of his Relatives have been met (Chafetz Chayim -- Ahavath Chessed, ch. 19).

The proverbial Maaser Monkey Wrench: the importance of a priority list applies only to Charity Administrators, and an Individual Donor has the right to divide his Maaser as he chooses among those entitled to receive charity (Rabbi Moshe Feinstein).

Regardless of whether this is the case or now, I respectfully believe this should not affect our behavior, and a priority list should still be used when deciding to which Charities to give. The fact is that most Charities give their funds to a particular cause, and are not made up of Charity Administrators who support every facet and need of Am Israel. Therefore, the Individual Donor should insure that his Maaser is being used more properly by still taking into account the priorities of each charities you give to. Further, as we see above, one is obligated to support one's parents from his Maaser fund, in necessary, and so in truth the Individual Donor cannot give away his Maaser to anyone he chooses among those entitled to receive charity.

TO WHOM TO GIVE: THE NON-JEWS

"In our day when taxes must be paid to the government and these taxes are often withheld from one's wages, it must be surmised that one's 'income' is the amount that a person is left with after taxes." -- Rabbi Hayim Halevy Donin, To Be a Jew

After an in-depth study, I have concluded that in the United State approximately 30% of our income goes to the government, and perhaps one third of government's spending is on charitable activities, such as Medicare, Medicaid, welfare, social security, and education. As a result, the approximately 98% Non-Jewish population is receiving approximately 10% of our pretax income. As a result, I believe that we are giving enough to the Non-Jewish population. In an age when we are giving much of our money to Non-Jewish cases such as Easter Seals, Save the Whales, Good Will, etc., perhaps out of guilt or desire to assimilate, I think it is important to realize that the Non-Jewish community is receiving quite a lot. If you look at your taxes as a way to provide charity and peace to the nation and between Jew and Non-Jew, you should be happier about paying them! The conclusion arrived at is that the non-Jewish people are receiving through our taxes sufficient amounts from our taxes in support of the poor, the Jewish poor are not. Thus we should emphasize with our giving the blessing of the Jewish people.

WHAT ABOUT MY CHURCH OR SYNAGOGUE?

It is generally agreed that Maaser [poor Tithe] may not be used to cover an obligations of a church or synagogue that is NOT for "necessities of life". As a result most offerings and donations "over and above the poor Tithe" are to be used for essential needs of the church and synagogue like salaries, lighting, rent, etc., and Maaser [poor Tithe] and Festival Tithe money was not to be used.

TO WHOM TO GIVE: A SUMMARY

For the most part, you are allowed to give your Poor Tithe to whomever you want -- to whom you give charity to is not legal but rather moral (with the exception of supporting a Parent). Still it is better to give according to priority, and balance the way you give. Torah Scholars should receiving approximately half [remember that although they received the tithe 2 years out of 6, they received smaller amounts every year as well as God calls groups them with the stranger, widows, and orphans in Scripture], and other categories the remaining amount according to priority and then need. When there is an issue of saving a Life, all priority must be given to that. In

fact, the 10% minimum no longer becomes valid, as the community can assess each individual whatever he can afford, without limit, to save the life.

The most praiseworthy type of giving charity is to set a fellow man, both Jew and non-Jew on his feet so that he does not require charitable aid nor need to ask for it (Yoreh De'ah, 249:1). Therefore one should insure that his children have a profession, and that his parents have a realistic retirement plan.



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BIBLICAL CHARITY-'TZEDAKAH'-TRUE BIBLICAL RIGHTEOUSNESS

The Biblical word in Hebrew for charity is TZEDAKAH, which literally means "righteousness." Ever since the Jews began to lead their own ethnic group-life in ancient Israel, they have shown an unending concern for helping those less fortunate than themselves. These have included the hungry, the sick, and the old, as well as all the other needy and helpless. This activity in benevolence and mutual aid intensified and kept pace with the growing difficulties of the Jewish people. The development of an ethical consciousness in the plain folk played no small part in the rise of this universal philanthropy. In the Hellenistic age, it was noted, and not always with a flattering intention by many non-Jews, as one of the identifying marks of the Jewish character. To some sophisticated Romans who had close contact with Jewish life, it appeared as a most curious, even an incredible, preoccupation.

There is a notation in the Talmud about an argument between Rabbi Akiba and Turnus (Tineius) Rufus, the governor of Judea. The Roman asked Rabbi Akiba: "If, as you say, your god loves the poor, why then does he not support them?" A reasonable question, certainly! Rabbi Akiba replied that if God left the care of the poor to the benevolence of the Jews themselves it was purposely "so that we may be saved by its merits from the punishment of Gehinnom [Gehenna or Purgatory]." On what authority did the Rabbi base this assumption about God's intention? Akiba cited this passage:

Isa. 58:7

Is it not to day thy bread to the hunger, and that thou bring the poor that are cast out to thy house? When thou seest the naked, that thou cover him, and that thou hide not thyself from thine own flesh?

It is for a very special reason that the obligation of giving charity is accorded such an important place in the teachings of the Rabbinic moralists. Not only did they assume that an act of charity saved the giver from the fires of Gehinnom, but they lauded it as an activity that "uplifts the soul," and one that is "equal to the merit of all the other mitzvot [the 613 precepts of the Torah]." Most important of all, they claimed, "it brings the Redemption nearer."

At every Jewish burial all over the world today, as the collectors of charity move among the mourners, they shatter the silence of grief with the urgent proclamation: "Tzedakah tatsil mi-mavet!" ("Charity saves from death!").

An index as to how Jews regard the giving and the taking of charity may be found in the very meaning of its Hebrew equivalent: tzedakah. Although the word actually means "righteousness," it also carries the connotation of justice. In other words, what is given to the poor and is accepted by the poor belongs to them by moral right! By right? What right? This is the way the ancient Rabbis tried to explain it: If poverty existed, it was society that was principally at fault, since it permitted the oppression of the

poor and the weak. Such a condition was considered to be a violation of natural law, and the widespread **practice of benevolence merely served as one form of atonement and amelioration.** When the Psalmist sang: "The earth is the Lord's and the fullness thereof," the principle of that right was clearly noted. The same principle was given the force of law by the Scriptural text: "Mine is the silver and mine is the gold, saith the Lord of Hosts." And, since, obviously, God gave the earth and "its fullness thereof" (its silver and its gold) only to the rich and to the powerful, the Sages deduced from that fact that God owed a material debt to the poor because they were left empty-handed. Accordingly, to have this debt repaid by the rich to the poor would constitute an act of "justice" and, therefore, of "righteousness."

Furthermore, they believed that when God gave wealth to the rich, he did not give it to them outright, nor did he do so to reward them for their actions or for any special merit. **He merely gave it to them in trust for the poor!** Thus the rich were only, so to speak, God's fiscal agents on earth for the poor. To extend tzedakah "with a full hand" to the poor, therefore, fulfilled its true inner meaning as an act of "righteousness." From this was developed the axiom that, if the rich were really honest and God-fearing, they would eagerly distribute the wealth they were holding in trust from God to God's innumerable creditors-the poor, the sick, the helpless, the needy, etc.

The Rabbinic teachers, who were men close to the people, argued that if this debt to the poor was not paid, thus being dishonestly withheld by "God's agents," then the poor, whenever they were driven to desperation by the wretchedness of their condition, had every right to **raise their voices to Heaven in bitter complaint.** Said Judah ben Simon (Palestine, fourth century): "The poor man sits and complains to God: 'Why am I different from the rich man? He sleeps in his bed, and I? I sleep here [in the street]!,,, Should the rich close their ears to this justified complaint then, warned the Rabbis, **they sin in the gravest way against God and the natural law.** "It is not written," they pointed out "the poor man," but **"your brother,"** in order to show that both mean the same thing.

While the most advanced among the Rabbinic teachers had an indestructible faith in the compassionate impulses of the heart, they were at the same time also sober-minded men with a few illusions. Even if their teachings were trained on soaring objectives and were designed to awaken the slumbering conscience, nevertheless, their methods were firmly planted in reality. Consequently, they considered it wise to formalize the **practice of benevolence as a religious obligation.** Without the pressure of religious law, they realized, many ungenerous or unjust individuals might be tempted to conveniently avert their gaze from the unfortunate and the needy. Therefore, the warning of the second-century Mishnah Sage, Joshua ben Korha:

"He who turns his eyes away [from a needy person] is to be considered as a worshiper of idols!"

The Sages took the realistic view that, being what they were, human beings could not be expected to behave like the proverbial angels. In any design for ethical living, their frailties and contradictory drives had to be considered, and with more objectivity than harshness. This same view had to be applied even to the measure of righteous conduct (all too pitifully small) that was expected from the pious in their fulfillment of the ethical commandments and precepts of the Torah. True, the teachers of Jewish ethics felt it their duty always to point up the purest and the noblest possibilities in conduct to the individual. Yet they were not unmindful of the need of dangling before him the expectation of some concrete reward, whether the promise of prosperity in this life or the certainty of bliss in the World-to-Come. For in doing good, as in everything else, it did seem that men required incentives (even invisible and future ones).

There was also a reverse side to the problem of tzedakah. This will sound startling to Christians today who are unaware of the truth of the origins of Christianity, but Jews (and this also included Jesus and other early Jewish-Christians) believed that works of charity brought forgiveness of sins. Consequently, there were, and for that matter still are, people who gave charity out of the promptings of a guilty conscience. They regarded their acts of charity as placatory acts of expiation to God or as amends for the wrong they had done to their fellow men. This kind of giving was merely a new form for an older and more

primitive practice: In Temple days, expiatory "sin-offerings" were brought constantly upon the altar; but when the sanctuary on Mount Zion lay in ruins, the Sages warned against the disasters which would overtake those who failed to help "God's needy."

The Jewish moralists also had to face the presence of the motive of vanity in many givers. Certain people derive a sense of power and pleasure from their ability to give to charity-publicly! Sadly, they are looking forward to the pathetically brief burst of applause it brings from their fellow men. Oddly enough, much of the time Jewish tradition treated such givers of charity "with charity". The rabbis did not always condemn them, nor did they moralize too much about their motives. On the contrary, they deliberately encouraged all giving, whatever the reason behind it! They understood well enough that people often act out of mixed, and sometimes contradictory, motives. What if an individual did perform a benevolent act out of some unworthy calculation? They saw nothing flagrantly wrong in any act so long as it led to good results. And to help the suffering and the needy was the greatest good that could be desired! For that reason, it was not difficult for a Talmudic Sage to state: "He who says, 'I am giving this money as charity in order that my sons may live,' or, 'I am giving this money that I may inherit Eternal Life,' such a man is to be considered as perfectly righteous." We only need to look to the 19th chapter of the Gospel of Matthew to confirm such teachings by Jesus as well.

The Sages were sound educational psychologists. They believed fervently in man's ability to improve. Doing good is a habit, they thought, a pattern of conduct which can become spontaneous after long and sustained practice. "Let a man ... perform good deeds, even if at first it is not for their own sake. In time, he will come to do them for their own sake." Again Jesus teaches us the same thing, for he said "where your treasure is...there is your heart also." The hidden meaning is that if we put our treasure where God instructs through discipline, even if our emotions tell us otherwise, then in time our hearts will follow our gifts and our motives will change and embrace that to which we give.

It should not come as a surprise, therefore, that on account of such indoctrination and conditioning by daily practice, there have always been an astonishingly large number of Jews devoted to works of benevolence for benevolence' sake alone. This attitude, characterized as "the purity of the intention," became early a powerful tradition in Jewish life, and it has endured down to our own time. The passionate brother-feeling and respect for the human personality was eloquently expressed in the apocryphal Testament of Issachar, a Hebrew work written, significantly enough, perhaps two centuries before Jesus: "If any man was in distress, I joined my sighs with his, I shared my bread with the poor . . . I loved the Lord; likewise also every man with all my heart."

Even the poor, for the same moral reasons, were expected to dispense charity to those equally poor or even poorer than themselves. There was also a practical reason for actively involving the poor in the miseries of their brethren. Following the large-scale massacres and persecutions during the Middle Ages and as late as the seventeenth century, there were few really rich Jews left in Europe. The word "wealth" became a relative term when used in the ghetto. It had almost an ironic connotation. A Jew was considered rich only by virtue of the fact that he was perhaps one degree or two less poor than the great mass of his pauperized fellow Jews! From a practical point of view, little reliance could be placed on the philanthropy of the small number of wealthy men who did exist. The poor, for the sake of their own survival, had to learn to help one another. The proverb, "The poor help the poor," acquired the bitter but heartening ring of truth. This is also, no doubt, one of the main reasons why the Talmudic teachers of morality translated the urgent need for the practice of mutual aid from the poor to the poor into a religious obligation.

The Babylonian Rabbinic jurist, Mar Zutra, rendered this legal opinion: "Even the poor man, who himself is supported by charity, should give charity to those who are in need." And should the poor man be so poor that he has absolutely nothing to give away, he is reminded that he still has the compassionate warmth of his heart left to offer his brother in distress. He is advised to say to him, speaking in the true spirit of tzedakah: "My brother, my heart goes out to you, but I have nothing to give you."

To enable even the poorest to help other poor, the Jews of latter-day Poland established an ingenious device. The communal authorities had a coinage of their own minted which they sold for coin of the realm to the pious. These were just crude bits of brass that were stamped with the Hebrew word "perutah." (In Talmudic times,

the perutah was a coin of the smallest monetary value.) The Jew asking aid from his fellow Jews in Poland would be given a perutah from the charitable, and after he had accumulated a sufficient number of these trifling coins, he would present them to the gabbai (the treasurer of the Jewish community) for exchange into legal tender.

The Marranos of Portugal (intimidated converts to Catholicism who, nevertheless, stubbornly observed the Jewish religion in secret) had a poignant saying: "The name Jew is derived from the fact that we assist one another."

Perhaps the highest development in the ethical philosophy of benevolence and in the institutional forms of its practice occurred during the Rabbinic period in Judea. At that time, philanthropic activities had become so widespread, as well as urgently necessary for the Jews in the Roman Empire, that they even drew tribute from a Greek religious competitor of the Jews in Athens, the Christian missionary, Aristides Marcianus (c. 125). In his apologia for Christianity which he addressed to the Emperor Antoninus Pius, he observed about the Jews: "They have compassion on the poor; **they release [i.e. ransom] captives**; they bury the dead; and they do other things similar to these such as are acceptable before God and also well pleasing to man."

Needless to say, the Jewish philosophy and practice of ma'asim tovim ("good works") were carried over into Christianity through the traditional Jewish teachings of Jesus and the evangelism of the Apostles.

The paramount importance given to works of benevolence by the Jewish religious teachers during the last centuries of the Second Commonwealth let loose a flood of self-injuring actions on the part of many of the generous and devout. The Sages, somewhat alarmed, then began to consider the inherent truth of the adage that too good is not good at all! A religious law to curb over-enthusiastic philanthropy seemed to be required for the protection of the kind-hearted against themselves. During the second century B.C.E. a moralist in the Book of Enoch warned: "If a man gives an alms of his heart-murmur [i.e., he gives at the point when he has nothing more to give but his heart-murmur], he commits a double sin: he ruins himself and his contribution."

About three hundred years later, following the bloody crushing of the revolt led by Bar Kochba against the Romans in Judea, an assembly of the foremost rabbis met in Galilee to consider the proper means of alleviating the widespread need and hunger among the people. It was finally resolved: "A man's benefactions should not exceed a fifth of all his possessions. . . . While the giving of charity is obligatory, it has its limits. If a man will give away all he possesses, he will only make a pauper of himself, and that is forbidden."

This ardent feeling for "doing good" overflowed narrow group loyalties to take in other than Jews. While it is true that, when the Jews were fragmentized as a people and dispersed with the ill winds of chance, Jewish charity was wholly designed to help Jews, for what Gentiles were there willing to help them? Nonetheless, Jewish ethical practices were never allowed to relax and to become parochial; they required that all needy non-Jews living among Jews had to receive benevolence equally with them. Charity knows neither race nor religion, advised the Talmud. It drew its authority for this view from the Torah: "God loves the stranger (Gentile). . . . Love ye also the stranger." Under Mishnaic as well as under Biblical law, the Gentile poor were to share with the Jewish poor in the gleanings of the harvest. They were to be given food, shelter, and clothing, when they required them. Their sick were to be visited, aided, and comforted. And when they died, they were to be given decent burial if there was no one of their own to perform this last act of human kindness for them.

In his book about the rites and ceremonies of the Jews, Rabbi Leone da Modena of early seventeenth-century Venice, states: ". . . they do upon all occasions help any object of charity, let him be what he will."

Beginning with the Middle Ages, Jewish charitable societies with wide-ranging fields of specialized welfare service made their appearance in the collective life of Jews everywhere. There was, and still is, no Jewish community in the world, however small, that has not always hummed like a beehive with benevolent projects of every imaginable kind. In the words of the Mishnah, with reference to the social setting of the period preceding the final national tragedy in 70 C.E., there existed in every community many organized societies which directed their efforts to "the practice of charity . . . hospitality to wayfarers, visiting the sick, dowering the brides,

attending the dead to the grave . . ."

There also were societies for the care of orphans and the aged; for assisting widows; for waiting on expectant and new mothers before, during, and after childbirth, and engaging wet-nurses for ailing mothers; and for providing medical treatment and medicines for those unable to pay (in later centuries, such societies established hospitals and clinics). Other groups, in response to desperate situations, undertook to collect the unconscionable fines and levies that were constantly being demanded of Jewish communities by the Christian rulers and local municipal councils. Special organizations, at no small risk to themselves, were formed to succor the survivors of massacres and to give Jewish burial to those who had fallen, to give aid to refugees in flight, to extend plague, fire, and flood relief, to ransom captives, and to free slaves by purchase.

There were other specialized charitable societies devoted strictly to religious goals and ritual observance. They provided free mezuzot, Sabbath and Channukah candles, matzot and wine for Passover, oil (and in later ages, candles) for the illumination of synagogues, Houses of Study, and religious schools. There were societies in every community tirelessly working for the support of the educational institutions like the Talmud Torahs and yeshivot (institutes of higher learning), including those in the Holy Land.

Perhaps closest to the hearts of the devout in bygone times was the religious instruction of the young. This was motivated by the national resolve of the Jewish people, one that was continuous since the Rabbinic age, never to allow "the light of the Torah to be diminished" in Israel. To this end, too, there were groups which were exclusively dedicated to the buying (and keeping in repair) of religious works for the libraries of the Houses of Study and the yeshivot.

The voluntary collector of charity among Jews has been the most admired and, in some instances, also the most disliked or, more truly, feared, of individuals. Entering into the homes of the generous, no matter how poor, he always seemed a messenger of righteousness in the service of his unfortunate fellow men. To the miserly and the flint-hearted, on the other hand, he appeared like a specter and an unwelcome reminder of their guilty consciences.

With the bewildering number of charitable projects constantly in progress among Jews (and so many of them lying outside of official communal activities) the collectors of charity were faced with a staggering task. Because there were so many societies, dedicated to every imaginable kind of poor relief, the number of collectors was virtually legion. One might almost say that practically every Jew and his cousin was a collector for some charitable cause or another! Competition for a pitiful coin was keen. It is amazing that, considering the usually fantastic poverty of the Jewish masses, they were able so successfully to pursue their benevolent objectives in such a bewildering variety of directions. Despite the best intentions in the world and the most stringent of personal sacrifices, there simply were not enough coins to be collected from or to go around among the dwellers of the ghetto hovels!

Clearly, under such circumstances, the lot of a charity collector was an unenviable one. His solicitation of funds was marred by much unpleasantness; sometimes by humiliation or even abuse. Nonetheless, out of a holy dedication, the pious did not flinch from their tasks. The mere certainty that they were performing a mitzvah (a good deed on behalf of the needy) was a sufficient reward for their efforts. Perhaps it was to encourage the sensitive and the faint-hearted among collectors that a Sage of the Talmud offered these words of comfort with this prayerful hope for himself: "May my lot be cast among those who collect charity rather than among those who give it!"

Without any exaggeration, no sacrifice of pride or sensitivity was considered too great for the dedicated collector to make, providing it resulted in a donation. There is the story of a Chasidic tzaddik who once was reproached by his disciple who thought that the holy man was demeaning himself when he solicited a donation from a miserly man. The rabbi laughed, "My dear son," he asked with a wink, "if you want to milk a cow, don't you have to stoop a little?"

It is most engaging to discover that the charity collector's chore of "milking the cow" was valued in Jewish tradition as one of the most exalted forms of charity. Sometimes the role of the collector took on an astonishing

character. It is recounted in the Talmud how Rabbi Zechariah, the son-in-law of the Sage, Joshua ben Levi, used to accept charity together with all the indigent. His neighbors were both shocked and amazed. Many muttered unkind words against him; they very well knew that he did not stand in need of public assistance. However, when Rabbi Zechariah died, it was discovered that not only had he not used for himself any of the charity money he had accepted, but he had distributed it secretly among those of the poor who were too proud to ask for public assistance. He had humbled himself in order to protect their pride.

However deeply furrowed may have been the field of benevolence in Jewish life by individual charity and by the semiofficial charity societies, the most effective work in poor-relief in other centuries was done then, just as it is today, by the Jewish community (the kahal) itself. Communal charity was already in existence in Mishnah times among the Jews in Judea, Syria, Babylonia, Egypt, Rome, Cyrenaica, and other far-off places. Each community had a fund called the kuppah which was supervised by financial overseers (gabbaim). These officials assessed the wealth (or lack of it) of every individual in the community, levying periodic proportionate tithings of 10 per cent of them in order to cover the needs of all public charitable and religious enterprises. No one was exempted from this taxation, not even the old and the sick, or the women and children.

It is touching to find, in Jewish writings of several centuries ago many bitter references to the overseers of charity and to the harsh methods they occasionally adopted; no doubt more often out of desperation than hard-heartedness-toward those unable to pay the communal tax. It sometimes happened that the most important household possessions, such as the Sabbath candlesticks, the silver Kiddush cup, or even the bedding, were "sequestered" by the kahal officials and held, so to speak, in "custody" so these officials could exert effective pressure for the payment of taxes in arrears. There are still extant folk songs in Yiddish which berate the communal bigwigs and tax-collectors for their unfeeling hearts toward the desperately poor.

There were a hundred different "voluntary" ways by which the hard-worked kuppah in the community could be replenished. There was no occasion, whether of rejoicing or of sorrowing, of good fortune or of had, when tzedakah was not collected. Contributions came from fond parents whose "cup [of joy] runneth over," as they celebrated the birth of a child. They gave at a circumcision party, at a Pidyon ha-Ben (the ceremony for the redemption of the first-born son), at a Bar Mitzvah, at a betrothal, at a wedding. The beginning of a hazardous journey was prayerfully marked by a donation as was the safe arrival at journey's end. Whenever an individual or any member of his family emerged alive from sickness, an epidemic, or a pogrom, he made a charity donation during the service of thanksgiving with the congregation. Even when a man had a dream and woke up safe and sound, he often celebrated his joy at being alive with a contribution to the charity fund.

Other sources of revenue for charity were the not unsubstantial "honors" conferred at services in the synagogue on the Sabbath and on holy days during the reading of the Torah. These honors were auctioned off to the highest bidders among the worshipers, and the money accruing from them was dedicated to the alleviation of human misery and to the various religious institutions and enterprises of the community.

Then, too, for a variety of reasons, there were charity collections on feast days and on fast days. Yahrzeit (the annual memorial day for departed loved ones) was another occasion. Even during week days, and without any specific reason, some congregates would drop coins into the charity-box as they left the synagogue at the conclusion of the prayer service. Often there were several charity-boxes serving several purposes. For example, in the synagogue at Mantua, Italy, in 1630, the worshipers were confronted by the imperious demands of seven separate charity-boxes: one each for the Holy Land, for burial purposes, for the care of the sick and the aged, for dowries for poor brides, for relief of the needy, for the support of the Talmud Torah, and for the redemption of captives.

A memorable line from The Song of Songs, although it referred merely to a lover's devotion, became most fittingly the motto of Jewish collectors of charity in their tireless labors: "I sleep, but my heart waketh."

What if an individual was so penurious that he would not make any donation at all, as so frequently happened? That was, indeed, a bitter pill for the kindhearted to swallow.

The following folk story illustrates what the folk-Jew thought of the illimitable resources of giving after there was nothing more to give.

When an orphan asylum was in danger of closing down because it lacked a certain sum of money, the rabbi of the community urgently implored the richest man in town to make up the deficit. But the wealthy man promptly refused. "I will sell you my share in Paradise if only you will give me the money," pleaded the rabbi out of desperation. The rich man was delighted with the "bargain" and gave him the money. And so the orphan asylum was saved, but the collector was without his portion of bliss in the World-to-Come. The rabbi's disciples were aghast when they heard of his "deal." They remonstrated with him: "Oh, Rabbi! how could you do a thing like that since you, a holy man was sure to enter Paradise!" The rabbi replied: "Twice each day I repeat in my prayers: 'Love thy God with all thy heart, with all thy soul, and with all thy possessions. My sons, I'm only a poor man. What are 'the possessions' with which I can serve God? All that I possess is my share in Paradise, and to serve God's children, the orphans, I am ready to part with even that.'"

The teachers of Jewish ethics placed great emphasis not only on the need for giving charity, but also on how to give and how not to give. The delicacy of feeling shown for the unfortunate and the needy, which was a powerful tradition among Jews since Maccabean times, is mirrored in the Rabbinic concern to protect the receivers of charity against the possible arrogance and vulgarity of some of their "benefactors."

The Sages decreed that no act of charity had any religious merit if it was unaccompanied by compassion for a fellow creature in distress. The Talmud makes this point abundantly clear, time and time again, citing numerous Rabbinic opinions and reflections on it. "Even if one speaks only a single kind word to comfort the poor and those who are in distress, he has given in true charity indeed." What did the Torah have to say on the subject? "Because of this compassionate word, God will bless you!" However, "compassion" always was more than a mere word to upright Jews. It represented part of their way of life. "Soils of Compassionate Fathers" is one traditional name Jews have called themselves collectively.

The subject of how not to give received equally exhaustive treatment in the Talmud. "A man may give charity lavishly, yet, because he gives without brotherly love, he wounds the hearts of the poor," gloomily observed one Disciple of the Wise. Of what use, in a moral sense, were such benefactions? The somber conclusion was that they were worthless since they never even acquired the true character of ordinary charity; that is, they were devoid of all righteousness and justice! However, observed the Rabbis consoling, "A man may give only a little, but if the sentiment of the heart goes along with it, both he and his giving are blessed, indeed!"

The Sages also took severely to task those who give publicly and ostentatiously to an unfortunate person in order to direct flattering attention to themselves, for the net result is that then they succeed only in humiliating and degrading the object of their "generosity." The Talmud relates how a Rabbi once saw a man give a zuz (a small silver coin) with a munificent gesture to a needy person. The Rabbi rebuked the donor: "Far better if you had given him nothing at all than that the whole world should watch you hand him alms! See what you have done with your charity! You have humiliated the poor man with it!"

With the insensitive among the rich in mind, the Talmud suggested a supplementary prayer for daily recitation: "O God, grant that we may not have to ask help from others. Let not our sustenance depend on their bounty, for though their benevolence is small, the shame they inflict is indeed great." And so, in order to protect the sensitive and the proud, the Rabbis decreed: "A benefaction to the poor must be made privately, with no one else present."

It is recorded that Rabbi Abba was in the habit of helping the proud poor in a singular way. He would tie some money in a kerchief and then proceed to "lose" it in the vicinity of the needy person he wished to help. Mar Ukba, another religious luminary of ancient Babylonia, was careful to slip, unobserved, the sum of four zuzim under the door of a poor neighbor each day. This "technique" of giving became a continuous tradition in Jewish life. It is told of Rabbi Elimelech of Lizhensk, the Chasidic tzaddik of eighteenth-century Galicia, how he would disguise himself as a peasant and would dump a load of firewood, a bag of flour, or a sack of potatoes before a needy widow's door. He would then make good his departure before he could be questioned about it.

The Sages summed up their praise for anonymous giving, thus: **"He who gives charity in secret is as great as Moses."**

But the requirements of communal benevolence in the more complicated Palestinian society during the third century C.E. led Chiyya bar Abba to counsel: "The best way to give charity is to deposit the money in the collection box. In this way, the giver does not know whom he gives, nor does the poor man know who the giver is."

However severely the miserly or ostentatious givers of tzedakah were lectured by the Rabbis, the characterless takers of charity were not spared either. Censorious sounds the Shulchan Aruch, the sixteenth-century code of Jewish law:

"One should always avoid accepting charity and rather roll in misery than depend upon the help of others. And thus our Sages commanded: 'Rather turn your Sabbath into a weekday than be dependent on others.' "

I close this article by including the Eight Degrees of Tzedakah as enumerated by Moses Maimonides as recorded in his Mishneh Torah.

What you need to know: Ascending Order Of Righteous (Kal v'omer)

- The person who gives reluctantly and with regret.
- The person who gives graciously, but less than one should.
- The person who gives what one should, but only after being asked.
- The person who gives before being asked.
- The person who gives without knowing to whom one gives, although the recipient knows the identity of the donor.
- The person who gives without making one's identity known.
- The person who gives without knowing to whom one gives. The recipient does not know from whom he receives.
- The person who helps another to support oneself by a gift or a loan or by finding employment for that person, thus helping that person to become self-supporting.

Things to remember:

- The dignity of the poor must always be respected.
- Helping people to help themselves is the greatest form of *tzedakah*.

Blessings...Craig Lyons M.Div.



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WHAT IS BIBLICAL RIGHTEOUSNESS...EXPOUNDED

Righteousness, as defined by the Encyclopedia Judaica, is the fulfillment of all legal and moral obligations. Righteousness is not an abstract notion but rather consists in doing what is just and right in all relationships:

Ps 106:3 3 Blessed are they that keep judgment, and he that doeth righteousness at all times. (KJV)

Isa 64:5 5 Thou meetest him that rejoiceth and worketh righteousness, those that remember thee in thy ways: behold, thou art wroth; for we have sinned: in those is continuance, and we shall be saved. (KJV)

Jer 22:3 3 Thus saith the LORD; Execute ye judgment and righteousness, and deliver the spoiled out of the hand of the oppressor: and do no wrong, do no violence to the stranger, the fatherless, nor the widow, neither shed innocent blood in this place. (KJV)

Ezek 18:19-27 19 Yet say ye, Why? doth not the son bear the iniquity of the father? When the son hath done that which is lawful and right, and hath kept all my statutes, and hath done them, he shall surely live. 20 The soul that sinneth, it shall die. The son shall not bear the iniquity of the father, neither shall the father bear the iniquity of the son: the righteousness of the righteous shall be upon him, and the wickedness of the wicked shall be upon him. 21 But if the wicked will turn from all his sins that he hath committed, and keep all my statutes, and do that which is lawful and right, he shall surely live, he shall not die. 22 All his transgressions that he hath committed, they shall not be mentioned unto him: in his righteousness that he hath done he shall live. 23 Have I any pleasure at all that the wicked should die? saith the Lord GOD: and not that he should return from his ways, and live? 24 But when the righteous turneth away from his righteousness, and committeth iniquity, and doeth according to all the abominations that the wicked man doeth, shall he live? All his righteousness that he hath done shall not be mentioned: in his trespass that he hath trespassed, and in his sin that he hath sinned, in them shall he die. 25 Yet ye say, The way of the Lord is not equal. Hear now, O house of Israel; Is not my way equal? are not your ways unequal? 26 When a righteous man turneth away from his righteousness, and committeth iniquity, and dieth in them; for his iniquity that he hath done shall he die. 27 Again, when the wicked man turneth away from his wickedness that he hath committed, and doeth that which is lawful and right, he shall save his soul alive. (KJV)

Ps 15:2 2 He that walketh uprightly, and worketh righteousness, and speaketh the truth in his heart. (KJV)

Righteous action results in social stability and ultimately in peace: "And the work of righteousness shall be peace" Avot 2:7).

Isa 32:17 17 And the work of righteousness shall be peace; and the effect of righteousness quietness and assurance for ever. (KJV)

Hosea 10:12 12 Sow to yourselves in righteousness, reap in mercy; break up your fallow ground: for it is time to seek the LORD, till he come and rain righteousness upon you. (KJV)

In the Bible righteousness bears a distinctly legal character; the righteous man is the innocent party, while the wicked man is the guilty one:

Deut 25:1 1 If there be a controversy between men, and they come unto judgment, that the judges may judge them; then they shall justify the righteous, and condemn the wicked. (KJV)

Exod 23:7 7 Keep thee far from a false matter; and the innocent and righteous slay thou not: for I will not justify the wicked. (KJV)

2 Sam 15:4 4 Absalom said moreover, Oh that I were made judge in the land, that every man which hath any suit or cause might come unto me, and I would do him justice! (KJV)

Isa 5:23 23 Which justify the wicked for reward, and take away the righteousness of the righteous from him! (KJV)

Righteousness requires not merely abstention from evil, but a constant pursuit of justice and the performance of positive deeds (Deut. 16:20; Jer. 22:3; cf. Prov. 16:17; Gen. R. 30:9; Jub. 7:20; Tob. 3:2; Kid. 40a).

The meaning of righteousness is broadened to include actions beyond the letter of the law in the realms of ethics and ritual (Ezek. 8:5; Tob. 1:10–12; Eccles. 7; Lev. R. 27:1).

Paralleling the concept of righteousness is that of wickedness (see Zedakah and Rish'ah). Failure to perform obligations leads indirectly to the upsetting of social stability and, ultimately, to the deliberate undermining of the social structure (Isa. 5:23; Hos. 10:13; Amos 5:12; Avot 5:18; Sanh. 101b; RH 17a).

Against the juridical background of righteousness, the paradox of divine justice comes into prominence. A doctrine of exactly balanced rewards and punishments contradicts the reality in which the just man suffers in consequence of his very righteousness (Eccles. 7:15; cf. Gen. 18:23; Jer. 12:1; Hab. 1:13; Mal. 3:15; Ps. 32:10; Job, passim; Wisd. 2–3; Lev. R. 27; Ber. 7a; Shab. 55b; Hor. 10b).

This individual problem takes on a national character in Jewish history, throughout which an innocent nation is constantly being persecuted (Wisd. 10:15; IV Ezra 10:22).

The paradox becomes even more striking in view of the legal character of the covenant between God and His people: "And I will betroth thee unto Me in righteousness and in justice" (Hos. 2:21).

Attempts to come to grips with this paradox account for the notion that the righteous man suffers for and with his generation, and that his death expiates for their sins (MK 28a; Ex. R. 43:1; cf. Gen R. 34:2; Sanh. 108a). Often, however, man's anger and righteous indignation in the face of overwhelming injustice causes him to invoke that absolute righteousness which rests only with God: "for Thou art righteous" (Neh. 9:8; cf. II Chron. 12:6; Isa. 5:16; 45:22–25; Ps. 89: 16; II Macc. 12:6; Hag. 12b).

Because righteousness is not an inherent human characteristic, but rather a learned trait resulting from sustained performance of obligations, man can never attain the peak of righteous perfection: "For there is not a

righteous man upon earth that doeth good and sinneth not" (Eccles. 7:20; cf. Ps. 143:2; Job 4:17; 15:14; Dan. 9:18). The impossibility of achieving absolute righteousness, however, does not preclude the constant striving toward this end. The Jew emulates the Patriarchs, conscious that God evaluates even their righteousness in relative terms (Gen. R. 30:9; Shab. 55a; Sanh. 107a; cf. Hab. 2:4; Yoma 38b; RH 16b; Sanh. 93a; Num. R. 3:1; Song R. 3:3; Zohar, Gen. 9). Judaism holds in contempt those who assume a pretense of piety and righteousness: "Be not righteous overmuch neither make thyself overwise" (Eccles. 7:16; cf. Eccles. 7:5; Nid. 30b), while, on the other hand, it exalts the zaddikim nistarim ("the hidden righteous") of each generation (Suk. 45b; Hul. 92a; Gen. R. 35:2).

The prophets conceive of the ideal society in terms of righteousness (Isa. 28:17; 60:21; Jer. 23:5-7; Hos. 10:12; Zech. 8:8; Ps. 7:10; 18:25; Dan. 9:24). Subsequent attempts to formulate a code for an ideal society rest heavily on practical principles of daily righteous conduct (En. 10:21; 13:10; Ps. of Sol. 17:27; Meg. 17b; cf. the teachings of the "Teacher of Righteousness" in the Dead Sea Scrolls). Eschatologically, righteous action within a righteous society will restore peace in the world and will reestablish Jerusalem as the citadel of righteousness: "And I will restore thy judges... afterward thou shalt be called the city of righteousness" (Isa. 1:26-27; Jer. 31:22). [Z.Sz.]

In rabbinic literature the term zedakah means "charity," "almsgiving," "practical benevolence," but does not refer to righteousness in general for which there is no special term. However, the name zaddik, "righteous man" (pl. zaddikim), is found throughout rabbinic literature denoting the good man, the man free from sin, the one who carries out his obligation to God and to man by obeying the precepts of the Torah. Occasionally in the literature the term zaddik denotes the specially pious, the man of extraordinary goodness, the holy man or saint, as when it is said that there are never less than 36 zaddikim in the world who see the Divine Presence each day (Suk. 45b). But in general the term zaddik does not necessarily suggest unusual piety, but simply the carrying out of God's will. This can be seen from the division of men (RH 16b) into the thoroughly righteous (zaddikim gemurim), the thoroughly wicked (resha'im gemurim), and the average persons (beinonim). In one passage (Ber. 61b) the distinction is made that the zaddikim are governed by the good inclination, the wicked by the evil inclination, and the average by both inclinations. When Rabbah commented that he was an average person Abbaye objected that this would mean that most people are wicked. The term "righteous" is used of women as well as of men (Song. R. 1:17; Sot. 11b). The zaddikim among the gentiles have a share in the world to come (Tos. Sanh. 13:2).

The zaddikim, in their humility, promise to do only a little for others but in reality do much (BM 87a). The zaddikim are so scrupulous in avoiding the slightest taint of theft that their honestly acquired property becomes dearer to them than their own person and they risk their lives to preserve it (Hul. 91a). They have a strong social conscience. They rise up early in the morning to attend to the needs of the community (Yalkut, Ex. 264). Even at the time of their death they worry not about their own affairs but about their communal responsibilities (Sifrei, Num. 138).

Even when they are dead the zaddikim are called "living," unlike the wicked who are called "dead" even while they are still alive (Ber. 18a). When a zaddik resides in a city he adorns that city so that when he departs its glory departs with him (Gen. R. 68:6). The very stones of a place quarrel among themselves for the privilege of serving as a pillow for the zaddik who is obliged to sleep out of doors (Hul. 91b). Beauty, strength, riches, honor, wisdom, old age, gray hairs, and children are comely to the zaddikim and comely to the world (Avot 6:8). But the zaddikim suffer in this life. Whenever they wish to have a life of comfort Satan complains that they ought to be satisfied with the reward stored up for them in the hereafter and not wish to enjoy, too, the ease of this world (Gen. R. 84:3). God causes the zaddikim to suffer in this world to purge them of the few sins of which they are guilty, just as when a tree stands in a clean place with its branches overlapping an unclean place the branches are lopped off so that the whole tree can stand in a clean place (Kid. 40b). In another passage, however, it is said that Moses received no answer when he asked God why it is that one zaddik meets with good fortune in this world while another meets with evil (Ber. 7a).

A man can repent sincerely in his heart of the sins he has committed and by so doing change his status from that of rasha ("wicked") to that of zaddik. Thus if a man who is thoroughly wicked betroths a woman on the understanding that he is a zaddik the act is valid. Conversely, if a known zaddik betrothed a woman on the

understanding that he is a rasha the act is also valid because he may have been guilty of an acceptance of idolatry in his heart and this would change his status (Kid. 49b). A man who has been a perfect zaddik all his life and is sorry for the good deeds he has done thereby cancels out all those good deeds. Conversely, a complete rasha who repents of his evil deeds at the end of his life cancels out thereby all those evil deeds (Kid. 40b). Nevertheless, a good deed is not disqualified by any self-seeking motive. For example, a man who gives charity so that his children may live or that he may have reward for it in the hereafter can still be considered a perfect zaddik (Pes. 8a–b).

In medieval Jewish thought a definite tendency can be observed to extend the scope of righteousness. Not only is greater inwardness demanded of the zaddik, but he is expected to observe as the norm rules of conduct which in rabbinic literature are set down as the ideal for the especially pious. The medieval moralistic literature consists mainly of such demands classified and codified as standards to which all should aspire. A typical example is the anonymous work with the revealing title of *Orhot Zaddikim*, "The Ways of the Righteous" (tr. S. Cohen (1969)). Thus the saying of R. Yose, who is described (Avot 2:8) as a hasid ("saint"), that all man's deeds should be for the sake of heaven (Avot 2:12), is formulated in the Codes (Tur, OH 231) as the rule for all men. When a man eats and drinks, for example, it should not be in order to enjoy his food and drink but to have strength for God's service. The same applies to his working, sleeping, marital relations, and conversing with others. All should be done for the sake of heaven and not for personal gratification.

In Maimonides' writings the life of righteousness is made to embrace the Greek ideal of harmony and balance in choosing the middle way. The good man should be neither too prone to anger nor as indifferent to insult as a corpse; neither too ambitious nor too lazy; neither frivolous nor melancholic; neither greedy nor a spendthrift (Yad, Deot 1:4–5). Man is free to choose the way he wishes to follow. It is given to every man to be as great a zaddik as Moses or as great a rasha as Jeroboam (Yad, Teshuvah 5:2). Maimonides defines the zaddik as the man with more good deeds to his credit than bad. The rasha has more bad deeds than good ones, while the average man (beinoni) has his good and bad deeds equally balanced. The same assessment is made by God of a country and of the world as a whole. But it is not the mere quantity of the deeds which counts in this assessment. A good deed can be of such quality that it can succeed in outweighing many bad deeds, and the converse is also true (Yad, Teshuvah 3:1–2).

Among the kabbalists the term zaddik is given, as in a few instances in rabbinic literature, the meaning of "saint." The zaddik is no longer simply the ordinary good man but a holy man of elevated degree. In the Zohar, zaddik is the name of one of the Sefirot—Yesod, "foundation." This is the creative principle and is symbolized by the phallus. Consequently, the zaddik on earth is especially careful to avoid any flaw in the "sign of the covenant," i.e., he keeps himself free from all forms of sexual impurity. "One who does not guard the sign of the Covenant as he should cannot be called a zaddik" (Zohar, Gen. 94a). Among the biblical heroes, the counterpart of Yesod is Joseph who refused to yield to the blandishments of Potiphar's wife and who, as a result, is called "Joseph the zaddik" (Zohar, Ex. 23a). In Hasidism, too, the Zaddik is the miracle-working saint and holy man, the hasidic master. The term hasid could not have been applied to him since this was the name given to his followers, the hasidim. Once the term had been used in this sense the rabbinic references to the zaddik were interpreted in the Hasidic literature as referring to the holy man. In Habad theory the terms zaddik and rasha are acknowledged to be used in the rabbinic literature, in some instances in the loose sense of one who is acquitted in judgment by God and one who is declared guilty. But the true definition of the zaddik is that he is the man "who has no evil inclination because he has killed it by fasting" (Likkutei Amarim, I, 1). The prescriptions for leading the good life found in the classical sources are not for such rare souls who do not need them, but for the "average men" (beinonim). The beinoni is now, in fact, not "average" at all but the righteous man who struggles against the evil within him in order to do God's will.

The pursuit of righteousness was the aim of the Lithuanian Musar movement but the approach was decidedly non-mystical. In response to the claim of Hasidism that the Zaddik is invested with the power to cause harm by his curse, Israel Salanter, the founder of the movement, is said to have retorted that if that were so, the zaddik can be a danger to others and should be obliged to pay for any harm he may do in this way. The followers of Israel Meir ha-Kohen (the Hafez Hayyim) used to say that while it was the boast of the hasidim that their zaddik decrees and God fulfills, of the Hafez Hayyim it was rather true that God decrees and the zaddik fulfills.

The righteous man, according to the Musarists, is other-worldly, ascetic, profoundly concerned with his ethical obligations, and devoted to the study of the Torah and the practice of the precepts. The Musar leaders and teachers were frequently referred to as ha-rav ha-zaddik, "The rabbi, the zaddik..."

In modern writings on Jewish religious thought, especially those in Western languages, the emphasis is chiefly on the ethical and moral content of righteousness and on its universal application. [Louis Jacobs]



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THE TORAH INSTRUCTS US CONCERNING "RIGHTEOUS" GIVING

We learned, if you read some of the previous articles, of the [Hebrew concept of "Tzekakah."](#) If you have not read this article yet you need to do so before continuing in this study.

Adopting a more Biblical life-style often means learning and exploring moral issues that before I would have ignored. One of the most important concepts in the Bible is Charity, called [Tzedakah](#) in Hebrew. You may not be aware of this but every child of God is obligated according to the Jewish Scripture and the Bible Yeshua used to give between 10% and 20% of his income.

Answer for yourself: But to whom? This is the \$64,000 question.

This article is my attempt to answer this question with halakhic guidelines, with the goal of assisting myself and others in making sure that our giving of alms and our tithes is in obedience to the Word of God.

TO WHOM TO GIVE? THE COMMON APPROACH

Answer for yourself: How do most of us give charity?

If you're like me, you receive dozens of requests, pleas, and sad stories in the mail, and when one of them finally manipulates you out of your complacency, and you haphazardly give \$30 here, \$100 here, \$50 there. You have no overall plan for how you give. Tzekakah (understood as active righteousness), is a concept so important to God that He give His people a plan. Believe it or not God commands that we do not give to certain needs. Let us see why.

In the Sh'ma (Deut. 6:4...), we are directed to love Ha'Shem with all our might or "possessions." [Giving the right amount of charity means nothing or is even harmful if we do not direct it well.](#) When the poor are not properly supported, they risk death; when education is not supported properly, it also risks death. It also shows a lack of respect to property when money is given away so whimsically.

TO WHOM TO GIVE? TESTING THE WATERS

Answer for yourself: Our question then becomes to whom does the Torah (the Bible used by Yeshua) tell us to give charity?

My American "egalitarian" background speaks to giving to the random homeless person on the street, and equally to both Jews and Gentile. My initial investigation into Biblical and Jewish sources supported this view. Regarding giving equally to Jew and Gentile alike, I found:

- "A Jew should give charity to poor non-Jews." --Rambam, Mishneh Torah
- "Poor Gentiles should be supported along with poor Jews; the Gentile sick should be visited along with

the Jewish sick; and their dead should be buried along with the Jewish dead, in order to further peaceful relations." --Gittin 61a

- "The poor of all nations must be supported like poor Israelites, for the sake of peace." --Kitzur Shulhan Arukh

Although these excerpts might lead one to believe there is an equal obligation to Jew and Non-Jew, there is not!

Giving charity to a non-Jew is under a completely different category than giving to a Jew, namely, for the purpose of "darkei shalom" (keeping peace with our neighbors). Giving for the purpose of keeping peace with our neighbors became necessary in the Diaspora to prevent persecution by Gentiles. This is not comparable to the Torah obligation requiring saving/helping our Jewish brethren.

It still seems a little strange in that every man was one of God's creatures whom we must try to save (at Pesach Jews wept for the Egyptians who died in the Red Sea!). But it is an issue of priorities.

TO WHOM TO GIVE? THE TORAH'S PRIORITIES...SHOULD THEY NOT BE OURS AS WELL?

Below is my effort to produce a concise list summarizing many of the halachic decisions regarding the priority with which "Maaser" (the Tithe) should be given. All the people below refer to Jews, and where not stated, assumes all other properties are equal. Food, I believe, refers to any life saving cure and clothing to any semi-basic item that is not exclusively life saving.

- A person's own essential needs have greater priority than anyone else's, where essential needs are minimum food, shelter, and clothing (Rabbi Yaakov -- Tur, written in the name of Rabbi Saadiah Goan).
- Within a category a Woman always takes precedence over a Man, a Torah Scholar over a Non-Scholar (Yoreh De'ah 251:9).
- Redeeming captives (pidyon shevuyim) has the highest priority. This refers to paying a ransom amount (or perhaps a bribe) when someone is kidnapped or wrongly imprisoned. Your wife has higher priority than you in being redeemed, and you greater than your Rebbe or Father (Yoreh De'ah 252). Prisoners in civilized countries also qualify (Rabbi Moshe Feinstein).
- Based on lineage, the order of priority is Kohen, Levi (teacher/musician), People of Israel, then Convert (Shulchan Aruch -- Horayut 13.a, Yoreh De'ah 251:9)
- A person who needs food has a greater priority than one who needs clothing (Yoreh De'ah 251:7).
- Scholarship is more important than lineage, and a Mamzer Torah Scholar has priority over an ignorant Kohen Gadol. A Torah Scholar who needs clothing has greater priority over a Non-Torah Scholar who needs food (Rema -- Horayut 13a, Yoreh De'ah 251:9). [Please notice the importance given to attaining Biblical knowledge for blessing].
- Relatives only have priority over others in the event there is no Imminent Danger to Life (HaRav Unterman, Former Chief Ashkenazic Rabbi of Israel). When there is Imminent Danger to Life, priority is not given to Relatives but to Lineage and Torah Scholarship (Talmud -- Horayut 13a).
- A Relative's or a Rebbe's (teacher's) needs are greater than anyone else's needs (Matanot Aniyim 7:13). [Should we not support those who teach the truth of God's Word before we support those in other nations?]
- Based on relationships/geography, the order of priority is Parents, Children, Brothers, Other Relatives, Neighbors, Locals, and then Other Non-Locals (Yoreh De'ah 251:3). [Should we not support with out giving our parents before we support strangers?]

- **Brothers on the father's side precede those on the mother's side and the poor of Israel before the poor of other towns (Rema -- Yoreh De'ah 251:3).**
- **The poor of Jerusalem have precedence over all other towns in Eretz Israel (Rabbi Moshe Sofer, Responsa Chatham Sofer 233, 234).**
- **Today the poor of Old and New Jerusalem have the status of citizens of Jerusalem (Rabbi S.Z. Auerbach)**
- **A Relative has priority over all persons (Ramban -- Matanot Aniym 7:13). The poor Relatives take priority even over the local poor who have greater needs (Panim Yafot, Deuteronomy, Parashat Re'eh, also cited by Responsa Chatam Sofer, Yoreh De'ah 231).**
- **Non-Locals who need Food have greater priority than Locals who need clothing (Sifre, Baal HaFla, Chofetz Chayim, Chatam Sofer).**
- **A Neighbor must refer to one with whom there has been a personal relationship, not to just a spatial Residential Proximity (Rema -- Chosen Mishpat 253:29).**
- **In order of priority, your House, Parents, Brothers and Sisters, Relatives, Neighbors, and those who live on the Same Street (Midrash Tana Devei Eliyahu Ch. 27).**

From this I learn that the term Neighbor refers to two different people: a Friend (emotionally a Neighbor), and someone who lives nearby (geographically a Neighbor), with the first having greater priority. Additionally, we see that your entire household has priority over your Parents. The exception seems to be Maintaining Children. Maaser money may not be used for the purpose of Maintaining Children, who are dependent, unmarried, and live with their parents (Rabbi Moshe Feinstein, Maaser Kesafim p. 100).

- **The needs on one who previously extended graciousness to a person has priority even over the request of a Torah Scholar who is a stranger (HaGoan Rav Yitzchok Hutner -- Pachad Yitzchok; Rosh HaShannah -Maamar 3:1).**

This seems to be putting friends above Torah Scholars who are strangers, and can be resolved by breaking Torah Scholars and Neighbors each into two categories: Torah Scholars into those who are Known and Unknown; and Neighbors into those who are friends and those who live nearby. The priority for these four groups would then be: Known Torah Scholars, Friends, Unknown Torah Scholars, and then Geographical Neighbors.

- **If there are no other funds available to him, a child not only has a halachic permission to utilize his charity funds to support his Parents but is under a mandatory obligation (Chatam Sofer of Pressburg). However, it is humiliating to the child to have to use charity funds to support Parents (Rabbi Yaakov -- Tur, written in the name of Rabbi Saadiah Goan).**

HOW MUCH TO GIVE: THE TORAH'S PRIORITIES

Below are some guidelines summarizing how much Maaser [that portion of the Tithe destined for the poor] should be given, to each category, assuming of course that there is a need. If there is no need in a particular category, Maaser should be given to the next lower level.

- **One should not give all one's charity funds to only one poor person (Yoreh De'ah 257:9).**
- **Though a large percentage may be given to a poor Relative or to a Rebbe, it is best to give to other charities, other poor people, including support of Yeshivot (HaGaon R. Moshe -- Iggerot Mosheh, Yoreh De'ah I, Responsum 144).**
- **When one category has precedence over another, something must be left for the lower category (Rabbi Yechiel Michal Epstein).**
- **Only one half of the Maaser should be used for a Relative. Allocate a larger portion to poor of Relatives, than to non-Relatives, other categories of priority should be treated in the same way (Chatham Sofer Responsum 231).**

- **An individual is not obliged to provide all the needs of a poor person but he should give publicity to his situation in the community (R. Moshe Isserles)**

The major aim of the institution of Maaser Kesafim was to help Torah Scholars and therefore a person should endeavor to use at least half of his Maaser for this purpose, provided the needs of his Relatives have been met (Chafetz Chayim -- Ahavath Chessed, ch. 19).

The proverbial Maaser Monkey Wrench: the importance of a priority list applies only to Charity Administrators, and an Individual Donor has the right to divide his Maaser as he chooses among those entitled to receive charity (Rabbi Moshe Feinstein).

Regardless of whether this is the case or now, I respectfully believe this should not affect our behavior, and a priority list should still be used when deciding to which Charities to give. The fact is that most Charities give their funds to a particular cause, and are not made up of Charity Administrators who support every facet and need of Am Israel. Therefore, the Individual Donor should insure that his Maaser is being used more properly by still taking into account the priorities of each charities you give to. Further, as we see above, one is obligated to support one's parents from his Maaser fund, in necessary, and so in truth the Individual Donor cannot give away his Maaser to anyone he chooses among those entitled to receive charity.

TO WHOM TO GIVE: THE NON-JEWS

"In our day when taxes must be paid to the government and these taxes are often withheld from one's wages, it must be surmised that one's 'income' is the amount that a person is left with after taxes." -- Rabbi Hayim Halevy Donin, To Be a Jew

After an in-depth study, I have concluded that in the United State approximately 30% of our income goes to the government, and perhaps one third of government's spending is on charitable activities, such as Medicare, Medicaid, welfare, social security, and education. As a result, the approximately 98% Non-Jewish population is receiving approximately 10% of our pretax income. As a result, I believe that we are giving enough to the Non-Jewish population. In an age when we are giving much of our money to Non-Jewish cases such as Easter Seals, Save the Whales, Good Will, etc., perhaps out of guilt or desire to assimilate, I think it is important to realize that the Non-Jewish community is receiving quite a lot. If you look at your taxes as a way to provide charity and peace to the nation and between Jew and Non-Jew, you should be happier about paying them! The conclusion arrived at is that the non-Jewish people are receiving through our taxes sufficient amounts from our taxes in support of the poor, the Jewish poor are not. Thus we should emphasize with our giving the blessing of the Jewish people.

WHAT ABOUT MY CHURCH OR SYNAGOGUE?

It is generally agreed that Maaser [poor Tithe] may not be used to cover an obligations of a church or synagogue that is NOT for "necessities of life". As a result most offerings and donations "over and above the poor Tithe" are to be used for essential needs of the church and synagogue like salaries, lighting, rent, etc., and Maaser [poor Tithe] and Festival Tithe money was not to be used.

TO WHOM TO GIVE: A SUMMARY

For the most part, you are allowed to give your Poor Tithe to whomever you want -- to whom you give charity to is not legal but rather moral (with the exception of supporting a Parent). Still it is better to give according to priority, and balance the way you give. Torah Scholars should receiving approximately half [remember that although they received the tithe 2 years out of 6, they received smaller amounts every year as well as God calls groups them with the stranger, widows, and orphans in Scripture], and other categories the remaining amount according to priority and then need. When there is an issue of saving a Life, all priority must be given to that. In

fact, the 10% minimum no longer becomes valid, as the community can assess each individual whatever he can afford, without limit, to save the life.

The most praiseworthy type of giving charity is to set a fellow man, both Jew and non-Jew on his feet so that he does not require charitable aid nor need to ask for it (Yoreh De'ah, 249:1). Therefore one should insure that his children have a profession, and that his parents have a realistic retirement plan.



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"TZEDAKAH"... HEBREW FOR BIBLICAL RIGHTEOUSNESS AND CHARITY

Charity is a fundamental part of both the Biblical and Jewish way of life. Traditional Jews give at least ten percent of their income to charity. Traditional Jewish homes commonly have a pushke, a box for collecting coins for the poor, and coins are routinely placed in the box. Jewish youths are continually going from door to door collecting for various worthy causes. In many ways, charitable donation has taken the place of animal sacrifice in Jewish life: giving to charity is an almost instinctive Jewish response to express thanks to God, to ask forgiveness from God, or to request a favor from God. According to Jewish tradition, the spiritual benefit of giving to the poor is so great that a beggar actually does the giver a favor by giving a person the opportunity to perform tzedakah.

THE MEANING OF TZEDAKAH

"Tzedakah" is the Hebrew word for the acts that we call "charity" in English: giving aid, assistance and money to the poor and needy or to other worthy causes. However, the nature of tzedakah is very different from the idea of charity. The word "charity" suggests benevolence and generosity, a magnanimous act by the wealthy and powerful for the benefit of the poor and needy. The word "tzedakah" is derived from the Hebrew root: Tzadeh-Dalet-Qof, meaning **righteousness, justice or fairness**. In Judaism, giving to the poor is not viewed as a generous, magnanimous act; it is simply an **act of justice and righteousness, the performance of a duty, giving the poor their due.**

OBLIGATION OF TZEDAKAH...THE DUTY OF EVERY CHRISTIAN

Giving to the poor is an obligation the believer has toward God and his fellow man, a duty that cannot be forsaken even by those who are themselves in need. Tzedakah is the highest of all commandments, equal to all of them combined. A person who does not perform tzedakah is considered equivalent to an idol worshipper. Tzedakah is one of the three acts that gain us forgiveness from our sins. The High Holiday liturgy states that God has inscribed a judgment against all who have sinned, but teshuvah (repentance), tefilah (prayer) and tzedakah can reverse the decree.

According to Biblical law, we are required to give one-tenth of our income to the poor. This is generally interpreted as one-tenth of our net income after payment of taxes. Those who are dependent on public assistance or living on the edge of subsistence may give less; no person should give so much that he would become a public burden.

The obligation to perform tzedakah can be fulfilled by giving money to the poor, to health care institutions or to educational institutions. It can also be fulfilled by supporting your children beyond the age when you are legally required to, or supporting your parents in their old age. The obligation includes giving to both Jews and gentiles; contrary to popular belief, Jews do not just "take care of our own."

Judaism acknowledges that many people who ask for charity have no genuine need. In fact, the Talmud suggests that this is a good thing: if all people who asked for charity were in genuine need, we would be subject to punishment (from God) for refusing anyone who asked. The existence of frauds diminishes our liability for failing to give to all who ask, because we have some legitimate basis for doubting the beggar's sincerity. It is permissible to investigate the legitimacy of a charity before donating to it.

We have an obligation to avoid becoming in need of tzedakah. A person should take any work that is available, even if he thinks it is beneath his dignity, to avoid becoming a public charge.

However, if a person is truly in need and has no way to obtain money on his own he should not feel embarrassed to accept tzedakah. No person should feel too proud to take money from others. In fact, it is considered a transgression to refuse tzedakah. To make yourself suffer by refusing to accept tzedakah is equivalent to shedding your own blood.

LEVELS OF TZEDAKAH...MAIMONIDES 9 LEVELS

Certain kinds of tzedakah are considered more meritorious than others.

The Talmud describes these different levels of tzedakah, and Maimonides organized them into a list. The levels of charity, from the least meritorious to the most meritorious, are:

1. **Giving assistance to a someone who has fallen on hard times by presenting a gift or loan, or entering into a partnership with the person, or finding them work, thereby helping that person to become self supporting.**
2. **Giving assistance in such a way that the giver and recipient are unknown to each other.**
3. **Donations to the community charities, which should only be done if there is confidence that the charity is administered in an honest, prudent, and efficient fashion.**
4. **Donations when the donor is aware to whom the charity is being given, but the recipient is unaware of the source.**
5. **Donations when the recipient is aware of the donor's identity, but the donor still doesn't know the specific identity of the recipient.**
6. **Donations where each party knows the other, but the gift is given unasked.**
7. **Donations where each party knows the other, but the gift is given only after a specific request.**
8. **Donations where each party knows the other, but the gift is given only after a specific request, and the donor gives less than should be given (but does so willingly).**
9. **Donations given grudgingly. (Mat. Ani'im. chap. 10)**

What one needs to understand is that in a descending order the level of Righteousness is seen and understood; therefore #1 for instance is a higher level of righteous giving than #5 for example. Now it is up to you to study these and act accordingly. Shalom.



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THE BIBLICAL TITHE...TAUGHT CORRECTLY

"Ma'aser" is the Hebrew word for the tithe. A tenth part of agricultural produce or livestock which was "holy to the Lord" (Lev. 27:30-32). The Bible specifies various percentages of the crop that the farmer must allocate in accordance with given criteria as a religious offering to particular individuals. The custom of tithing is of ancient origin, as Abraham gave a voluntary tithe to Melchisedek (Gen. 14:18-20; cf.28:22). As part of the commandments "dependent on the Land [of Israel]," these tithing regulations are only applicable to produce grown there (Kid. 1.9). Such laws applied to the first six years of the seven-year cycle during which crops were grown; no tithes were given in the seventh SABBATICAL year (shemittah) during which the fields had to remain fallow. If you were not a farmer you were not expected to "tithe" but yet you were obligated to support and care for the poor as such conduct can be shown to be connected with receiving Eternal Life (more on that when dealing with other articles).

Initially, the farmer was required to give terumah (a "heave offering" or contribution) to the PRIEST (Ex. 29:28; Num. 18:8). There is no specification as to which particular priest must receive the terumah, and the decision as to whom it should be given was left to the farmer. Regarding the quantity involved, biblical law requires only that terumah be given and does not mention any minimal amount. Thus, the sages declared that giving "a single ear of wheat is enough to exempt an entire barn." By Rabbinic decree, however, terumah had to be no less than 1/60 of a farmer's crop: according to the Mishnah (Ter. 4.3), the average person gave 1/50, while generous people would give 1/40. The relevant laws are discussed in tractate TERUMOT of the Mishnah, Tosefta, and Jerusalem Talmud. In the absence of Temple and the absence of animal sacrifice, this commandment does not apply at this time.

Each year, after the separation of terumah, the farmer had to set aside one-tenth of his crop for the LEVITES as the regular "first tithe," ma'aser rishon (Num. 18:21,24). Which Levite actually received this first tithe was left to the farmer's discretion. Since the Levites, unlike the other tribes, were not given agricultural land of their own but lived in cities, the tithe enabled them to subsist and discharge their primary function - - teaching Torah to all Israel. Tractate MA'ASEROT of the Mishnah and Jerusalem Talmud (known as Ma'aser Rishon in the Tosefta) indicates the rules for this tithe. Today, since we do not have actual "Levites" and are without the Temple or Tabernacle, we have only "functional Levites" who are primary "teachers" of the people of God. Thus, this "Each Year Levitical 10% Tithe" would not apply as it once did, but will be reinstated once the Temple is rebuilt! Thus, Bet Emet has not chosen to teach this "commandment" at binding in this time due to the absence of "functional Levites" which attend to the ministry of the Temple.

The Levites were required to give one-tenth of the tithes they received, or one percent of the original crop, to the priests (again we do not have functioning priests without a Temple and this commandment does not apply at this time). This allocation was known as "a tithe of the tithe" (ma'aser min ha-ma'aser, Num. 18:26), or terumat ma'aser (Bik. 2.5). According to the Talmud (Yev. 86b), when EZRA returned to Erets (land) Israel from Babylonia, he found that the Levites had mostly not heeded the call to join the other returning exiles. In response, Ezra penalized the Levites by allowing the Israelites to give their first tithe to the priests, who were also descended from the tribe of Levi. Some have interpreted this talmudic passage to mean that the Israelites were actually required to give their first tithe to priests, and to withhold it from the Levites. This situation prevailed throughout the period of the Second Temple.

In the first, second, fourth, and fifth years of the seven-year shemittah cycle, the farmer had to set aside one-tenth of his remaining crop as the "second tithe," ma'aser sheni. This produce had either to be brought to Jerusalem and eaten there, or, if that was too difficult, it could be sold and the money used to buy food which had to be eaten in Jerusalem (Deut. 14:22-26). Thus the **"SECOND TITHE"** is often called the **"FESTIVAL TITHE."** The law of the second tithe enabled Israelites who "went up" to Jerusalem for the three PILGRIMAGE FESTIVALS (Passover, Pentecost, Tabernacles) to maintain themselves during their stay in the city. Detailed regulations concerning this tithe are to be found in tractate MA'ASER SHENI of the Mishnah, Tosefta, and Jerusalem Talmud. This **"SECOND TITHE-FESTIVAL TITHE"**, the tithe of animals (Lev. 27:32) was, according to the rabbis, also consumed in Jerusalem and **shared again with the LEVITES.**

Let us summarize; we have the **FIRST TITHE** given yearly to support the Levite, the **SECOND TITHE** given 4 out of 6 years for the observance and celebration of the **FESTIVALS.**

In the third and sixth years of the shemittah cycle, the "POOR MAN'S TITHE" (ma'aser ani) replaced the normal second tithe of Deut. 14:28-29, 26:12. Since the FESTIVAL TITHE was not collected during the 3rd and 6th year, this 10% was moved to help the poor. This would mean one would have to allot from funds collected over 4 years sufficient amounts to celebrate the Festivals for "ALL" of the seven years. This "POOR TITHE" which was collected for 2 years out of 6 had to be distributed to the LEVITES (considered "poor" since he had no inheritance in the land), to the WIDOWS, ORPHANS, SICK, LAME, BLIND, GENTILE SOJOURNERS, ETC., but a cash equivalent might be given instead of the actual produce or animals..

So you see that in the days of the Temple the LEVITE-TEACHER received not only 10% from the LEVITICAL TITHE, but also "some" of the SECOND-FESTIVAL TITHE as well as "some" of the THIRD-POOR MAN'S TITHE. Thus, the TEACHER received support 6 out of 7 years from the people of God because of his dedication to both Torah and the people of Yahweh. In the seventh year, the fields were laid rest and what grew on its own from seedlings was again the heritage of the poor which included the **LEVITE** once again.

In order to summarize what I feel is quite complicated given its many variables, we see that over a six year period when some received yearly (the teaching Levite) and some did not, that **THREE CATEGORIES** surface from our study: **LEVITES, FESTIVALS, and the POOR.** Bet Emet Ministries, having tried to simplify this for worshippers today, and in light of the absence of the Temple and Tabernacle, has chosen to allot **THREE CATEGORIES OVER SIX YEARS** as applicable for today again in light of the absence of the Temple and a sacrificing Priesthood and Levitical ministry. Study of your Bibles will show you our responsibility to care for our teachers, worship the LORD through the Festivals, and take care of the poor.

Notice carefully, "un-tithed produce or animals", known as "tevel", might **not be eaten until the appropriate tithes had been separated.** Failure to take care of our responsibilities to our anointed teachers, failure to worship according to the PATTERN in the Bible before Yahweh our LORD through the Festivals, and failure to care for the poor, yet taking their "allotment" and using it for our own needs what every they be is considered **ROBBERY BEFORE GOD!** The talmudic sages feared that an unlearned person, called the AM HA-ARETS (Biblically ignorant children of God who knew not the commandments of God), might only give terumah and not the remaining tithes. They therefore ruled that any "suspect" produce bought from such a farmer also had to be tithed.

While these various laws were no longer observed by Jews living in the Diaspora (outside the land of Israel) after the destruction of the Second Temple, Rabbinic law still requires the tithing of produce grown in Erets Israel. Accordingly, some observant Israelis separate a very small amount from produce they have bought from other Jews, recite a prescribed benediction and then destroy this terumah. According to a formula devised by R. Avraham Yeshayahu Karelitz, however, the different tithes are merged. Slightly more than one percent of the produce is set aside and its sanctity is then transferred to a specially reserved coin. Since tithes are no longer

allocated to priests and Levites but may be fed to animals, those taken at source (e.g., by major food distributors and cooperatives) are sent to the different zoos in Israel. Processed Israeli foodstuffs exported abroad are usually tithed by the rabbinate, that endorses these products as religiously fit (kosher). Raw fruit and vegetables, however, are not necessarily tithed before export.

Two notable effects of the tithing system in ancient Israel were an emphasis of Jerusalem and the Temple as focal points of the Jewish religion and an aroused awareness that generous consideration had to be given to the less fortunate. Even today, a legacy of the terumah and ma'aser regulations may be seen in the symbolic allocation of up to one-tenth of one's income for the purpose of charitable donations.

Answer for yourself: Now having read this for yourself, does your actions and conduct in this area line up more with what is written in the Jewish Scriptures, the Word of God, or with you denominational guidelines, and would you call it sin since you and your church do not obey these Scriptures, in fact most likely violate them Sunday after Sunday? Something to think about; I guarantee you God does.

In closing, allocation of your tithes to areas other than the support of the teacher, observance and worshipful celebration of the seven Festivals and care of the widows, orphans, sick, lame, and blind, etc., is a perversion of Yahweh's truth, and such brings the **CURSE**, defined accurately and Biblically as a loss of Godly blessings now and in this time as well as the world to come. But many will say "I am blessed;" I would only ask you this: "If you began to become obedient in this area, whereas you are not now, then should you expect more blessings from God let alone worship Him in Spirit and in Truth to a greater degree; and is that not what it is all about?" I hope this has been informative to you and you will begin to pattern your worship of the LORD in your tithes and offerings accordingly as stated in the Bible and not by denominational or non-denominational traditions which violate such truths. If your church will not allocate the money collected in this fashion then don't give to them for such is an "accessory" to robbery. Allocate your tithe accordingly. Such brings the Kingdom of God to others and your failure to do accordingly deprives others of God love...in a practical way. Shalom.

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COULD WE BE UNDER A CURSE IF WE GIVE THE TITHE TO OUR CHURCH...AND NOT KNOW IT?

Answer for yourself: Do you know the difference between the "half-shekel tax" and the "tithe" and how they are to be used according to the Jewish Scriptures? If you are like most Christians today the answer is a resounding "no"!

Answer for yourself: Is it possible to tithe to your church Sunday after Sunday and God allow the curse of Malachi 3 to overtake you because the Church does not use the funds collected in the manner commanded by Scripture, and in such giving you become an accessory to the robbery of God?

Before you dismiss the above two questions as "foolish" I warn you not to do so.

Answer for yourself: Blessing is relevant. We all think and say we are "blessed," but have you ever wondered how much less of God you have in your life and in the life of your family because of sins of omission and ignorance?

Answer for yourself: Is it possible to learn where we have made mistakes and repent, whereby our conduct and behavior in an area like tithing, will bring the Scriptural blessings we read about but seldom experience? I believe the answer is "yes."

GIVING MONEY TO THE CHURCH: THE TITHE, THE HALF-SHEKEL TAX, AND THE CURSE OF MALACHI 3

Answer for yourself: Do you love God and do you connect your love of God with obedience of His Word? Then if you do then this article will awaken you to realities that the Church has never taught or shown you.

It gives me much pleasure to deal with a topic in this article that is not only widely misunderstood in Christianity today, but neglected by almost all churches. In this article you will quickly come to understand why. The tragic fact of the matter is that since we neglect or misunderstand the commandment in Exodus 30:11-16 concerning the "half-shekel" offering that allows for the financing of the Tabernacle, Temple, ministries and churches, we take erroneously from the Tithe delegated funds and misappropriate them in supporting such ministries and churches instead of righteously overseeing that they be used correctly as willed and commanded by God in the Holy Scripture. Let us investigate the matter at length in hopes that new understanding will lead to repentance in both our belief-system and our obedience and conduct in such matters before God and man.

THE HALF-SHEKEL TAX/OFFERING

Exodus chapter 19 records for us the events connected with Israel at Sinai and chapter 20 records for us the giving of the Ten Commandments. These "Ten" are better understood at ten "categories" from which all 613

commandments originate. The "ten" categories serve only as groupings whereby related commandments are grouped for better and more complete understanding. Along with the first four commandments deal with worship:

Exod 20:1 (KJV) And God spake all these words, saying, 2 I [am] the LORD thy God, which have brought thee out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage. {bondage: Heb. servants} 3 Thou shalt have no other gods before me. 4 Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image, or any likeness [of any thing] that [is] in heaven above, or that [is] in the earth beneath, or that [is] in the water under the earth: 5 Thou shalt not bow down thyself to them, nor serve them: for I the LORD thy God [am] a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth [generation] of them that hate me; 6 And shewing mercy unto thousands of them that love me, and keep my commandments. 7 Thou shalt not take the name of the LORD thy God in vain; for the LORD will not hold him guiltless that taketh his name in vain. 8 Remember the sabbath day, to keep it holy. 9 Six days shalt thou labour, and do all thy work: 10 But the seventh day [is] the sabbath of the LORD thy God: [in it] thou shalt not do any work, thou, nor thy son, nor thy daughter, thy manservant, nor thy maidservant, nor thy cattle, nor thy stranger that [is] within thy gates: 11 For [in] six days the LORD made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them [is], and rested the seventh day: wherefore the LORD blessed the sabbath day, and hallowed it.

The worship of God had to be organized and regulated by a pattern that would ensure its continuance to subsequent generations without change or deletion as when first given and commanded by God. To help this goal be realized God commanded that Israel build a Tabernacle that would both house God's Presence as well as serve as a teaching example for His correct worship, thus providing a pattern of worship for all time because God is the same yesterday, today, and tomorrow. Beginning with Exodus chapter 25 God begins to command Israel to build the ark of the covenant, the table of showbread, the golden candlesticks, as well as the tabernacle itself. Exodus chapter 30 records for us that God "provides the remedy before the wound" in that He instructs His people concerning the financing of such ministry.

THE CONNECTION BETWEEN ATONEMENT AND RIGHTEOUS GIVING

Answer for yourself: Have you ever noticed where Jesus in the New Testament connects receiving Eternal Life with the giving of alms to the poor and were you aware that such "alms" comes from the proper giving of one's tithe?

Answer for yourself: If one does not tithe correctly, or is instructed by their Pastor or Church to do it wrong, then what effect does that have upon receiving Eternal Life?

Answer for yourself: Could "atonement" that is connected with the proper giving of the tithe be a part in one receiving Eternal Life?

These are dynamite questions!

Uniquely tied to the financing of organized worship of God is the concept of atonement for idolatry and false worship. The Rabbis instruct us that such "remedy" and "atonement" was provided before the actual sin of idolatry in the worship of the golden calf in Exodus 30. God's mercy and forgiveness was provided to Israel in giving them a way of providing atonement for their souls because of idolatry and false worship connected with the golden calf through the financing and promulgation of "true worship" by supporting organized Tabernacle worship with the half-shekel tax.

But you probably say that you are not in need of atonement for false worship or idolatry in your life. Oh brother and sister, how little you truly know if you are not an intense student of Scripture, the history and

origin of Christianity, or the original language of the Bible for there is not one who attends contemporary Christian churches to whom this does not apply. "Not so", you might say; well such an answer betrays one's lack of serious study in these areas. I would challenge you to study this our for yourself as I diligently have for fifteen years and then the answer become very apparent. You only have to attend the Catholic church or ascribe to many of the doctrines taught in the Protestant churches today to be guilty of idolatry, and amazingly so, without your slightest awareness. More on that later, please keep reading.

Let us examine Exodus chapter 30 in detail:

Exod 30:11 (KJS) And the LORD <3068> spake <1696> (8762) unto Moses <4872>, saying <559> (8800), 12 When thou takest <5375> (8799) the sum <7218> of the children <1121> of Israel <3478> after their number <6485> (8803), then shall they give <5414> (8804) every man <376> **a ransom <3724> for his soul <5315> unto the LORD <3068>**, when thou numberest <6485> (8800) them; that there be no plague <5063> among them, when [thou] numberest <6485> (8800) them. {their number: Heb. them that are to be numbered} 13 This they shall give <5414> (8799), every one that passeth <5674> (8802) among <5921> them that are numbered <6485> (8803), half <4276> a shekel <8255> after the shekel <8255> of the sanctuary <6944>: (a shekel <8255> [is] twenty <6242> gerahs <1626>:) an half <4276> shekel <8255> [shall be] the offering <8641> of the LORD <3068>. 14 Every one that passeth <5674> (8802) among them that are numbered <6485> (8803), from twenty <6242> years <8141> old <1121> and above <4605>, shall give <5414> (8799) **an offering <8641> unto the LORD <3068>**. 15 The rich <6223> shall not give more <7235> (8686), and the poor <1800> shall not give less <4591> (8686) than half <4276> a shekel <8255>, when [they] give <5414> (8800) an offering <8641> unto the LORD <3068>, **to make an atonement <3722> (8763) for your souls <5315>**. {give more: Heb. multiply} {give less: Heb. diminish} 16 And thou shalt take <3947> (8804) **the atonement <3725> money <3701>** of the children <1121> of Israel <3478>, and shalt appoint <5414> (8804) **it for the service <5656>** of the tabernacle <168> of the congregation <4150>; that it may be a memorial <2146> unto the children <1121> of Israel <3478> before <6440> the LORD <3068>, **to make an atonement <3722> (8763) for your souls <5315>**.

Exodus chapter 30 records for us a census of everyone twenty years and above, for it would be these people who would worship the golden calf and commit idolatry, thus sealing their fate. Through the census they are enrolled to die in the wilderness. But notice the mercy of God "Everyone who is included in the census must pay a half-shekel . . . everyone of twenty years or more. . . The rich shall not give more, and the poor shall not give less, than the half-shekel (Exodus 30:14-15). In the days of Jesus the half-shekel offering amounted to about 88 cents, but before you get ecstatic, please understand the expenses involved in the running of the Temple, when divided by the number of men over the age of twenty, averaged only 88 cents. This unbelievably small figure attests to the fact that there was only "one Temple in town" as well as the enormously large population within the nation itself. This does not apply to us today in the same way, for in every city there are hundreds of religious institutions and churches, and if the "budget" of each church were to be divided by the male membership over the age of twenty I can assure you the amounts would be staggeringly high; so high in fact, that because of the proliferation of disunity as seen in Christianity today with over 22,000 different denominations, very few churches could support themselves and keep their doors open if they adhered to and obeyed this commandment and didn't rob from God the Tithe to make up the shortfall.. Let us keep reading.

Because of false worship and idolatry the children of Israel twenty years of age and older who participated in the false worship of the golden calf are sealed to die in the wilderness, **but their sins could be forgiven if they repented of idolatry and brought a sin-offering in the form of a half-shekel that would atone for their sins of false worship of God.** Once enlightened to the truth, they were no longer to contribute and support false worship and false religion in any form or fashion, but instead, turn 180 degrees and begin to support and propagate Biblical truths, thus turning their backs upon the religious traditions of men that made the Word of God of none effect and which can be exposed as error when compared with Biblical fact and not fiction. Simply said, they were to no longer follow lies and false worship when discovered, but repent and contribute to the spreading of Biblical truths and no longer support financially religious errors. **This is a real**

urgent message for the Christian Church today which considers itself infallible and incapable of error, when just a little concentrated study by those seeking truth will expose multitudes of doctrinal errors and false worship when compared and contrasted with Scripture.

The problem is that too few study the ancient documents which reveal the errors when engrafted among Biblical truth. Too many study relatively recent materials from the Reformation onward, but if the mistakes were made long before in the second or third century, then they will never discover it unless they look for the earliest deviation from the faith of Jesus as it was handed down throughout history. They only reinforce error after error, not realize the inception of the original error. Instead of showing ourselves students of God's Word, whereby we rightly divide and interpret God's Word correctly (historically, culturally, politically, linguistically), multitudes sit in churches Biblically illiterate and ignorant of Biblical truth. They only covet what they hear repeated Sunday after Sunday, and when questioned about their beliefs and how their beliefs often contradict Scripture, they too easily pass such challenges off as the pursuits of heretics. How sadly they are wrong!

Again the support of churches and ministries which teach truth and not more erroneous traditions concerning more "golden calves" are to be supported by the half-shekel offering and NOT THE TITHE! If such religious institutions and churches teach provable Biblical errors they should not be supported at all!

Let me reiterate, nowhere does the Bible teach that churches, church budgets, or ministries are to be supported through the Tithe! Yet, that was my experience for most of my life in the contemporary American Christian Church, and most likely, it is yours as well. Support of ministries from the Tithe is called "ROBBERY" by God in the Book of Malachi.

What we fail to take into consideration is that "atonement" is connected to our faithful support of Biblical truth through offerings over and above the Tithe. Using the Tithe in place of the "half-shekel" offering does not bring the desired atonement according to Holy Scripture!

Supporting of institutions who uncompromisingly teach the truth of Scripture through offerings above the Tithe secures for the giver "ransom for his soul," since most likely we all have at one time or the other participated in neo-paganism done in Jesus' name or been involved in idolatry whether we knew it then or not. Thus the major importance in understanding this commandment and practicing it correctly in our lives.

Let us look at the Hebrew word for "ransom":

Lexicon Hebrew 3724 03724 kopher {ko'-fer} from 03722; TWOT - 1025b; n m AV - **ransom** 8, satisfaction 2, bribe 2, camphire 2, pitch 1, **sum of money** 1, village 1; 17

- 1) price of a life, ransom, bribe
- 2) asphalt, pitch (as a covering)
- 3) the henna plant, name of a plant (henna?)
- 4) village

The root word is:

Lexicon Hebrew 3722 03722 kaphar {kaw-far'} a primitive root; TWOT - 1023,1024,1025,1026; v AV - atonement 71, purge 7, reconciliation 4, reconcile 3, forgive 3, purge away 2, pacify 2, atonement...made 2, **merciful** 2, **cleansed** 1, disannulled 1, **appease** 1, put off 1, pardon 1, pitch 1; 1) to cover, purge, make an atonement, **make reconciliation**, cover over with pitch

- 1a) (Qal) to coat or cover with pitch
- 1b) (Piel)

- 1b1) to cover over, **pacify**, propitiate
- 1b2) to cover over, atone for sin, make atonement for
- 1b3) to cover over, **atone for sin and persons by legal rites**
- 1c) (Pual)
- 1c1) to be covered over
- 1c2) to make atonement for
- 1d) (Hithpael) to be covered

God's mercy is seen in providing you and I a means of atoning for past times where we participated in false worship by giving us a way whereby we can today make reconciliation with God because of our false worship.

Literally we pacify His wrath over the idolatry we practiced. Notice carefully that this half-shekel atonement money is for atonement for sins done in rites and ceremonies that are considered as Law; literally what we do or once did thinking that it was both desired and commanded by God. It is through supporting churches and ministries, not with the Tithe but with the half-shekel offering over and above the tithe, that we literally cleans ourselves before God of past idolatries and receive the mercy of God; thus bringing reconciliation with God in these regards.

Further evidence is demonstrated that the offering we are to bring consists of a contribution of money as seen below when looking at the Hebrew word used in the verse for "offering."

Lexicon Hebrew 8641 08641 teruwmah {ter-oo-maw'} or terumah (Deut 12:11) {ter-oo-maw'} from 07311; TWOT - 2133i; n f AV - offering 51, oblation 19, heave 4, gifts 1, offered 1; 76

- 1) contribution, offering
- 1a) a heave offering
- 1b) any offering
- 1c) an offering to God
- 1d) **an offering (of grain, money, etc)**
- 1e) contribution

Notice also that this offering is to be used specifically for the "service" of the ministry of the congregation, regardless whether it was for the Tabernacle back then or churches today. The Hebrew word used for "service" is as follows:

Lexicon Hebrew 4150 04150 mow`ed {mo-ade'} or mo`ed {mo-ade'} or (fem.) mow`adah (2 Chr 8:13) {mo-aw-daw'} from 03259; TWOT - 878b; n m AV - congregation 150, feast 23, season 13, appointed 12, time 12, assembly 4, solemnity 4, solemn 2, days 1, sign 1, synagogues 1; 223

- 1) appointed place, appointed time, meeting
- 1a) appointed time
- 1a1) appointed time (general)
- 1a2) sacred season, set feast, appointed season
- 1b) appointed meeting
- 1c) appointed place
- 1d) appointed sign or signal
- 1e) tent of meeting

Notice carefully that the half-shekel offering was given by the congregation at an appointed place and at an appointed time; all of which took place around their meeting together.

The root word for "service" in the Hebrew is even more descriptive:

Lexicon Hebrew 3259 03259 ya`ad {yaw-ad'} a primitive root; TWOT - 878; v AV - meet 7, together 5, assemble 4, appointed 3, set 3, time 2, betrothed 2, agreed 1, appointment 1, gather 1; 29

- 1) to fix, appoint, assemble, meet, set, betroth
- 1a) (Qal) to appoint, assign, designate
- 1b) (Niphal)
- 1b1) to meet
- 1b2) to meet by appointment
- 1b3) to gather, assemble by appointment
- 1c) (Hiphil) to cause to meet
- 1d) (Hophal) to be set, be placed before, be fixed

Again, we see conclusively, that the half-shekel offering over and above the Tithe supported the meeting and assembling of the congregation for service unto the LORD. It covered not only the "place" where they met, but all expenses related to their "services." Notice carefully that this "atonement offering for their previous false worship" was to be placed before something or someone. It is not too hard to figure that it was placed before God as a sign of their repentance and atonement for past idolatries.

It is this "atonement" and "ransom for our souls" for past idolatries that serves as a "memorial" in behalf of the repentant before the LORD. Look at the Hebrew word for "memorial."

Lexicon Hebrew 2146 02146 zikrown {zik-rone'} from 02142; TWOT - 551b; n m AV - memorial 17, remembrance 6, records 1; 24

- 1) memorial, reminder, remembrance

The root word is:

Lexicon Hebrew 2142 02142 zakar {zaw-kar'} a primitive root; TWOT - 551; v AV - remember 172, mention 21, remembrance 10, recorder 9, mindful 6, think 3, bring to remembrance 2, record 2, misc 8; 233

- 1) to remember, recall, call to mind
- 1a) (Qal) to remember, recall
- 1b) (Niphal) to be brought to remembrance, be remembered, be thought of, be brought to mind
- 1c) (Hiphil)
- 1c1) to cause to remember, remind
- 1c2) to cause to be remembered, keep in remembrance
- 1c3) to mention
- 1c4) to record
- 1c5) to make a memorial, make remembrance

When we begin to Tithe correctly, and then take upon ourselves the commandment of the half-shekel offering to support true Biblical ministries which teach the "narrow way, then we bring ourselves before God for His remembrance of both our repentance and love for Him and His truth. Each time we support true ministries from offerings over and above the Tithe we cause God to remember our total dedication to His Word which we both hold, propagate, and finance as our responsibility before our brothers and sisters whom are still embedded in false teachings and man-made traditions that look religious, but when exposed to the light of Yahweh's Holy Torah, are full of dead men's bones.

Lastly notice that all were to support the going forth of the truths of God's Word equally. No one was to give more or less than the other. This ensures that the rich will not dominate the poor in the church, thus reinforcing that God is not a respecter of persons, and neither should Pastors or Preachers. Oh how God hates cliques in churches, those because of influence, power, or money have the "inside tract" with the Pastors, where the "blue color worker" is shunned for his inability to contribute more than the next person of higher social status. I have seen this game played first hand by the best of them when I Pastored full-time in the Metroplex of Dallas where the wealthy abound. But so do the widows.

As you can now clearly see, the Bible does not allow for support of ministry through the Tithe, but only through offerings above the Tithe.

Only part of your Tithe goes to support the "teacher," for those who labor hard in word and doctrine are worthy of double honor ("money" in Greek-thus we are not to muzzle the ox that treads out the grain and spiritual truths for the rest of us); but **NEVER** should the Tithe or part of the Tithe go to finance and support the ministry, the church, or the church's budget and expenses. That is relegated to offerings over and above the Tithe.

Lastly, this will be shocking to most Pastors and Preachers today, but women are exempt from the support of the Tabernacle, Temple, or Church according to Jewish Law. That means that no longer will widows have to give money to the church to buy God's favor as they have been erroneously told. Too often when Pastoring I encountered widows with children or unmarried women with children who struggled to eat and clothe themselves because they had been told that they would be robbing from God if they didn't give to the church. This abomination and false teaching is incorrect on two fronts: 1) women are exempt from supporting ministries based upon the example that women in Israel were exempt from giving to the Temple and Tabernacle in the form of the half-shekel offering, and 2) the Tithe is NEVER to be given to a religious institution to further ministry in any form whatsoever! However, women are still required to support with part of her Tithe the minister, the celebration of the Festivals and Sabbaths throughout the year, as well as support the poor, other widows, orphans, sick, etc.

In addition to the half-shekel offering, imposed annually on rich and poor alike for the maintenance of the Tabernacle and Temple and the Church, the citizens had to provide for the maintenance of the support of the poor, the Levites (teachers), and the celebration of Biblical Festivals and Sabbath. This much neglected teaching is responsible for making multitudes of good people guilty of "robbing God in Tithes and Offerings" for they contribute their Tithe moneys to religious institutions which do not place their gifts and offerings in the commanded and designated places required by God in Scripture. Again the traditions of men and your church have taken the place of the Bible and few are aware of this tragic sin because of their lack of Biblical knowledge. Thus, by default, being told they "rob God" if they don't give to the Church, in harsh reality, they "rob God" by giving to those religious institution which use their Tithe to run the Church instead of adhering to the half-shekel offering above the Tithe for support of the Church.

- Don't be guilty of robbing God by failing to place your Tithe in those places where Yahweh (God) has placed His name in Scripture as approved places where blessings can come from such obedience in giving.
- Likewise, don't be guilty of robbing God of your offerings as well as failing to support financially ministries that expose error and false worship with your offerings over and above the Tithe.

The paradox is ironic, but regrettably, our failure in obedience in both the Tithe and Half-shekel offerings are sin before God of the highest order for it brings the curse of Malachi 3 upon us And the supreme tragedy is that the curse comes because we trusted others to give for us according to the Scriptures (whether we knew them correctly or not...our spiritual leaders surely should). But in reality our Tithes and offerings above the Tithe are misrepresented and misapplied by those we trust; namely our Pastors and Preachers who use the funds we give to whatever pressing need they desire (regardless of Scripture). This is all done behind closed doors and with the assent of the multitudes with closed minds who are unknowing of God's commandments in these regards.

May God forgive us for our lack of study of His Word where these concepts can be discovered and adhered to

by those concerned about obeying God more than men, thus ensuring the worship of our Father in Heaven in Spirit and in Truth, and not in the traditions of your church which again makes the Word of God of non-effect!

IF YOU WON'T BELIEVE ME-WILL YOU BELIEVE THE PROPHET HAGGAI?

A striking illustration of the results of selfishly withholding the half-shekel offering from the cause of God was given in the days of the prophet Haggai. After their return from the captivity in Babylon, the Jews undertook to rebuild the temple of the Lord; but meeting determined opposition from their enemies, they discontinued the work (quit contributing the half-shekel offering along with free will offerings since they were starting from scratch); and a severe drought, by which they were reduced to actual want, convinced them that it was impossible to complete the building of the temple.

"The time is not come," they said, "the time that the Lord's house should be built." But a message was sent them by the Lord's prophet: "Is it time for you, O ye, to dwell in your paneled houses, and this house lie waste (God's house)? Now therefore thus saith the Lord of hosts; Consider your ways. Ye have sown much, and bring in little; ye eat, but ye have not enough; ye drink, but ye are not filled with drink; ye clothe you, but there is none warm; and he that earneth wages, earneth wages to put it into a bag with holes." Haggai 1:2-6.

And then the reason is given: "Ye looked for much, and, lo, it came to little; and when ye brought it home, I did blow upon it. SOUND FAMILIAR? Why? saith the Lord of hosts. Because of Mine house that is waste, and ye run every man unto his own house. Parallels must be made! The commandments of God concerning His House lie in waste while mankind runs to their own traditions! Look at the tragic results that come from not obeying the Word of God but relying on men's traditions instead..."Therefore the heaven over you is stayed from dew, and the earth is stayed from her fruit. And I called for a drought upon the land, and upon the mountains, and upon the corn, and upon the new wine, and upon the oil, and upon that which the ground bringeth forth, and upon men, and upon cattle, and upon all the labor of the hands." Verses 9-12.

"When one came to a heap of twenty measures, there were but ten: when one came to the pressfat for to draw out fifty vessels out of the press, there were but twenty. I smote you with blasting and with mildew and with hail in all the labors of your hands." Haggai 2:16, 19.

Having already experienced God's curse for not giving and building God's house correctly and roused by these warnings, the people set themselves to build the house of God and build it correctly with God's blessings. Then the word of the Lord came to them: "Consider now from this day and upward, from the four and twentieth day of the ninth month, even from the day that the foundation of the Lord's temple was laid, . . . from this day will I bless you." Verses 18, 19.

Today although God's House (the Church) is anything but laid waste as we examine the architectural monuments chiseled from marble built with the multiple Tithes belonging to the widows, the orphans, the sick, lame, and blind, there is no doubt that the Houses of God today suffer from a greater waste than in the days of Haggai the prophet. The Church today suffers from a famine of the Word of the Living God and lies in waste...devoid of many truths, which when adhered to will bring the supernatural blessings of God to our lives to which we are content to live without; continually blaming the Devil for blocking our blessing. The blame should be placed upon teachers of God's Word who are not capable of handling their positions and who have not prepared themselves adequately before God for such a high call.

We are warned to "CONSIDER OUR WAYS." It would do you well to begin to study the Bible as you never had to see if these things be so.

Let us not fail to learn from the example set for us by the people of Haggai's day who heard a message of correction and heeded it. Let us set ourselves to build the House of God correctly, properly giving offerings over and above the Tithe to support the Church where each male member over twenty years of age contributes monthly or yearly the same in order to finance the ministry. This will encourage the church to live within the budge of its congregation, and some may even be forced to close its doors. But don't loose heart, the home church is where it all started and the New Testament informs us that from such an environment all the world heard the Word of God; yet we are told today that with the multitude of mega-churches that we haven't enough satellites, radio and TV stations to reach the globe yet. Something is desperately wrong with the methods we have chosen to accomplish such a grand task.

Answer for yourself: Is God holding back His blessing because of our disobedience?

Answer for yourself: Are you tired of making excuses why many things don't work in the Spirit realm anymore? This was very embarrassing to me when in full time ministry when having to explain to the people why what they read in the Bibles about giving and blessings, for example, was not happening in their lives.

The answer is that we are robbing God of His Tithes and offerings as revealed in this article. It is obvious to the critical Bible student that our obedience is lacking in many areas, of which the Tithe and half-shekel offering are only the beginning.

Often I, having the same questions, would ask my spiritual authorities why what we are reading in the Bible was not our experience. Too often the same answer was given...."we lack faith." Dear Christian, it is not faith we lack...but OBEDIENCE! We failed to "CONSIDER OUR WAYS;" but I pray you won't let this courageous teaching be set upon a shelf somewhere to collect dust, and fail to CONSIDER YOUR WAYS in light of what you have just learned. Remember, it was only when the people of Haggai's day began to give correctly [both in Tithes and half-shekel offerings] and build the House of God CORRECTLY that God said "from this day will I bless you." What day? The day they began to give correctly!

There is only one thing for the "thinking Christian" to do; verify what I have taught you by your own Scriptural and Historical analysis, repent, ask for forgiveness before God, and begin to Tithe correctly and bring your support of Biblical Truth in the form of the half-shekel offering to those who dare courageously to preach the truth when is unpopular to do so in our religious society today. If you desire to learn the truth from religious fiction, I sincerely invite you to inquire as to how you may obtain more teachings that will ensure your life will be more Biblically correct and more pleasing to the God you love. Remember Jesus said "why do you say you love me and not obey me?"

Answer for yourself: Are we? May God bless you and yours. Shalom.

Craig Lyons M.Div.



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YOU MUST PAY YOUR TITHES ONLY AT THE PLACE WHERE GOD HAS CHOSEN TO PLACE HIS NAME

Before proceeding it is mandatory that you have read and understood our previous article entitled: "The Biblical Tithe." It was in this article, if you remember, that we delineated the various Commandments concerning where God commanded His Tithe (The Lord's Tithe) was to be given, how often, and in what proportion. Possessing this information then we can move on to more serious studies.

During my tenure at Pastor at one of the largest charismatic churches in the Dallas-Ft. Worth metroplex, I believe no other teaching of Yahweh was so mistakenly taught from our pulpit, as well as by the majority of pastors of multitudes of churches in our land, including the television and radio airways, as the commandments concerning our giving of offerings and tithes. Let us remember that the Holy Scriptures must be our guide in faith and practice, and not our traditions no matter how "holy" we have come to believe they are, as often **"FALSE TEACHINGS" come from our pulpits** and we are unaware if we have not studied the Bible for ourselves in the matter. That is where I found myself years ago as I **"BELIEVED EVERYTHING MY PASTOR TOLD ME;"** never checking him out in the matter to **"see if those things be so."**

Few "believers" in the contemporary churches of today realize that **Yahweh actually SPECIFIES THE PLACE one may LEGALLY pay their TITHES!** However, "Satan influenced" FALSE TEACHERS want to keep this knowledge a secret because they "preach tithing" or "beg for money" on a regular basis, and they certainly can NOT BRING THE TRUTH on TITHING and still expect their deceived and manipulated followers to DONATE to them!

Nevertheless, the LAW OF YAHWEH is the ONLY TRUTH in which we can rely!

Answer for yourself: Let me ask you a very simple question. If the BIBLE TEACHES SOMETHING DIFFERENT ON A SUBJECT THAN WHAT YOUR PASTOR OR YOUR DENOMINATION TEACHES, THEN WHICH SHOULD YOU BELIEVE?

On the surface that seems almost too simple a question to ask, but I dare say almost **ALMOST ALL CHRISTIANS I KNOW DISOBEY YAHWEH IN THEIR GIVING SUNDAY AFTER SUNDAY AND NEVER KNOW IT;** always responding in hope that after they give that NEXT OFFERING YAHWEH WILL SURELY ANSWER THEIR PRAYERS AND GIVE THEM THAT "HUNDRED FOLD RETURN." The sad reality is that they are led by the "blind" to give, and give, and give, yet their ship never seems to come in.

Answer for yourself: WHERE IS YAHWEH IN ALL OF THIS?

We at Bet Emet Ministries do not want you money. Often we suffer ridicule and slander by good people who

lack Biblical understanding for teaching the **HARD FACTS OF THE BIBLE THAT FLY IN FACE OF MAN'S TRADITIONS THAT MAKE THE WORD OF OUR PRECIOUS YAHWEH OF NONE EFFECT.** Such false teachings are to be "ridiculed" and "shamed openly" as YAHWEH COMMANDS IN HIS WORD (Deut 12 commands us to destroy, denounce, even ridicule openly FALSE TEACHINGS AND PREACHINGS that destroy and corrupt the LORD'S TRUTHS!). We are NEVER to speak derogatorily about others or ridicule them and their teachings **UNLESS THEY PRACTICE IDOLATRY AND THEN WE ARE COMMANDED TO EXPOSE THEM RUTHLESSLY AND DESTROY THEIR ALTARS AND PLATFORMS THEY USE FOR FALSE WORSHIP WHICH DECEIVES THE MULTITUDES.** Such MISPLACED WORSHIP (in our erroneous practice of giving OUR TITHES) is considered IDOLATRY BY YAHWEH AND HIS HOLY SCRIPTURES whether we like it or not! I have been guilty of this very "sin" through ignorance of His laws, but not more! **SADLY, THE WORSHIP IN OUR GIVING OF TITHES AND OFFERINGS IS BEING DIVERTED FROM YAHWEH'S PLACE PRESCRIBED IN HIS HOLY SCRIPTURES. SUCH DIVERSION OF KINGDOM FUNDS ROBS YAHWEH AND HIS PEOPLE OF HIS BLESSINGS THAT COME FROM OBEDIENT GIVING. THIS IS THE WORSHIP OF MONEY AND MAN'S GOALS INSTEAD OF YAHWEH' KINGDOM!** For this reason Mary and I are not man-pleasers, but rather choose to please our LORD and Savior for the truths He brings us that "open our blind eyes and deaf ears" in order that we may live a life more pleasing to Him, thus influencing others to **SEEK THE LORD OF HEAVEN AND EARTH in obedience which is the ULTIMATE MANIFESTATION OF OUR LOVE FOR HIM!**

We now enter into a deep study that will shed much light on proper giving as the Holy Scriptures teach. Once you see this for yourself we only ask that you honestly evaluate your experience in light of what you have learned.

THE LAW OF YAHWEH...DEUTERONOMY 12:5-8 SAYS:

Please note carefully what these Scriptures say: To THIS "**CHOSEN PLACE**" YOU ARE TO GO, and "**THERE**" you MUST PAY YOUR TITHES.

Answer for yourself: What is this "chosen place?" Is it your church? **What if you found out that it was not?**

Understand that we just read the LAW and COMMANDMENT of Yahweh....one of the 613 Laws of Yahweh, found in the first five books of your Bible. Such LAW AND COMMANDMENTS will never be taught by most of the **preachers of our land because they are in the practice of using YAHWEH'S TITHE TO BUILD PERSONAL AMBITIONS (CALLED MINISTRIES) AND MORE TELEVISION STATIONS AND BUILDINGS,** and let us be the first to say that this applies to the preachers of the "feast keeping" churches as well.

Answer for yourself: Does God allow for the TITHE to be used on these ventures? Before you say "yes" you need to keep reading; not only this article, but the remainder in our series on the tithe.

The Great Commission of taking into all the world the KINGDOM OF GOD BY TEACHING THEM NATIONS TO OBSERVE WHATSOEVER YESHUA COMMANDED HIS DISCIPLES HAS BEEN REPLACED TODAY WITH A MISSION OF BUILDING TV AND RADIO STATIONS, from which there is little Bible study or no Bible study at all; just the financing of lavish studios with lots of expensive decorations from where they continually beg for your money, asking incessantly to "send them your money today" in order to save the world. They say "if only you will send in your love gifts, God will reward you financially. **Often such people who respond use their TITHE MONEY to finance these FALSE PREACHERS, and if they do, then such action shows a complete lack of understanding of what God has commanded in His Word concerning the proper use of the tithe.** Usually they give you some neat things for your money, in other words you **ARE LITERALLY BUYING RELIGIOUS PARAPHERNALIA** such as tapes, books, plaques, glasses, sculptures lifetime memberships, etc. **YOU ARE NOT GIVING ANYTHING!** It saddens me but you could almost call it the **CHRISTIAN SHOPPING NETWORK;** in fact I saw such a program last week in Dallas that **TICKED DOWN THE TIME REMAINING for unsuspecting PRECIOUS PEOPLE to send in their \$58.00 for 58 Blessings before TIME RAN OUT! These "THIEVES FOR GOD" cause the unsuspecting**

TO FINANCE THE KINGDOM OF THE PREACHER INSTEAD OF YAHWEH!

EXAMINING THE "PLACE" WHERE GOD HAS COMMANDED TITHES BE GIVEN

Now listen carefully. These "FALSE TEACHERS" AND "FALSE PROPHETS" who ENTERTAIN THE FLOCK instead of TEACHING THE FLOCK are SPOKEN OF in the prophecies written in your own Bibles, and it is through Yahweh's PROPHECIES that one MUST SEARCH in order to find the PLACE YAHWEH HAS CHOSEN TO ESTABLISH HIS NAME!

All over the world today you can find "THOUSANDS AND THOUSANDS OF PREACHERS WHO COME IN THE OWN NAMES with NO WRITTEN AUTHORITY FROM YAHWEH TO BACK UP THE MESSAGES THEY BRING OR THE DOCTRINES THEY TEACH."

We appeal to you to open your hearts to the "WAY, THE TRUTH, AND THE LIFE" OF YAHWEH'S WORD and cast out the leaven of the false teachers whose doctrine cannot withstand the scrutiny and comparison with YAHWEH'S HOLY SCRIPTURES. We at Bet Emet Ministries believe the Bible Yeshua used, the Torah, and if someone teaches something opposite to the teachings of the Torah he is in YAHWEH'S WORDS A FALSE TEACHER AND A FALSE PROPHET, no matter how many degrees or positions he may have held in his denomination. HIS DENOMINATION IS NOT YESHUA'S DENOMINATION! TRUTH IS TRUTH AND ERROR IS ERROR! LET YAHWEH'S WORD BE HELD IN YOUR HEARTS OVER ALL FALSE TEACHINGS WHICH ABOUND!

LACKING WRITTEN AUTHORITY FROM YAHWEH FOR WHAT THEY TEACH ABOUT TITHING they falsely justify their selfish ambitions by teaching to the BIBLICALLY UNIFORMED (the majority of good people who attend the majority of churches in our country today) that "one" or "all" of the Laws of the Kingdom of Yahweh are "done away with." Yet there is absolutely NO SCRIPTURE to justify many of their "preaching." Many quote Paul in saying that "Christ is the end of the Law."

HAVE THE LAWS CONCERNING TITHING BEEN DONE AWAY WITH?

Answer for yourself: Have you ever wondered that if the Laws concerning tithing have been done away with (because according to Paul Christ is the end of the Law) then why do ministers repeatedly turn to Malachi and use it in their tithing "pitches" to their congregations.

Answer for yourself: Have you ever studied for yourself what the "storehouse" was, and if you had, then you would quickly realize that it has nothing to do with a "church" today; in fact, it is just the opposite of what the church is and does (practically). More on that later.

Answer for yourself: Have you ever looked up the word "end" in that Scripture (Romans 10:4) in your Strong's Concordance or Greek Lexicon?

The Greek word for "end" is Strong's # 5056. The Greek word is "telos": to set out for a definite point or goal, the point aimed at as a limit, the conclusion of an act or state, the result, ultimate result, a continual custom, finally, uttermost. This Scripture has nothing to do with YAHWEH'S LAW ENDING, AND IF ANYTHING, IT TEACHES THE CONTINUANCE OF HIS LAWS.

Answer for yourself: What did Yeshua say in Matt. 5:17:

Matthew 5

- 17. Think not that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfill.

Answer for yourself: Do you not realize that if you obey YAHWEH'S COMMANDMENTS as I am sure you will agree that Yeshua continually did, never disobeying his Father, then your life will be modeled to the goal of being like and living like Christ?

Answer for yourself: Are we not to imitate Yeshua?

Answer for yourself: Is he not "the point aimed at" as we reject the conforming influences in the world and choose rather to be transformed into the image of God as seen in Yeshua?

Answer for yourself: Are we not at the end of our lives to arrive at a point of conformity to Yahweh's Laws that we take upon ourselves the very stature of Christ?

Answer for yourself: Is God and His ways not the goal we pursue in life and model our lives after?

We at Bet Emet maintain without apology that it is IMPOSSIBLE TO PATTERN OUR LIVES AFTER THE GODLINESS WE SEE IN JESUS AND HIS LIFE, SEEING HIM AS THE GOAL WE ASPIRE TO IN ALL CONDUCT, BEHAVIOR, FAITH AND PRACTICE, IF WE NEGATE OR BELIEVE THE LAWS OF YAHWEH HAVE PASSED AWAY! To say the Laws that Yeshua lived by and modeled for us by his obedience are "done away with" obliterate the GOAL TO WHICH WE ARE ASPIRE TO ATTAIN IN THIS LIFE!

Thus, THERE IS NOT SCRIPTURE TO JUSTIFY THE "PREACHING" OF SUCH FALSE DOCTRINE AS WE SEE IN OUR CHURCHES TODAY WHEREBY THE TITHE IS TO BE USED IN THE MANNER THAT THE VAST MAJORITY OF CHRISTIAN CHURCHES IN OUR LAND USE IT. We should be ASHAMED that we have let ourselves be led by "BLIND TEACHERS AND PREACHERS" WHO HAVE LED US TO SIN IN THE NAME OF JESUS BY DISOBEYING YAHWEH'S LAWS; ONE SUCH LAW IS THE LAW OF TITHING TO THE PLACE WHERE YAHWEH HAS PLACED HIS NAME!

IS IT POSSIBLE TO TITHE AND SIN?

I understand Yahweh's anger at the false teachings and false preachers that lead thousands and thousands of people to follow them in their deception, even though Yahweh warned over and over, that: "MANY FALSE PROPHETS (FALSE TEACHERS) will DECEIVE THE WHOLE WORLD," as we have read in Revelation 12:9. MANY FALSE PROPHETS (FALSE PREACHERS) will arise and WILL DECEIVE the many, as is clearly written in Matthew 24:11: "any MANY FALSE PROPHETS (FALSE PREACHERS) will rise and WILL DECEIVE THE MANY." Second Peter 2:1 states: "But there were also FALSE PROPHETS (FALSE PREACHERS) among the people, just as there WILL BE FALSE TEACHERS AMONG YOU, who will secretly bring in damnable heresies, even denying the Redeemer Who brought them, and bringing swift destruction upon themselves."

It is THE MANY FALSE PREACHERS, those who preach AGAINST the Law of Yahweh, which if obeyed would lead the giver to tithe properly, who are leading this world to commit SIN! Realize THE TRUTH of what Yeshua was saying in Matthew 24:12: "And because "INIQUITY" will abound, the LOVE of the many will grow cold." This is happening today in the churches of America WHEN WE GIVE TITHES DESIGNATED BY YAHWEH FOR THE POOR, THE FATHERLESS, THE SICK, ETC., AND BUILD BIGGER AMPHITHEATERS AND CHURCHES, THEREBY CONTINUALLY BUILDING CONTEMPORARY TOWERS OF BABEL THAT TEACH DOCTRINE THE VIOLATES THE BIBLE!

The word translated "INIQUITY" (And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me ye that work iniquity) is the word #458, in Strong's Greek Dictionary as used in Matt. 7:23, and means: "anomia,"

from #459, illegality, ie. violation of law or generally wickedness: iniquity, transgress, transgression of the law, unrighteousness. Strong's #459 means: "anomos," lawless, NOT SUBJECT TO JEWISH LAW, by implication a Gentile, wicked, without law, lawless, transgressor, unlawful, wicked.

Answer for yourself: Let us ask you: Is this a New Testament Scripture?

IT SURE IS! THEN SOMETHING IS WRONG WITH THE TEACHING THAT TELLS YOU THE LAW OF YAHWEH IS PASSED AWAY BECAUSE YOUR NEW TESTAMENT (RIGHTLY UNDERSTOOD IN THE ORIGINAL WORDS) TEACHES YOU ENTIRELY SOMETHING DIFFERENT THAN THE MAJORITY OF FALSE TEACHERS AND PREACHERS ON TELEVISION, RADIO, AND THE MANY STREET CORNERS TEACH.

Answer for yourself: Who are you going to believe?

Answer for yourself: Are we not supposed to teach the Bible?

Answer for yourself: Are we not to pattern our lives after the Bible?

Answer for yourself: Can you show me where we have the right to teach a tradition we received as a child and grew up revering as an adult in the FACE OF BIBLICAL FACT THAT PRONOUNCES SUCH BELIEFS AND TEACHINGS A LIE?

WE HAVE SINNED! WE HAVE LED OTHERS TO SIN IN IGNORANCE LIKE OURSELVES!

Paul teaches us that he "WOULD NOT HAVE US BE IGNORANT BRETHREN! We at Bet Emet only wish to teach you the Bible, not destroy Yeshua's church, **BUT IF WE ARE TO BE CO-LABORERS WITH YESHUA, HOW DARE I TEACH SOMETHING DIFFERENT THAN THE ARCHITECT'S PLANS!**

I just showed you that James Strong, author of his Concordance, calls this "LAW" that we violate (WHICH WILL CAUSE YESHUA TO TELL US TO DEPART FROM HIM) the "JEWISH LAW" which refers to the TORAH, or the FIRST FIVE BOOKS of the Bible. Yeshua said "BECAUSE THE BREAKING of the Law of Yahweh WAS ABOUNDING, the LOVE of the MANY was growing cold."

Answer for yourself: HAS NOT OUR LOVE FOR OUR NEIGHBOR GROWN COLD WHEN WE IN EFFECT DISOBEY THE COMMANDMENTS CONCERNING THE TITHE BY FAILING TO FEED, CLOTHE, EDUCATE, BUY MEDICINE OR EYEGLASS FOR, PROVIDE HEARING AIDS FOR THE DEAF AND WALKING CANES FOR THE LAME, DELIVER FROM WELFARE ROLLS MANY BY TEACHING A SKILL, ETC., AND IN ITS PLACE USE SUCH MONEY COMMANDED BY GOD TO BE USED ONLY IN THESE AREAS TO BUILD MULTI-MILLION DOLLAR BUILDINGS USED FOR BEGGING FOR MORE MONEY TO FINANCE SUCH EDIFICES THAT OUR CHILDREN WILL STRUGGLE THEIR WHOLE LIVES TO PAY?

In effect, Yeshua was CONDEMNING the FALSE PREACHERS in this world and does so today!

Let us examine what Yeshua says in Matt. chapter 24:5: "MANY FALSE PREACHERS would come AGAINST HIS NAME, AND WOULD DECEIVE THE MANY;" In Matt. 24:9 Yeshua teaches us that the breaking of Yahweh's Law sill abound, which shows that it is the "teaching" of these FALSE PREACHERS that causes the LOVE of the people to grow cold BECAUSE these FALSE PREACHERS "TEACH" AGAINST THE LAWS WRITTEN IN THE HOLY SCRIPTURES, "preaching" that they are "done away with."

These FALSE TEACHERS do not want you to keep Yahweh's Laws.

Answer for yourself: WHY?

If the people of this world OBEYED YAHWEH'S LAWS, then these same people would TAKE THEIR TITHES TO THE PLACE YAHWEH HAS CHOSEN TO ESTABLISH HIS NAME, RATHER THAN to the Churches and Assemblies where "MEN" have chosen to start "THEIR OWN RELIGIOUS WORKS." THESE FALSE TEACHERS ROB YAHWEH'S CHILDREN OF BLESSINGS ONLY WHICH YAHWEH WILL GIVE THROUGH OTHERS BY THE CORRECT DISTRIBUTION OF THE TITHE. THESE FALSE TEACHES build bigger TEMPLES and CHURCH BUILDINGS, MORE TELEVISION CHANNELS THROUGHOUT THE LAND, BUY MORE EXPENSIVE TELEVISION TIME IN STEAD OF FEEDING THE HUNGRY, CLOTHING THE NAKED, PROVIDING MEDICAL SERVICES TO THE POOR WHO CANNOT AFFORD THEIR OWN. I could go on but the tithe was NEVER MEANT to be used in the manner we see today!

Answer for yourself: Let me ask you, what does a widow woman with dependent children need more, her rent paid because she is sick, or to send in \$40.00 a month for ten months in hopes that her "hundred fold" blessing will miraculously fall from the sky? I plead with those who read this newsletter to arise from religious slumber and wake to the truth contained in the Bible.

Many will feel we at Bet Emet have a "critical spirit" or are "bitter" because we ATTACK THE ERROR IN DOCTRINE taught as truths to the Body of Christ. I call you attention to Deuteronomy chapter 12:2-5 where we are instructed to "UTTERLY DESTROY ALL THE PLACES, WHERE IN THE NATIONS WHICH YE SHALL POSSESS SERVED THEIR GODS, UPON THE HIGH MOUNTAINS, AND UPON THE HILLS, AND UNDER EVERY GREEN TREE: AND YE SHALL OVERTHROW THEIR ALTARS, AND BREAK THEIR PILLARS, AND BURN THEIR GROVES WITH FIRE; AND YE SHALL HEW DOWN THE GRAVEN IMAGES OF THEIR GODS, AND DESTROY THE NAMES OF THEM OUT OF THAT PLACE. YE SHALL NOT DO SO UNTO THE LORD YOUR GOD, BUT UNTO THE PLACE WHICH THE LORD YOUR GOD SHALL CHOOSE ...TO PUT HIS NAME..SHALL YE SEEK..AND SHALL YOU COME."

Notice we are to "UTTERLY DESTROY" ALL THE PLACES...OF FALSE WORSHIP. Let me ask you a question:

Answer for yourself: IF YOU ARE GIVING YOUR TITHES AND OFFERING IN ERROR, IS THIS NOT A MANIFESTATION OF FALSE WORSHIP?

Answer for yourself: IS NOT YOUR HEART AND MIND LED ASTRAY IN CORRUPT WORSHIP WHEN WE GIVE OPPOSITE TO HOW THE BIBLE INSTRUCTS?

We are commanded to UTTERLY DESTROY FALSE WORSHIP. "UTTERLY DESTROY" are the same words in Hebrew corresponding to Strong's # 06: "break, destroy, destruction, cause to make to perish." Yahweh desires we **DESTROY ALL SPIRITUAL UNTRUTHS. We are to "OVERTHROW" false altars diverting sacrifices and offerings not warranted by YAHWEH IN HIS HOLY LAW. WE ARE TO OVERTHROW FALSE WORSHIP;** Strong's #5422 corresponds to "nathats" in Hebrew: "tear down, beat down, break down, cast down, destroy, overthrow, pull down, throw down." **We are to "BREAK" the pillars of untruths that keep YAHWEH'S CHILDREN IN SPIRITUAL BONDAGE THAT BRINGS THE CURSES (absence of Blessings) TO THEIR LIVES. "BREAK" is Strong's # 7665 corresponding to "shabar" in Hebrew: "burst, break down, broken hearted, bring to birth, crush, destroy, hurt, tear." We are to "HEW DOWN THE GRAVEN IMAGES." "HEW" corresponds to Strong's # 1438 corresponding to "gada": "to destroy anything, cut asunder, cut down, cut off." Notice in Deut. 12:4 that "YOU SHALL NOT DO SO UNTO THE LORD YOUR GOD." In otherwords, WE ARE NOT TO DESTROY, CAUSE TO PERISH, TEAR DOWN, CAST DOWN, PULL DOWN, THE TRUTH ABOUT YAHWEH OR HIS LAWS. BUT WE DEFINITELY ARE TO DO THIS AND MORE TO FALSE TEACHINGS, DECEPTION, AND LIES THAT**

LEAD US TO SIN AND KEEP US FROM THE TRUTH OF YAHWEH'S WORD. Notice also we are "TO CAUSE BROKEN HEARTEDNESS OVER THE SINS WE HAVE COMMITTED ALL THE TIME BELIEVING WE HAVE BEEN HONORING YAHWEH WITH OBEDIENCE" and "BRING TO BIRTH" THE TRUTH TO OUR HEATS!

We at Bet Emet bring **SCRIPTURAL FACT TO YOUR AWARENESS** that you may "TEAR" your hearts and not your garments before Yahweh. **We at Bet Emet have the anointing of Jeremiah as found in the Scriptures. Look at Jeremiah 1:5-10 one and notice the CALL OF JEREMIAH WHO WAS LIKEWISE SENT TO A RELIGIOUS PEOPLE TO CONFRONT THEM WITH THEIR SINS IN HOPE OF REPENTANCE:**

Jeremiah 1

- 5 Before I formed thee in the womb I knew thee; and before thou wast born I sanctified thee, [and] I ordained thee a prophet to the nations. {ordained: Heb. gave}
- 6 Then said I, Ah, Lord GOD! behold, I cannot speak: for I [am] a child.
- 7 But the LORD said to me, Say not, I [am] a child: for thou shalt go to all that I shall send thee, and whatever I command thee thou shalt speak.
- 8 Be not afraid of their faces: for I [am] with thee to deliver thee, saith the LORD.
- 9 Then the LORD put forth his hand, and touched my mouth. And the LORD said to me, Behold, I have put my words in thy mouth.
- 10 See, I have this day set thee over the nations and over the kingdoms, to root out, and to pull down, and to destroy, and to throw down, to build, and to plant.

We at Bet Emet, like Jeremiah, ARE NOT AFRAID OF THE FACES OF THE FALSE TEACHERS AND FALSE PROPHETS WHO SPREAD LIES AND DECEPTIONS IN YESHUA'S NAME CONCERNING THE TITHE OR OTHER ERRORS FOR THAT MATTER (and believe me they abound...you only have to study our websites to see them). Truly the Lord has put his hand and touched my mouth with YAHWEH'S UNCOMPROMISING TRUTHS. YAHWEH has given us the call at Bet Emet "TO ROOT OUT, AND TO PULL DOWN, AND TO DESTROY, AND TO THROW DOWN," but notice for what purpose...."TO BUILD AND TO PLANT!"

Answer for yourself: In otherwords, we desire that "fruit abound to your account" and if you disobey Yahweh in ignorance how can you expect rewards in the world to come my friend?

NOTICE, we are NOT TO DESTROY, THROW DOWN THE SACRED WORD OF YAHWEH..."YE SHALL NOT DO SO UNTO THE LORD YOUR GOD."

Answer for yourself: If FALSE TEACHING AND FALSE PREACHING has PERVERTED YAHWEH'S TRUTHS ABOUT THE TITHE, IS THAT NOT DESTRUCTION OF HIS TRUTH?

Answer for yourself: WE ARE NOT TO DO SO UNTO THE LORD! THESE FALSE TEACHERS WHO TEACH OPPOSITE OF GOD'S WORD, ARE THEY NOT GUILTY OF DESTROYING YAHWEH'S WORD?

Answer for yourself: ARE WE NOT GUILTY IN MAINLINE CHRISTIANITY TODAY?

Answer for yourself: ARE YOU NOT BROKEN AND THE FALSE ALTARS OF YOUR HEAT AT COMING TO THE AWARENESS OF SUCH SINS?

Answer for yourself: ARE YOU NOT CONCERNING ABOUT YOUR REWARDS OR LACK OF REWARDS

IN HEAVEN?

We call upon you to destroy the altars of man's teachings that live in your hearts THAT HAVE REPLACED THE ALTARS OF YAHWEH'S TEACHINGS WHERE ACCEPTABLE SACRIFICES CAN BE MADE TO YAHWEH!

NOTICE what Yeshua says concerning these FALSE TEACHERS AND FALSE PREACHERS "who do religious works ON THEIR OWN," telling us THEIR SENTENCE in Luke 13:22-28:

Luke 13

- 22 And he went through the cities and villages, teaching, and journeying toward Jerusalem.
- 23. Then said one to him, Lord, are there few that are saved? And he said to them,
- 24 Strive to enter in at the narrow gate: for many, I say to you, will seek to enter in, and shall not be able.
- 25 When once the master of the house hath risen up, and hath shut the door, and ye begin to stand without, and to knock at the door, saying, Lord, Lord, open to us; and he shall answer and say to you, I know you not where ye are from:
- 26 Then ye shall begin to say, We ate and drank in thy presence, and thou hast taught in our streets.
- 27 But he shall say, I tell you, I know you not where ye are from; depart from me, all [ye] workers of iniquity.
- 28 There shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth, when ye shall see Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, and all the prophets, in the kingdom of God, and you [yourselves] thrust out.

Luke 13:26 teachers us that these "FALSE PREACHERS" in "RELIGIOUS WORKS" have proclaimed to their followers that they have "done the will of the Father" **but in reality have not!** Luke 13:27 teaches us that these "FALSE TEACHERS AND PREACHERS" who have promoted perversions and untruths, and promoted their own "RELIGIOUS WORKS INSTEAD OF THE WORKS OF GOD" are REJECTED! How horrible will the day of judgment be for both the "MANY WHO HAVE LEAD THE MULTITUDES AWAY FROM YAHWEH'S LAWS" as well as "THE MULTITUDES THEMSELVES"!" **Do not let that be you!**

Yeshua says "GET AWAY FROM ME, ALL YOU 'WORKERS OF INIQUITY'!"

By definition we find Strong's # 93 (iniquity) corresponding to "adikia" in Greek: "injustice, wrongful, unjust, unrighteousness, wrong." Although a different Strong's number from what we say in Matt. chapter 7, the meaning is the same. **LACK OF SUBJECTION TO JEWISH LAW-YAHWEH'S LAWS RESULTS IN UNRIGHTEOUSNESS and WRONG CONDUCT AND WRONGFUL WORSHIP! SUCH WRONG AND UNRIGHTEOUS WORSHIP IS SEEN IN BRINGING YOUR TITHES AND OFFERINGS TO PLACES OTHER THAT WHERE YAHWEH HAS PLACES HIS NAME. This plainly shows that these "religious leaders" have TAUGHT that the LAWS OF YAHWEH are "done away with," effectively leading their followers to COMMIT SIN!**

Therefore, BECAUSE these "workers of iniquity" teach the people to commit iniquity, or BREAK THE JEWISH LAW-YAHWEH'S LAWS, THEY ARE CUT OFF FROM YAHWEH, as we see in Isa. 59:2: "BUT YOUR INIQUITIES HAVE SEPARATED BETWEEN YOU AND YOUR GOD, AND YOUR SINS HAVE HID HIS FACE FROM YOU, THAT HE WILL NOT HEAR."

The same LAWS OF YAHWEH which tells you that ONE TENTH of all your increase belongs to Yahweh, also TELLS YOU WHERE TO TAKE YOUR TITHES!

Deut. 14:22 instructs you TO TITHE! Deut. 12:5-8 tells you "WHERE TO TAKE THAT

TITHE...AND IT IS NOT YOUR CHURCH IF THEY ARE NOT APPROPRIATING THE FUNDS IN THE COMMANDED AREAS AND IN THE COMMANDED AMOUNTS...FAILURE TO DO SO IS SIN...AND THEY MAKE YOU AN ACCESSORY TO ROBBERY OF GOD

Answer for yourself: How can we "accept" the one Scripture that tells us to "pay our tithes" while rejecting the other **Scripture that tells us to "take our tithes TO THE PLACE YAHWEH HAS CHOSEN TO ESTABLISH HIS NAME?"**

Such SALAD BAR CHRISTIANITY seen in the PICKING AND CHOOSING WHAT LAWS WE WILL AND WILL NOT OBEY IS SIN! For those who think they can "change" or "delete" EVEN ONE OF YAHWEH'S LAWS, they should read the next two Scriptures:

Deut. 4:2: "You shall NOT ADD to the word which I command you NOR SHALL YOU TAKE ANYTHING FROM IT, so that you may KEEP THE COMMANDMENTS OF YAHWEH your Father, which I command you."

Revelation 22:18-19: "For I testify to everyone who hears the words of the prophecy of this Book: IF ANY MAN WILL 'ADD TO THESE THINGS,' YAHWEH WILL ADD TO HIM THE PLAGUES THAT ARE WRITTEN IN THIS BOOK: and if any man WILL TAKE AWAY from the WORDS OF THE BOOK OF THIS PROPHECY, YAHWEH WILL TAKE AWAY HIS PART OUT OF THE BOOK OF LIFE, and out of the holy city, and from the things which are written in this Book."

Answer for yourself: What is the Book of Life? The metaphorical concept of a Book of Life dates from the Bible (Ex. 32:32, Mal. 3:16, Ps. 69:29); to be omitted or "blotted out" from the book means death. This idea was subsequently connected with the notion of an annual balancing of the heavenly books on the Days of Judgment (Rosh HaShannah and the Day of Atonement). The Sefer ha-Hayim is the Heavenly ledger containing the record's of man's deeds and conduct throughout the year. Evil men are erased from the Book of Life and not inscribed with the righteous. Judah ha-Nasi said "Know what is above you...and Eye that sees, and Ear that hears, and a Book in which all your deeds are recorded" (Avot. 2:1)., while R. Akiba declared that "the ledger is open, then hands records (Avot. 3:16). Three separate "books" are opened on Rosh HaShannah: one for the thoroughly wicked, who are immediately condemned to death; a second for the wholly righteous, who are inscribed and sealed for life; and a third for "intermediate" or average people, whose fate is held in suspense until the Day of Atonement when it is sealed.

Everyone is made a promise by Yahweh, either a PROMISE OF BLESSINGS OR A PROMISE OF CURSINGS. Those WHO DELETE FROM or ADD TO THE LAWS OF YAHWEH are certainly made a "promise"-a promise that their opportunity for spiritual life with its attending REWARDS will be removed from them! James 2:10-11 states: "For whoever keeps the WHOLE LAW, and yet offends in ONE POINT, he is GUILTY OF ALL."

Only YAHWEH has "LIFE" to give, and that is the reason Yeshua said in Matt. 4:4 that the only "WAY TO LIFE ETERNAL" IS THROUGH LIVING BY THE EVERY WORD THAT PROCEEDS OUT OF THE MOUTH OF YAHWEH." This is also why those who DO YAHWEH'S COMMANDMENTS are BLESSED in Revelation 22:13 BECAUSE they PRACTICE THE "EVERY WORD" OF YAHWEH.

Thus, each of us is responsible for paying our TITHES TO YAHWEH! First, by knowing "what" to TITHE UPON and THEN TO "SEEK THE PLACE" YAHWEH HIMSELF TELLS US....through his Prophets of old..WHERE HE HAS CHOSEN TO ESTABLISH HIS NAME."

DO YOU KNOW WHERE TO "LEGALLY" PUT YOUR TITHES?

Deuteronomy 12

- 5. But the place which the LORD your God shall choose out of all your tribes to put his name there, [even] his habitation shall ye seek, and there thou shalt come:
- 6 And there ye shall bring your burnt offerings, and your sacrifices, and your tithes, and heave offerings of your hand, and your vows, and your freewill offerings, and the firstlings of your herds and of your flocks:
- 7 And there ye shall eat before the LORD your God, and ye shall rejoice in all that ye put your hand to, ye and your households, in which the LORD thy God hath blessed thee.
- 8 Ye shall not do after all [the things] that we do here this day, every man whatever [is] right in his own eyes.

YAHWEH once chose Jerusalem as the PLACE TO ESTABLISH HIS NAME. However, YAHWEH REJECTED JERUSALEM....BECAUSE OF THE SAME THING THAT THE MAJORITY OF CHRISTIANITY IS DOING TODAY: REJECTING YAHWEH'S LAW, AND TURNING TO THE PRACTICE OF SIN INSTEAD! Jeremiah 23:9-11 teaches us why He rejected Jerusalem and reject us today if we practice sin instead of obedience to Godly tithing:

Also let us read Jer. 23:14-17 and 26:27:

Jeremiah 23

- 14 I have seen also in the prophets of Jerusalem an horrible thing: they commit adultery, and walk in lies: they strengthen also the hands of evildoers, that none doth return from his wickedness: they are all of them to me as Sodom, and the inhabitants of it as Gomorrah. {an...: or, filthiness}
- 15 Therefore thus saith the LORD of hosts concerning the prophets; Behold, I will feed them with wormwood, and make them drink the water of gall: for from the prophets of Jerusalem is profaneness gone forth into all the land. {profaneness: or, hypocrisy}
- 16 Thus saith the LORD of hosts, Harken not to the words of the prophets that prophesy to you: they make you vain: they speak a vision of their own heart, [and] not from the mouth of the LORD.
- 17 They say still to them that despise me, The LORD hath said, Ye shall have peace; and they say to every one that walketh after the imagination of his own heart, No evil shall come upon you. {imagination: or, stubbornness}

Jeremiah 23

- 26 How long shall [this] be in the heart of the prophets that prophesy lies? yea, [they are] prophets of the deceit of their own heart;
- 27 Who think to cause my people to forget my name by their dreams which they tell every man to his neighbor, as their fathers have forgotten my name for Baal.

BECAUSE OF SIN, BECAUSE OF THE BREAKING OF HIS LAWS, YAHWEH REJECTED THE LEVITICAL PRIESTHOOD AND THE PLACE WHICH HE HAD ONCE CHOSEN TO ESTABLISH HIS NAME! Matt. 23:37-38 states:

Matthew 23

- 37 O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, [thou] that killest the prophets, and stonest them who are sent to thee, how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under [her] wings, and ye would not!
- 38 Behold, your house is left to you desolate.

Notice the people of Yahweh murdered His messengers and stoned them who came to them with words of correction, reproof, instruction, and correction. Religious people usually fail to look within themselves to discern "if they be in the faith," FALSELY ASSUMING what their FALSE PREACHERS

HAVE TOLD THEM IS SO...WITHOUT THEIR OWN VERIFICATION THROUGH STUDY OF THE HOLY SCRIPTURES. Israel was not willing and their house (Temple) was DESERTED BY THE POWER AND PRESENCE OF YAHWEH. FOR REJECTION OF YAHWEH'S LAWS, and because we have disobeyed YAHWEH'S command in Deut. 12:13-14 where we are COMMANDED TO "TAKE HEED TO THYSELF THAT THOU OFFER NOT THY BURNT OFFERING (TITHES) IN EVERY PLACE THOU SEEST: BUT IN THE PLACE WHICH THE LORD SHALL CHOOSE..THOU SHALL OFFER THY BURNT OFFERINGS, AND THERE THOU SHALL DO ALL THAT I COMMAND THEE." Multitudes of voices clamor for your money today, readily to use Kingdom resources to build bigger monuments to men's dreams and architectural ingenuity. To the Biblically illiterate a bigger building is passed off as God's blessing, where in reality because they have used YAHWEH'S TITHE TO BUILD IT, it stands in heaven as a shame to the selfishness and perverseness of man's self-will in substituting the desires of men for THE WILL OF YAHWEH.

Answer for yourself: FINALLY, IS YAHWEH'S NAME PLACED TODAY IN THE MULTITUDES OF CHURCHES WHO FIRST OF ALL DON'T RECOGNIZE YAHWEH AS "THE NAME OF THE LORD" but rather call HIM BY TITLES INSTEAD OF HIS NAME?

Answer for yourself: Also, let me ask you, WOULD YAHWEH PLACE HIS NAME TODAY IN CONGREGATIONS AND CHURCH BUILDINGS THAT PERPETUALLY ROB HIM AND HIS PEOPLE OF HIS TITHES AND OFFERINGS?

Today the FALSE PREACHERS, when challenged by Ministries like Bet Emet WHO SUBMIT TO JEWISH LAW, respond the way the FALSE RELIGIOUS LEADERS DID in the time of Malachi. Let us examine in closing Mal. 3:6-12:

Malachi 3

- 6 For I [am] the LORD, I change not; therefore ye sons of Jacob are not consumed.
- 7. Even from the days of your fathers ye have gone away from my ordinances, and have not kept [them]. Return to me, and I will return to you, saith the LORD of hosts. But ye said, In what shall we return?
- 8 Will a man rob God? Yet ye have robbed me. But ye say, In what have we robbed thee? In tithes and offerings.
- 9 Ye [are] cursed with a curse: for ye have robbed me, [even] this whole nation.
- 10 Bring ye all the tithes into the storehouse, that there may be food in my house, and prove me now with this, saith the LORD of hosts, if I will not open you the windows of heaven, and pour you out a blessing, that [there shall] not [be room] enough [to receive it]. {pour...: Heb. empty out}
- 11 And I will rebuke the devourer for your sakes, and he shall not destroy the fruits of your ground; neither shall your vine cast her fruit before the time in the field, saith the LORD of hosts. {destroy: Heb. corrupt}
- 12 And all nations shall call you blessed: for ye shall be a delightsome land, saith the LORD of hosts.

Notice in verse 8 these FALSE PREACHERS OF THEIR DAY SAID "WHEREIN HAD WE ROBBED THEE? YAHWEH, may His Name be praised forever, said "IN TITHES AND OFFERINGS." They were without excuse...they had the LAWS OF YAHWEH and THEY SINNED WITH KNOWLEDGE. WE are likewise GUILTY because we SIN IN IGNORANCE, having grown up in Christian Churches WHO NEVER LOOKED UP NOR TAUGHT THEIR MEMBERS TO LOOK UP THE WORDS OF THEIR BIBLES IN THE ORIGINAL LANGUAGES! Yeshua is a Jew! The revelation of our Bible is recorded in Hebrew and Greek, and not English.

Answer for yourself: Looking up such words as "goal" and "iniquity" should make the average Christian ponder if he has truly "WORSHIPPED THE FATHER IN SPIRIT AND TRUTH" or have you and I been led in ignorance to "ROB GOD IN TITHES AND OFFERINGS" by first of all BY NOT BRINGING THEM TO THE PLACE WHERE YAHWEH HAS PLACED HIS NAME ("the" is a definite article signifying a

PARTICULAR PLACE... NOT COMMON... NOT TO EVERY PLACE YOU SEEST)?

"YAHWEH'S PLACE" where we are to bring our offerings and tithes has ALWAYS BEEN THE SAME PLACE....THE TITHE IS COMMANDED FOR 6 out of 7 years.

TEACHING LEVITE RECEIVED ALL THE "FIRST" TITHE (10%) EACH YEAR BECAUSE HE TAUGHT THE TRUTHS OF YAHWEH'S LAW TO HIS PEOPLE. NOWHERE in the Bible are TITHES TO BE GIVEN TO FALSE PREACHERS WHO TEACH YOU THE LAWS OF YAHWEH ARE PASSED AWAY! We at Bet Emet, understanding that the Temple, Priestly service, and Levitical service as one seen is no longer pertinent today. Thus, this "first tithe" is suspended until the building of the Temple.

LET US INVESTIGATE THE "SECOND TITHE." TWO of the remaining 6 years THE TITHE IS TO BE GIVEN TO THE WIDOWS, THE SICK, THE LAME, THE BLIND, THE INFIRM, etc. THE LEVITE IS ALSO INCLUDED IN THIS 10% FOR THESE TWO YEARS. THIS MEANS THAT "ALL" THE TITHE WAS SEPARATED EQUALLY AMONG THEM! Lastly, the REMAINING FOUR YEARS YOU ARE TO KEEP THE TITHE AND USE IT TO CELEBRATE AND REJOICE WITH YAHWEH OVER HIS HOLY DAYS AND FESTIVALS: Sabbath, Passover, Unleavened Bread, First Fruits, Pentecost, Rosh HaShanah, Yom Kippur, and Tabernacles. Also included in the Festival Tithe is sharing with the poor and Levite-teacher that they may likewise rejoice before Yahweh! TO THESE AND ONLY THESE CATEGORIES HAS YAHWEH PLACED HIS NAME AND APPROVAL REPEATEDLY THROUGHOUT THE OLD AND NEW TESTAMENT! TO THESE DESIGNATED "PLACES" YAHWEH HAS REPEATEDLY PLACED HIS NAME AND HIS BLESSING.

NOWHERE will you find WRITTEN AUTHORITY in either the Old Testament or the New Testament to validate the practice of giving as PRACTICED BY THE VAST MAJORITY OF CHRISTIAN CHURCHES TODAY. I literally beg those who read this letter to please, please study the tithe for yourself. I am desirous that you inherit all our God desires to give you. It truly grieves my spirit that those in authority are often so closed minded that they cannot admit they are in error and change. You, but being led astray, keep from your neighbors the literal Kingdom of Heaven because God meets others needs through you and I; He is not sending manna from heaven anymore. If we don't know the truth, we shall never be free, and worse yet, we can never set others free and loose them who are bound.

Answer for yourself: Is that not what the real anointing does?

Please, please...let me challenge you, my friends, to listen to what I say and please take issue with me personally if you desire that we might look into the matter together in love to see if these things be so.

Since we at Bet Emet believe the Scriptures over Church tradition that violates it, we have no other choice to confront such heresy where we find it as it surfaces on every street corner, television, letter, etc. WHY you ask? Deut. 12:9 tells you: "For you are not yet come to the rest and to the inheritance, which the Lord your God giveth you!" We as Christians only have an earnest of what YAHWEH has in store for us. We are to lay away treasure daily by obeying the mitzvoth (COMMANDMENTS). **In particular, Matt. 6 teaches this principle in relation TO GIVING ALMS WHICH IS PART OF OUR TITHE!**

Answer for yourself: What rewards can we expect FROM a gracious, caring, and giving YAHWEH IF WE DISOBEY THE COMMANDMENTS THAT ARE THE VERY BASIS FOR SPREADING HIS KINGDOM?

Answer for yourself: Are we not guilty of financing "THE DREAMS OF THE MANY FALSE PREACHERS" INSTEAD OF THE NARROW WAY THAT LEADS TO LIFE...now in this time and the world to come?

We at Bet Emet plead with you that YOU TAKE HEED TO THYSELF THAT THOU OFFER NOT THY BURNT OFFERINGS IN EVERY PLACE

you must pay your tithes only at the place where god has placed his name

Shalom.

THAT THOU SEEST!



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WHAT SHOULD WE GIVE TO OUR CHURCH? THE TITHE "OR" THE HALF-SHEKEL OFFERING & WHICH IS SIN AND BRINGS THE CURSE OF MALACHI 3 TO YOU AND YOUR FAMILY?

It gives me much pleasure to deal with a topic in this article that is not only widely misunderstood in Christianity today, but neglected by almost all churches. In this article you will quickly come to understand why. The tragic fact of the matter is that since we neglect or misunderstand the commandment in Exodus 30:11-16 concerning the "half-shekel" offering that allows for the financing of ministries and churches, we take erroneously from the Tithe delegated funds and misappropriate them in supporting such ministries and churches instead of righteously overseeing that they be used correctly as willed and commanded by God in the Holy Scripture. Let us investigate the matter at length in hopes that new understanding will lead to repentance in both our belief-system and our obedience and conduct in such matters before God and man.

THE HALF-SHEKEL OFFERING

Exodus chapter 19 records for us the events connected with Israel at Sinai and chapter 20 records for us the giving of the Ten Commandments. These "Ten" are better understood at ten "categories" from which all 613 commandments originate. The "ten" categories serve only as groupings whereby related commandments are grouped for better and more complete understanding. Along with the first four commandments deal with worship:

Exod 20:1 (KJS) And God spake all these words, saying, 2 I [am] the L-RD thy God, which have brought thee out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage. {bondage: Heb. servants} 3 Thou shalt have no other gods before me. 4 Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image, or any likeness [of any thing] that [is] in heaven above, or that [is] in the earth beneath, or that [is] in the water under the earth; 5 Thou shalt not bow down thyself to them, nor serve them; for I the L-RD thy God [am] a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth [generation] of them that hate me; 6 And shewing mercy unto thousands of them that love me, and keep my commandments. 7 Thou shalt not take the name of the L-RD thy God in vain; for the L-RD will not hold him guiltless that taketh his name in vain. 8 Remember the sabbath day, to keep it holy. 9 Six days shalt thou labour, and do all thy work: 10 But the seventh day [is] the sabbath of the L-RD thy God: [in it] thou shalt not do any work, thou, nor thy son, nor thy daughter, thy manservant, nor thy maidservant, nor thy cattle, nor thy stranger that [is] within thy gates: 11 For [in] six days the L-RD made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them [is], and rested the seventh day: wherefore the L-RD blessed the sabbath day, and hallowed it.

The worship of God had to be organized and regulated by a pattern that would ensure its continuance to subsequent generations without change or deletion as when first given and commanded by God. To help this goal be realized God commanded that Israel build a Tabernacle that would both house God's Presence as well as serve as a teaching example for His correct worship, thus providing a pattern of worship for all time because God is the same yesterday, today, and tomorrow. Beginning with Exodus chapter 25 God begins to command Israel to build the ark of the covenant, the table of showbread, the golden candlesticks, as well as the tabernacle itself. Exodus chapter 30 records for us that God "provides the remedy before the wound" in that He instructs His people concerning the financing of such ministry.

Uniquely tied to the financing of organized worship of God is the concept of atonement for idolatry and false worship. The Rabbis instruct us that such "remedy" and "atonement" was provided before the actual sin of idolatry in the worship of the golden calf in Exodus 30. God's mercy and forgiveness was provided to Israel in giving them a way of providing atonement for their souls because of idolatry and false worship connected with the golden calf through the financing and promulgation of "true worship" by supporting organized Tabernacle worship with the half-shekel tax.

But you probably say that you are not in need of atonement for false worship or idolatry in your life. Oh brother and sister, how little you truly know if you are not a study of Scripture, History, or the Original Language of the Bible for there is not one who attends contemporary Christian churches to whom this does not apply. Not so, well study for yourself as I diligently have for fifteen years and the answer is very apparent. You only have to attend the Catholic church or ascribe to many of the doctrines taught in the Protestant churches today to be guilty of idolatry, and amazingly so, without your slightest awareness. More on that later, please keep reading.

Let us examine Exodus chapter 30 in detail:

Exod 30:11 (KJS) And the L-RD <3068> spake <1696> (8762) unto Moses <4872>, saying <559> (8800), 12 When thou takest <5375> (8799) the sum <7218> of the children <1121> of Israel <3478> after their number <6485> (8803), then shall they give <5414> (8804) every man <376> a ransom <3724> for his soul <5315> unto the L-RD <3068>, when thou numberest <6485> (8800) them; that there be no plague <5063> among them, when [thou] numberest <6485> (8800) them. {their number: Heb. them that are to be numbered} 13 This they shall give <5414> (8799), every one that passeth <5674> (8802) among <5921> them that are numbered <6485> (8803), half <4276> a shekel <8255> after the shekel <8255> of the sanctuary <6944>: (a shekel <8255> [is] twenty <6242> gerahs <1626>:) an half <4276> shekel <8255> [shall be] the offering <8641> of the L-RD <3068>. 14 Every one that passeth <5674> (8802) among them that are numbered <6485> (8803), from twenty <6242> years <8141> old <1121> and above <4605>, shall give <5414> (8799) an offering <8641> unto the L-RD <3068>. 15 The rich <6223> shall not give more <7235> (8686), and the poor <1800> shall not give less <4591> (8686) than half <4276> a shekel <8255>, when [they] give <5414> (8800) an offering <8641> unto the L-RD <3068>, to make an atonement <3722> (8763) for your souls <5315>. {give more: Heb. multiply} {give less: Heb. diminish} 16 And thou shalt take <3947> (8804) the atonement <3725> money <3701> of the children <1121> of Israel <3478>, and shalt appoint <5414> (8804) it for the service <5656> of the tabernacle <168> of the congregation <4150>; that it may be a memorial <2146> unto the children <1121> of Israel <3478> before <6440> the L-RD <3068>, to make an atonement <3722> (8763) for your souls <5315>.

Exodus chapter 30 records for us a census of everyone twenty years and above, for it would be these people who would worship the golden calf and commit idolatry, thus sealing their fate. Through the census they are

enrolled to die in the wilderness. But notice the mercy of God "Everyone who is included in the census must pay a half-shekel . . . everyone of twenty years or more. . . The rich shall not give more, and the poor shall not give less, than the half-shekel (Exodus 30:14-15). In the days of Yeshua the half-shekel offering amounted to about 88 cents, but before you get ecstatic, please understand the expenses involved in the running of the Temple, when divided by the number of men over the age of twenty, averaged only 88 cents. This unbelievably small figure attests to the fact that there was only "one Temple in town" as well as the enormously large population within the nation itself. This does not apply to us today in the same way, for in every city there are hundreds of religious institutions and churches, and if the "budget" of each church were to be divided by the male membership over the age of twenty I can assure you the amounts would be staggeringly high; so high in fact, that because of the proliferation of disunity as seen in Christianity today with over 22,000 different denominations, very few churches could support themselves and keep their doors open if they adhered to and obeyed this commandment and didn't rob from God the Tithe to make up the shortfall.. Let us keep reading.

Because of false worship and idolatry the children of Israel twenty years of age and older who participated in the false worship of the golden calf are sealed to die in the wilderness, but their sins could be forgiven if they repented of idolatry and brought a sin-offering in the form of a half-shekel that would atone for their sins of false worship of God. Once enlightened to the truth, they were no longer to contribute and support false worship and false religion in any form or fashion, but instead, turn 180 degrees and begin to support and propagate Biblical truths, thus turning their backs upon the religious traditions of men that made the Word of God of none effect and which can be exposed as error when compared with Biblical fact and not fiction. Simply said, they were to no longer follow lies and false worship when discovered, but repent and contribute to the spreading of Biblical truths and no longer support financially religious errors. This is a real urgent message for the Christian Church today which considers itself infallible and incapable of error, when just a little concentrated study by those seeking truth will expose multitudes of doctrinal errors and false worship when compared and contrasted with Scripture. The problem is that too few study the ancient documents which reveal the errors when ingrafted among Biblical truth. Too many study relatively recent materials from the Reformation onward, but if the mistakes were made long before in the second or third century, then they will never discover it unless they look for the earliest deviation from the faith of Yeshua as it was handed down throughout history. They only reinforce error after error, not realize the inception of the original error. Instead of showing ourselves students of God's Word, whereby we rightly divide and interpret God's Word correctly (historically, culturally, politically, linguistically), multitudes sit in churches Biblically illiterate and ignorant of Biblical truth. They only covet what they hear repeated Sunday after Sunday, and when questioned about their beliefs and how their beliefs often contradict Scripture, they too easily pass such challenges of as the pursuits of heretics. How sadly they are wrong!

Again the support of churches and ministries which teach truth and not more erroneous traditions concerning more "golden calves" are to be supported by the half-shekel offering and NOT THE TITHE! If such religious institutions and churches teach provable Biblical errors they should not be supported at all!

Let me reiterate, nowhere does the Bible teach that churches, church budgets, or ministries are to be supported through the Tithe! Yet, that was my experience for most of my life in the contemporary American Christian Church, and most likely, it is yours as well. Support of ministries from the Tithe is called "ROBBERY" by God in the Book of Malachi.

What we fail to take into consideration is that "atonement" is connected to our faithful support of Biblical truth through offerings over and above the Tithe. Using the Tithe in place of the "half-shekel" offering does not bring the desired atonement according to Holy Scripture!

Supporting of institutions who uncompromising teach the truth of Scripture through offerings above the Tithe secures for the giver "ransom for his soul," since most likely we all have at one time or the other participated in neo-paganism done in Yeshua's name or been involved in idolatry whether we knew it then or not. Thus the major importance in understanding this commandment and practicing it correctly in our lives.

Let us look at the Hebrew word for "ransom":

Lexicon Hebrew 3724

03724 kopher {ko'-fer} from 03722; TWOT - 1025b; n m AV - ransom 8, satisfaction 2, bribe 2, camphire 2, pitch 1, sum of money 1, village 1; 17

- 1) price of a life, ransom, bribe
- 2) asphalt, pitch (as a covering)
- 3) the henna plant, name of a plant (henna?)
- 4) village

The root word is:

Lexicon Hebrew 3722 03722 kaphar {kaw-far'} a primitive root; TWOT - 1023,1024,1025,1026; v AV - atonement 71, purge 7, reconciliation 4, reconcile 3, forgive 3, purge away 2, pacify 2, atonement...made 2, **merciful** 2, cleansed 1, disannulled 1, **appease** 1, put off 1, pardon 1, pitch 1; 1) to cover, purge, make an atonement, **make reconciliation**, cover over with pitch

- 1a) (Qal) to coat or cover with pitch
- 1b) (Piel)
- 1b1) to cover over, pacify, propitiate
- 1b2) to cover over, atone for sin, make atonement for
- 1b3) to cover over, atone for sin and persons by legal rites
- 1c) (Pual)
- 1c1) to be covered over
- 1c2) to make atonement for
- 1d) (Hithpael) to be covered

God's mercy is seen in providing you and I a means of atoning for past times where we participated in false worship by giving us a way whereby we can today make reconciliation with God because of our false worship.

Literally we pacify His wrath over the idolatry we practiced. Notice carefully that this half-shekel atonement money is for atonement for **sins done in rites and ceremonies** that are considered as Law; literally what we do or once did thinking that it was both desired and commanded by God. **It is through supporting churches and ministries, not with the Tithe but with the half-shekel offering over and above the tithe, that we literally cleans ourselves before God of past idolatries and receive the mercy of God; thus bringing reconciliation with God in these regards.**

Further evidence is demonstrated that the offering we are to bring consists of a contribution of money as seen below when looking at the Hebrew word used in the verse for "offering."

Lexicon Hebrew 8641

08641 t@ruwmah {ter-oo-maw'} or t@rumah (Deut 12:11) {ter-oo-maw'} from 07311; TWOT - 2133i; n f AV - offering 51, oblation 19, heave 4, gifts 1, offered 1; 76

- 1) contribution, offering
- 1a) a heave offering
- 1b) any offering
- 1c) an offering to God
- 1d) an offering (of grain, money, etc)
- 1e) contribution

Notice also that **this offering is to be used specifically for the "service" of the ministry of the congregation**, regardless whether it was for the Tabernacle back then or churches today. The Hebrew word used for "service" is as follows:

Lexicon Hebrew 4150 04150 mow`ed {mo-ade'} or mo`ed {mo-ade'} or (fem.) mow`adah 2 Chr 8:13 {mo-aw-daw'} from 03259; TWOT - 878b; n m AV - congregation 150, feast 23, season 13, appointed 12, time 12, assembly 4, solemnity 4, solemn 2, days 1, sign 1, synagogues 1; 223

- 1) appointed place, appointed time, meeting
- 1a) appointed time
- 1a1) appointed time (general)
- 1a2) sacred season, set feast, appointed season
- 1b) appointed meeting
- 1c) appointed place
- 1d) appointed sign or signal
- 1e) tent of meeting

Notice carefully that the half-shekel offering was given by the congregation at an appointed place and at an appointed time; all of which took place around their meeting together.

The root word for "service" in the Hebrew is even more descriptive:

Lexicon Hebrew 3259 03259 ya`ad {yaw-ad'} a primitive root; TWOT - 878; v AV - meet 7, together 5, assemble 4, appointed 3, set 3, time 2, betrothed 2, agreed 1, appointment 1, gather 1; 29

- 1) to fix, appoint, assemble, meet, set, betroth
- 1a) (Qal) to appoint, assign, designate
- 1b) (Niphal)
- 1b1) to meet
- 1b2) to meet by appointment
- 1b3) to gather, assemble by appointment
- 1c) (Hiphil) to cause to meet
- 1d) (Hophal) to be set, be placed before, be fixed

Again, we see conclusively, that the half-shekel offering over and above the Tithe & supported the meeting and assembling of the congregation for service unto the L-RD. It covered not only the "place" where they met, but all expenses related to their "services." Notice carefully that this "atonement offering for their previous false worship" was to be placed before something or someone. It is not too hard to figure that it was placed before God as a sign of their repentance and atonement for past idolatries.

It is this "atonement" and "ransom for our souls" for past idolatries that serves as a "memorial" in behalf of the repentant before the L-RD.

Look at the Hebrew word for "memorial."

Lexicon Hebrew 2146 02146 zikrown {zik-rone'} from 02142; TWOT - 551b; n m AV - memorial 17, remembrance 6, records 1; 24

- 1) memorial, reminder, remembrance

The root word is:

Lexicon Hebrew 2142

02142 zakar {zaw-kar'} a primitive root; TWOT - 551; v AV - remember 172, mention 21, remembrance 10, recorder 9, mindful 6, think 3, bring to remembrance 2, record 2, misc 8; 233

- **1) to remember, recall, call to mind**
- **1a) (Qal) to remember, recall**
- **1b) (Niphal) to be brought to remembrance, be remembered, be thought of, be brought to mind**
- **1c) (Hiphil)**
- **1c1) to cause to remember, remind**
- **1c2) to cause to be remembered, keep in remembrance**
- **1c3) to mention**
- **1c4) to record**
- **1c5) to make a memorial, make remembrance**

When we begin to Tithe correctly, and then take upon ourselves the commandment of the half-shekel offering to support true Biblical ministries which teach the "narrow way, then we bring ourselves before God for His remembrance of both our repentance and love for Him and His truth. Each time we support true ministries from offerings over and above the Tithe we cause God to remember our total dedication to His Word which we both hold, propagate, and finance as our responsibility before our brothers and sisters whom are still embedded in false teachings and man-made traditions that look religious, but when exposed to the light of Yahweh's Holy Torah, are full of dead men's bones.

Lastly notice that all were to support the going forth of the truths of God's Word equally. No one was to give more or less than the other. This ensures that the rich will not dominate the poor in the church, thus reinforcing that God is not a respecter of persons, and neither should Pastors or Preachers. Oh how God hates clique in churches, those because of influence, power, or money have the "inside tract" with the Pastors, where the "blue color worker" is shunned for his inability to contribute more than the next person of higher social status. I have seen this game played first hand by the best of them when I Pastored full-time in the Metroplex.

As you can now clearly see, the Bible does not allow for support of ministry through the Tithe, but only through offerings above the Tithe. Only part of your Tithe goes to support the "minister," for those who labor hard in word and doctrine are worthy of double honor (money in Greek-thus we are not to muzzle the ox that treads out the grain and spiritual truths for the rest of us); but never should the Tithe or part of the Tithe go to finance and support the ministry, the church, or the church's budget and expenses. That is relegated to offerings over and above the Tithe.

Lastly, this will be shocking to most Pastors and Preachers today, but women are exempt from the support of the Tabernacle, Temple, or Church according to Jewish Law. That means that no longer will widows have to give money to the church to buy God's favor as they have been erroneously told. Too often when Pastoring I encountered widows with children or unmarried women with children who struggled to eat and clothe themselves because they had been told that they would be robbing from God if they didn't give to the church. This abomination and false teaching is incorrect on two fronts: 1) women are exempt from supporting ministries based upon the example that women in Israel were exempt from giving to the Temple and Tabernacle in the form of the half-shekel offering, and 2) the Tithe is NEVER to be given to a religious institution to further ministry in any form whatsoever! However, women are still required to support with part of her Tithe the minister, the celebration of the Festivals and Sabbaths throughout the year, as well as support the poor, other widows, orphans, sick, etc.

In addition to the half-shekel offering, imposed annually on rich and poor alike for the maintenance of the Tabernacle and Temple and the Church, the citizens had to provide for the maintenance of the support of the poor, the Levites (teachers), and the celebration of Biblical Festivals and Sabbath. This much neglected teaching is responsible for making multitudes of good people guilty of "robbing God in Tithes and Offerings" for they contribute their Tithe moneys to religious institutions which do not place their gifts and offerings in the commanded and designated places required by God in Scripture. Again the traditions of men and you church have taken the place of the Bible and few are aware of this tragic sin because of their lack of Biblical knowledge.

Thus, by default, being told they "rob God" if they don't give to the Church, in harsh reality, they "rob God" by giving to those religious institution which use their Tithe to run the Church instead of adhering to the half-shekel offering above the Tithe for support of the Church.

Don't be guilty of robbing God by failing to place your Tithe in those places where Yahweh (God) has placed His name in Scripture as approved places where blessings can come from such obedience in giving. Likewise, don't be guilty of robbing God of your offerings as well as failing to support financially ministries that expose error and false worship with your offerings over and above the Tithe. The paradox is ironic, but regrettably, our failure in obedience in both the Tithe and Half-shekel offerings are sin before God of the highest order for it brings the curse of Malachi 3 upon us And the supreme tragedy is that the curse comes because we trusted others to give for us, and our Tithes and offerings above the Tithe are misrepresented and misapplied by those we trust; namely our Pastors and Preachers who use the funds we give to whatever pressing need they desire (regardless of Scripture). This is all done behind closed doors and with the assent of the multitudes with closed minds who are unknowing of God's commandments in these regards.

May God forgive us for our lack of study of His Word where these concepts can be discovered and adhered to by those concerned about obeying God more than men, thus ensuring the worship of our Father in Heaven in Spirit and in Truth, and not in the traditions of your church which again makes the Word of God of non-effect!

IF YOU WON'T BELIEVE ME-WILL YOU BELIEVE THE PROPHET HAGGAI?

A striking illustration of the results of selfishly withholding the half-shekel offering from the cause of God was given in the days of the prophet Haggai. After their return from the captivity in Babylon, the Jews undertook to rebuild the temple of the Lord; but meeting determined opposition from their enemies, they discontinued the work (quit contributing the half-shekel offering along with free will offerings since they were starting from scratch); and a severe drought, by which they were reduced to actual want, convinced them that it was impossible to complete the building of the temple.

"The time is not come," they said, "the time that the Lord's house should be built." But a message was sent them by the Lord's prophet: "Is it time for you, O ye, to dwell in your paneled houses, and this house lie waste (God's house)? Now therefore thus saith the Lord of hosts; Consider your ways. Ye have sown much, and bring in little; ye eat, but ye have not enough; ye drink, but ye are not filled with drink; ye clothe you, but there is none warm; and he that earneth wages, earneth wages to put it into a bag with holes." Haggai 1:2-6.

And then the reason is given: "Ye looked for much, and, lo, it came to little; and when ye brought it home, I did blow upon it. SOUND FAMILIAR? Why? saith the Lord of hosts. Because of Mine house that is waste, and ye run every man unto his own house. Parallels must be made! The commandments of God concerning His House lie in waste while mankind runs to their own traditions! Look at the tragic results that come from not obeying the Word of God but relying on men's traditions instead..." "Therefore the heaven over you is stayed from dew, and the earth is stayed from her fruit. And I called for a drought upon the land, and upon the mountains, and upon the corn, and upon the new wine, and upon the oil, and upon that which the ground bringeth forth, and upon men, and upon cattle, and upon all the labor of the hands." Verses 9-12.

"When one came to a heap of twenty measures, there were but ten: when one came to the pressfat for to draw out fifty vessels out of the press, there were but twenty. I smote you with blasting and with mildew and with hail in all the labors of your hands." Haggai 2:16, 19.

Having already experienced God's curse for not giving and building God's house correctly and roused by these warnings, the people set themselves to build the house of God and build it correctly

with God's blessings. Then the word of the Lord came to them: **"Consider now from this day and upward, from the four and twentieth day of the ninth month, even from the day that the foundation of the Lord's temple was laid, . . . from this day will I bless you."** Verses 18, 19.

Today although God's House (the Church) is anything but laid waste as we examine the architectural monuments chiseled from marble built with the multiple Tithes belonging to the widows, the orphans, the sick, lame, and blind, **there is no doubt that the Houses of God today suffer from a greater waste than in the days of Haggai the prophet. The Church today suffers from a famine of the Word of the Living God and lies in waste...devoid of many truths, which when adhered to will bring the supernatural blessings of God to our lives to which we are content to live without; continually blaming the Devil for blocking our blessing. The blame should be placed upon teachers of God's Word who are not capable of handling their positions and who have not prepared themselves adequately before God for such a high call.**

We are warned to "CONSIDER OUR WAYS." It would do you well to begin to study the Bible as you never had to see if these things be so.

Let us not fail to learn from the example set for us by the people of Haggai's day who heard a message of correction and heeded it. Let us set ourselves to build the House of God correctly, properly giving offerings over and above the Tithe to support the Church where each male member over twenty years of age contributes monthly or yearly the same in order to finance the ministry. This will encourage the church to live within the budge of its congregation, and some may even be forced to close its doors. But don't loose heart, the home church is where it all started and the New Testament informs us that from such an environment all the world heard the Word of God; yet we are told today that with the multitude of mega-churches that we haven't enough satellites, radio and TV stations to reach the globe yet. Something is desperately wrong with the methods we have chosen to accomplish such a grand task.

Is God holding back His blessing because of our disobedience? Are you tired of making excuses why many things don't work in the Spirit realm anymore? This was very embarrassing to me when in full time ministry when having to explain to the people why what they read in the Bibles about giving and blessings, for example, was not happening in their lives. The answer is that we are robbing God of His Tithes and offerings as revealed in this article. It is obvious to the critical Bible student that our obedience is lacking in many areas, of which the Tithe and half-shekel offering are only the beginning.

Often I, having the same questions, would ask my spiritual authorities why what we are reading in the Bible was not our experience. Too often the same answer was given...."we lack faith." **Dear Christian, it is not faith we lack...but OBEDIENCE!** We failed to "CONSIDER OUR WAYS;" but I pray you won't let this courageous teaching be set upon a shelf somewhere to collect dust, and fail to CONSIDER YOUR WAYS in light of what you have just learned. Remember, it was only when the people of Haggai's day began to give correctly [both in Tithes and half-shekel offerings] and build the House of God CORRECTLY that God said **"from this day will I bless you." What day? The day they began to give correctly!**

There is only one thing for the "thinking Christian" to do; verify what I have taught you by your own Scriptural and Historical analysis, repent, ask for forgiveness before God, and begin to Tithe correctly and bring your support of Biblical Truth in the form of the half-shekel offering to those who dare courageously to preach the truth when is unpopular to do so in our religious society today. If you desire to learn the truth from religious fiction, I sincerely invite you to inquire as to how you may obtain more teachings that will ensure your life will be more Biblically correct and more pleasing to the God you love. Remember Yeshua said "why do you say you love me and not obey me?" Are we? May God bless you and yours. Shalom.



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WOULD JESUS APPROVE OF HOW YOU HAVE BEEN TAUGHT TO TITHE? #1

If by chance you have not studied out the Biblical tithe for yourself and made the mistake I did myself of just listening to what my pastors told me to do for years then I suggest that before you go on in this article than you review the [truth about the Biblical Tithe](#) by clicking on the link before you continue.

It is understood that before you read this articles that you are familiar with the previous articles in this series as such background information is very helpful in seeing "the whole picture" as presented in the following two articles.

Before we begin let me see if we can agree on a premise before reading this article for after all, God is watching.

A Christian's religious belief system, when tested and exposed to contradictory facts from the Biblical text, Biblical languages, Biblical history, Biblical culture, and archeology, must in the Spirit of Truth and Repentance, be flexible enough to change because God is watching and desires truth in the inward parts of man.

Now if you can agree with the above statement, let us begin our search for truth concerning Christianity and the Tithe.

As we begin to rediscover the Faith once delivered to the saints, and as we prepare ourselves for the High Holy Days, it is important that we begin the new year in a different way than we finish the last year! Possibly one of the most misunderstood and incorrectly taught doctrines of the contemporary American Church today is in the area of the Biblical Tithe. Sadly most Christians, not possessing accurate Biblical knowledge concerning righteous giving as taught in the Bible, believe what they hear from the pulpit Sunday after Sunday concerning giving and the Tithe. The vast majority never question if what they are taught concerning the tithe is actually true or just tradition. That was me fifteen years ago. This was my plight...see if you can relate:

- I believed what my Pastor told me, because after all, he is the Pastor!
- It never dawned on me to check out for myself what the Bible actually taught concerning the Tithe.
- It never dawned on me that I was being led astray by my church and their position on giving.
- It never dawned on me that I could be sinning by giving my money to the church.
- It never dawned on me that I was consistently displeasing to God when giving money to my church.

Not until I did my own study did I find out everything in the Bible God gave concerning the Tithe and my responsibilities to Him in my giving. In hopes of enlightening all readers I give you this article. May God confirm these truths to you as he did me. The only problem you have is not a generous heart, but a lack of

understanding concerning God and what he expects from you and your giving. You have heard your Pastor's desire for you to give, now learn what God says on the matter which most likely corrects your Pastor and your church.

Answer for yourself: Are you confident that you understand the principles of the Tithe as Jesus understood them?

Answer for yourself: Have you studied the Tithe for yourself in order that you could know if you are being taught error or truth by your Pastor or your Church?

Answer for yourself: Are you certain that your present tithing habits line up with the Hebrew Scripture?

Answer for yourself: Has your Tithe gone toward the areas that God instructed and commanded they go, or has your church used these funds in others areas not sanctioned by God?

Answer for yourself: What will you do when you finish reading this article and find out that you have not been tithing according to the Commandments of God and have in reality been disobedient to God in your Tithe and in actuality "robbing God" all these years, yet being falsely assured by your Pastor that you are in obedience to the Scriptures as he sees them?

TITHING AS TAUGHT IN THE BIBLE --WHY DIDN'T MY PASTOR TEACH ME THIS?

First I must share something of most importance which should mold your thinking as you read the rest of the article.

The Tithe belongs to God, not to the church, nor to the producer. It cannot be given to an apostate church without being given thereby against God, not to Him. It must be given therefore to godly causes and not go Pastor's needs or good ideas. Those to whom it was originally given, the priests and Levites, had charge of religion, education, and various other functions. The Tithe was paid six years in seven, the seventh being a rest for the land and the people.

Before going further we must examine the Biblical law concerning the Tithe. The Tithe is described in Lev. 27:30-33. A tenth of produce or production is claimed by God as His due and is holy or set apart for Him. If the owner wanted to retain this tenth (Tithe of his agricultural produce as fruit or grain). he could do so by paying its value plus a fifth.

Lev 27:30-33

- 30 And all the Tithe of the land, whether of the seed of the land, or of the fruit of the tree, is the LORD's: it is holy unto the LORD.
- 31 And if a man will at all redeem ought of his Tithes, he shall add thereto the fifth part thereof.
- 32 And concerning the Tithe of the herd, or of the flock, even of whatsoever passeth under the rod, the tenth shall be holy unto the LORD.
- 33 He shall not search whether it be good or bad, neither shall he change it: and if he change it at all, then both it and the change thereof shall be holy; it shall not be redeemed.

First of all the Tithe is to be given to the Priest and Levites. It was to these ministers to whom it was originally given. They had charge of religion, education, and various other functions during the Temple period. We must remember that the Priesthood of the Temple disappeared in 70 A.D. with the destruction of the Temple by the Romans. Therefore we are no longer able to give to the Priest and the Levite. That part of the Tithe does not apply today and will not until the Temple is rebuilt. **The Priests and the Levites do not function in the Temple today, but we must understand that we have "functional" Levites that do**

minister today.

Answer for yourself: What is a Levite?

A Levite was a "son of Levi" who was set apart for the service of the Tabernacle and Temple and were subordinate to the Priests. The Levite received the Tithe not because of blood lineage but because of his function to the people. Let me explain. The functions of a Levite were to preserve the Law of Jehovah in ALL its integrity and purity and to see that its requirements and duty was enforced. When the people settled in Canaan it was the duty of the Levites was:

- To guard the Tabernacle
- To open and close the Tabernacle
- To look after the cleaning of it and its furniture
- To prepare the show-bread for the Tabernacle
- To do whatever other baking was needed, along with work connected with the sacrifices
- They also taught and led music during worship
- They also assisted the Priests in slaughtering and skinning the animals for sacrifices and looked out after the Temple storehouse (a Tithe Barn that contained the food for the poor).

DOES YOUR CHURCH AND PASTOR MISREPRESENT THE TRUTH CONCERNING THE TITHE?

For years I hear my Pastor tell me that the "Church" was the Storehouse. For years I heard Malachi 3:10 quoted Sunday after Sunday..."bring all your Tithes into the Storehouse." I always thought this kind of funny that our Pastor would quote an Old Testament passage every Sunday to motivate us to obey God but yet hold to Dispensational Theology which taught that the Law had passed away. Funny, ugh? Of course the Pastor wanted all to understand that our church was "the Storehouse"! That way the Church could keep up with the Jones and maintain its prominence in the community. Nothing like competition between ministries to break loose the Child of God from his money which God desired be spent elsewhere. Most likely you have constantly heard your Pastor make reference to the same; that your church is the "storehouse" today.

Answer for yourself: Is your Church really "the Storehouse" as you have been led to believe or is this a clever deception intended to get your money?

Truthfully it depends. Unless your Church functions as a "food barn" the Church is not a Storehouse. Let me explain. As you will come to learn later in this article the "Poor Tithe" was collected two out of every six years. This "Poor Tithe" was agricultural produce which went to feed the widows, orphans, the sick, the lame, the blind, the homeless, etc. In other-words, the Biblical "Storehouse" was a food-barn. Understanding that 2 out of 6 years all the Tithe went to the poor, the sick, the lame, the blind, the homeless, (I will used 1/3 to represent the ratio of 2 out of 6 years), etc., that means for your Church to Biblically qualify as "the Storehouse" then 1/3 of your Church's total budget must go toward the benevolence ministry in your Church.

Answer for yourself: Does your Pastor diligently oversee that 1/3 of all the finances collected in the Tithe go toward the Benevolence Ministry in your Church?

Answer for yourself: Does your Church even have a Benevolence Ministry?

Answer for yourself: Can you see that if such funds do not go to this area, and in this percentage (1/3 representing 2 out of 6 years) that your Church is not the "Storehouse" but is in reality robbing from God by robbing from God's people what God commanded they be given in the Tithe?

Unless your Pastor and Church make sure that 1/3 of all funds collected in the Tithe go to the "poor" then they violate the Commands of God. Violation of the Law of God is considered sin in both the Old Testament and the New Testament. If you can be honest with the Biblical Text as well with yourself for just a minute, you will have to admit that most likely your Church and your Pastor have no right to claim that your Church is "the Storehouse." To make such a comparison is an out-right lie. It only succeeds to the extent it does because of the unquestioning trust given the Pastor by his flock and one's lack of Biblical knowledge. Both are lethal and lead to sin and disobedience before God. Such is the deception I was under for years and only extricated myself upon many years of prayerful study. In fact, when confronting the Senior Pastor as the last church where I Pastored in Duncanville, Texas, I asked him face to face where we found our authority to teach and handle the Tithe the way we do when we have explicit Scriptures commanding otherwise. You will be shocked at his answer: "What do you want us to do, tell the people we are wrong?" Did you hear that? Yes, tell them we have been mistaken and lead by example through repentance in our own lives.

Understand that the Levites distributed the food to the poor, widows, orphans, sick, lame, blind, deaf, etc. Every 2 years all the Tithe was commanded to be given to these areas alone, thus my reference to 1/3 as it represents 2 out of 6 years.

As you can see the Tabernacle in the wilderness and the Temple have ceased to exist. That part of Tithing does not exist as it once did. **Yet you can see the principle of Tithing has never changed: that the "teachers, musicians, and janitors" who once received the Tithe should receive the Tithe today. There is nothing preventing us from obeying this part of the statute as God intended except the Greed and Biblical ignorance of our Church leadership.** Maybe your Pastor does not qualify for the rebuke in this article; if not, you are very fortunate, but my experience teaches me that the vast majority of mainline Christianity stands guilty before God of robbing God and His people of the LORD'S Tithe.

Answer for yourself: How much of the Tithe in your church makes its way to your teachers, Sunday school teachers, your choir-members, and your janitors?

Answer for yourself: Have you got the courage to ask your Pastor or share this article with him?

As stated before if your church was like the ones I pastored at in Dallas for many years then these areas were constantly neglected. If you take the challenge and present your Pastors with his hard-hitting article, then I hope that when you inquire of your spiritual peers and head Pastors you don't receive the same reaction I did when confronting sin in the Church: "What do you want us to do, tell the people we were wrong?" Yes, that is a good start. Repentance is the order for the day.

Maybe you should ask your Pastor this Sunday why your church continues to collect the Tithe but not use it in the areas commanded by God. Remember God said "all the Tithe" was to go to these areas every 2 years. That means that at least 1/3 of the church's funds need to be given to these areas. That means 1/3 of the budget given every year to these areas.

Never forget that although Tithing as practiced in the Temple periods no longer exists. Yet, we still have a mandate from God to give the Tithe according to the principle and spirit of the Tithe: to the teachers, musicians, and "gate-keepers" in the house of God. I understand that the Tithe as it once stood no longer exists, but we are NOT exempt from Biblical commandments concerning giving to the poor, teachers, janitors, and to ourselves! That's right!

CAN YOUR PASTOR OR YOUR CHURCH LEADERSHIP COUNT TO SEVEN?

Now for a real shock!

The Tithe was paid for six years out of seven, the seventh year being a rest for the land and the people!

Answer for yourself: When was the last time your Preacher told you that God has not wished that you 'Tithe every seventh year'!

Answer for yourself: Why has this not been taught to you?

Answer for yourself: Should you not ask your teacher this Sunday? Maybe he does not know the Bible that well. That was my problem many years ago. Honestly, it is a rather difficult book to master. But it can be done. If we cannot master this Book from God then we should not teach it to others.

Answer for yourself: Surely your Pastor or Preacher wants you as well as himself to be obedient to God, doesn't he?

ABRAHAM TITHES BEFORE THE LAW WAS GIVEN TO MOSES....WHAT DO WE RECONCILE THIS FACT IN THE CHURCH?

Let us never forget that Abraham Tithed before the Mosaic Law was ever given (Heb. 7:2,4)

Heb 7:2

2 To whom also Abraham gave a tenth part of all; first being by interpretation King of righteousness, and after that also King of Salem, which is, King of peace; (KJV)

Heb 7:4

4 Now consider how great this man was, unto whom even the patriarch Abraham gave the tenth of the spoils. (KJV)

I fully expect some to defend their disobedience to the Tithe by stating "we are no longer under the Law." Besides misinterpreting the Greek behind the English of this verse, they fail to grasp the truth about God's plan of giving in the Scriptures. **Abraham lived 430 years before the Law was given to Moses, and he Tithed!** Jacob, after his vision at Luz which occurred long before the Law of Moses, devoted a tenth of all his property to God in case he should return home in safety; and as stated before, this again was long before the Law of Moses. As you can see the incorrect argument used by the church (that the Law has passed away) has no bearing on tithing. Oh, by the way, the Law is eternal and never has or will pass away. Ask for our teachings on the Law and we can prove it to you.

"CORRECT TITHING" was required before the Law and is required by God today.

THE ONLY PROBLEM WE FACE TODAY IS THAT VERY FEW CHRISTIAN CHURCHES TEACH TITHING THE WAY JESUS UNDERSTOOD IT OR WOULD HAVE TAUGHT IT!

STUDY for yourselves to make sure that you are not being, taught error, or worse, being led to "rob God" by robbing those of the Tithe which God designated they should receive. Of these I make mention again: giving to the teachers, musicians, and custodians.

Answer for yourself: When we do it unto the "least" of God's children, or not do it correctly, do we not do it to Him also (Matt. 25:40)?

Let us move on.

TITHING ON THE NET OR THE GROSS?

The Tithe in antiquity, apart from Israel, was a tenth, or a tenth-tax paid to a human king, as God cites in I Sam.8:15-18. Having rejected the Lord God as King, Israel would now pay its Tithes to an oppressive human king who would lead them into bondage (I Sam. 18:18). God's requirement of the Tithe is simply the declaration that He is Lord and King over His covenant people. To deny the Tithe is to deny God's covenant and to deny that God is our Lord and King. It is simply another way of saying. "we have no king but Caesar". This is not only the cry of the chief priests who crucified Yeshua, but of the anti-lawlessness of those who crucify Jesus afresh today. The Tithe is a royal tax: it is God's claim on us a Lord and King. The Lord, in collecting the Tithe, did not require farmers to turn their crops and herds into cash because it was a 'tenth' of the flock or harvest literally. It was food-stuffs. This meant that if a man had 18 calves his Tithe amounted to only one, since no Tithe was possible on the last nine. On everything else it was the first tenth, but the flock or herd not being divisible, the Lord took the last of every 10. This appears in Lev. 37:30-39.

The Tithe is a tax not on our capital but our income or increase. It is not a tax on the ten percent of the fruit trees but the fruit thereof: It does not take the tenth of all the herd, but a tenth of the new calves or the herd or the lambs of the flock. Because it is the "first fruits" or "prior claim" that God has on us, it is the tenth "BEFORE" we, our dependents, or the state take their share. No one has a priority claim that outranks God's right or diminishes it. This settles the issue if we are to Tithe on the "gross" or the "net". We are to Tithe on the "gross."

THE TRUTH IS TO BE SUPPORTED BY THE TITHE

As stated before,. the Tithe was given to the Levites because they stored the animals and grain in the "STOREHOUSE" (Malachi 3:10). These animals were stored until they could be used to feed the poor, widows, orphans, and strangers etc. As you have heard it said " now, I will show you something, that you have never seen before in Malachi 3:10", it is time to really see what you have never been taught by the Church. **THE STOREHOUSE is NOT THE LOCAL CHURCH! IT NEVER HAS BEEN, AND IT WILL NEVER BE! IT WAS' A TITHE-BARN! IT WAS A BENEVOLENT CENTER!** The Levites who received the Tithe yearly (since they were considered the poor of the land) then gave ten percent of the Tithe they received to the Priests yearly (Num. 18:26). The Levites, as stated earlier, had a very broad function in Israel. One of the most important functions is as **"TEACHERS"** (Deut. 33: 8-10).

Deut 33:8-10

- 8 And of Levi he said, Let thy Thummim and thy Urim be with thy holy one, whom thou didst prove at Massah, and with whom thou didst strive at the waters of Meribah;
- 9 Who said unto his father and to his mother, I have not seen him; neither did he acknowledge his brethren, nor knew his own children: for they have observed thy word, and kept thy covenant.
- 10 They shall teach Jacob thy judgments, and Israel thy law: they shall put incense before thee, and whole burnt sacrifice upon thine altar. (KJV)

You can easily see that God desired that the Tithe be given to His teachers who taught the Law of God as given

by Him to Moses.

Answer for yourself: Has your Pastors and Teachers taught you the Law and the Prophets as Moses did, or has your head and heart been filled with replacement religion as the corrupt fruit of Dispensationalism?

It is time for Christians to repent and quit playing church. It is time to quit financing and supporting religious institutions and churches that not only do not teach you the truth of God's Word but are above repentance when confronted with Biblical truths such as these. There is no way to reconcile the actions of the Christian Church and the Scriptures in the areas of tithing. Often these teachings, calling for repentance in a Christian's giving, are not accepted Christian Pastors and Evangelists because it would mean we would have to admit that we have been wrong about our prior teachings.

Answer for yourself: Have you ever stopped to contemplate what Jesus thinks of all the false teachers that misrepresent the Tithe to God's people? Or God for that matter?

Not only would Jesus rebuke these false teachers, but would teach you to observe the festivals if he were in your pulpit this coming Sunday. Oh, forgot. Jesus would not be in your church this Sunday for he observes the Sabbath and not the Day of the Sun as Rome does.

DOES THE TRUTH MUDDLE OR CLARIFY?

Often I have heard it said that these teachings on the festivals and the Tithe only "confuse the people". That is what my Senior Pastor told me once when addressing areas of my teaching. Simply, our doctrine at our Church was so unbiblical then sound Biblical Doctrine seemed foreign. Thus my resignation was inevitable.

Answer for yourself: Is it any wonder people are confused when they have never heard the truth before but only selfish lies propagated by the greed of Pastors and misplaced ambition?

Answer for yourself: Is it any wonder why people are confused when hearing such teachings when they are guilty of never studying the Bible in-depth and are not familiar with the Scriptural Doctrines or never studied them for themselves?

I believe that it is not so much that you are confused, but rather the many Pastors and Teachers that are confused! Yes, many are confused because they have not heard the truth before. They were not taught in Bible Schools the truth, but in place of truth accepted unquestioningly the denomination's teachings espoused through the school that they attended. Shame on us as Pastors who find the time to teach other people's "sermons" and "cassettes" when we have not devoted time for personal study whereby we seek out the truths of God's Word for ourselves, let alone for the people of God. May God have mercy on the teachers (Levites) come judgment day!

THE SECOND TITHE-THE FESTIVAL TITHE

The "Second Tithe" or the "Festival Tithe" required the assembling of the men of Israel in Jerusalem for the celebration of the festivals. They would normally take their families with them to rejoice in and before the Lord. This did *NOT* mean that they necessarily spent their time in worship services, but it does mean their rest and festivities were a rejoicing in the Lord. This "Second Tithe" is closely associated with the sabbath principle in that it also called for resting of one's soul. The modern family Christian summer conferences are closer to the meaning of the "Second Tithe" than just family vacations. We must keep this spiritual aspect in our sight.

Deut 14:22-29

- 22 Thou shalt truly Tithe all the increase of thy seed, that the field bringeth forth year by year.

- 23 And thou shalt eat before the LORD thy God, in the place which he shall choose to place his name there, the Tithe of thy corn, of thy wine, and of thine oil, and the firstlings of thy herds and of thy flocks; that thou mayest learn to fear the LORD thy God always.
- 24 And if the way be too long for thee, so that thou art not able to carry it; or if the place be too far from thee, which the LORD thy God shall choose to set his name there, when the LORD thy God hath blessed thee:
- 25 Then shalt thou turn it into money, and bind up the money in thine hand, and shalt go unto the place which the LORD thy God shall choose:
- 26 And thou shalt bestow that money for whatsoever thy soul lusteth after, for oxen, or for sheep, or for wine, or for strong drink, or for whatsoever thy soul desireth: and thou shalt eat there before the LORD thy God, and thou shalt rejoice, thou, and thine household,
- 27 And the Levite that is within thy gates; thou shalt not forsake him; for he hath no part nor inheritance with thee.

Deut 16:3

- 3 Thou shalt eat no leavened bread with it; seven days shalt thou eat unleavened bread therewith, even the bread of affliction; for thou camest forth out of the land of Egypt in haste: that thou mayest remember the day when thou camest forth out of the land of Egypt all the days of thy life.

Deut 16:13

- 13 Thou shalt observe the feast of tabernacles seven days, after that thou hast gathered in thy corn and thy wine:

Deut 16:16

- 16 Three times in a year shall all thy males appear before the LORD thy God in the place which he shall choose; in the feast of unleavened bread, and in the feast of weeks, and in the feast of tabernacles: and they shall not appear before the LORD empty:

The purpose of this Tithe was to rejoice before the Lord, "and thou shalt bestow the money for whatsoever thy soul desireth" in order to "rejoice, thou and thy household: and the Levite that is within thy gates." This second tax required by God was thus for the family's pleasure.

Answer for yourself: When was the last time you were told by your Pastor-Levite who is commanded to teach the truth, that God commanded you, as a non-Jewish believer in Him, to keep, observe, and attend the Festivals and Feasts before Him as a form of rejoicing?

Answer for yourself: When was the last time your Pastor or Evangelist (Levitical teacher) told you that God commanded you to rejoice with your Tithe of the 2nd and 5th year and take your family on a spiritual retreat or celebrate Passover, Shavuot (Pentecost/Weeks), or Yom Kippur?

This Commandment is all the more startling once you understand and see for yourself that Paul taught non-Jews in his 3 missionary journeys to keep and observe the Festivals. That's right, Paul taught his congregants to keep the Festivals and Feasts of the LORD.

Answer for yourself: Now that you know that another 1/3 of your Church's budget (the Tithe of the 2nd and 5th year) was to be used for keeping the Festivals and Feasts of the LORD, don't you find it strange that your Christian Church continues to collect the Tithe from you but never keeps or observes the Festivals themselves?

Answer for yourself: Can you continue to justify giving your money and Tithe to your Church after having been shown what I have to you in this article up to now?

Dearly beloved, we either love God and obey him or love or Pastor, Church, and tradition more. This is the bottom line. Either the Bible is our authority or else our tradition and acceptance by religious people or our Church is our authority. God deserves our best. Obedience is better than sacrifice.

WELL IF WE DO WHAT YOU SAY PASTOR CRAIG...WON'T THE CHURCH GO BROKE?

I can hear some of you saying "well if we do this then we cannot support the Church or pay its bills". That is true. I have heard it all before. It has been asked of me "how are we to support the Church if we told the people not to put their yearly "Tithe" into the Local Church as is their tradition"? Many say "this is always the way we have done it". My answer may be a shock to you. You see dearly beloved the organizational structure of the modern Church is foreign to the New Testament. The Early Church was many little 'HOUSE' churches that required little overhead, thus allowing for your obedience to the Tithe or tax for six out of seven years. By supporting the House Church one did not mortgage their rewards in Heaven one day. I have yet to see a House Church with a budget of \$600,000 a year. Literally the running and maintaining of the Corner Church has robbed the needy of their Tithe promised to them by God as well as their obedience before God. The growth and maintenance of big business, disguised as the church, has robbed people of the Kingdom of God in their lives. Just think with me for a minute.

Answer for yourself: How much of God's Tithe, as shown to be Commanded given to the poor, the lame, the blind, the sick, the orphans, the homeless, etc., as well as Commanded given to yourself as a Child of God whereby you and your family can keep and observe the Festivals and Feasts of the LORD are diverted in unscriptural "black holes" such as a mortgage of a large building, the electric bills for such a super-structure needed to feed the lighting, the refrigeration, the heating, to building insurance, to remodeling, to sound systems, to video projection, to tape recording equipment, to various programs of the church, etc?

The above is not sin if done according to the Scripture, but nowhere, I said nowhere, does God allow the Tithe to be used for these things. Nowhere does God sanction the use of the Tithe for "goodly things" but only "Godly things!" These must be financially supported with money over and above the Tithe, but to take the Tithe and spend it for these "goodly things" robs God and His people from the Kingdom of God coming to them through you...the Church.

To take food from the hungry, clothes from the naked, medicine from the sick, eyeglasses from the blind, hearing aids from the deaf, walkers and wheelchairs from the crippled totally destroy God's intent for the Tithe. The Christian Church for the most part stands naked before God in need of clothing herself.

What is even more scary for the Christian to realize, is that when Messiah comes and judges those worthy of Eternal Life in Matthew 25:31-46, the verse criteria whereby he judges the nations is the same criteria to which the Tithe is to support.

Answer for yourself: If we as good Christians continue to Tithe incorrectly and disobediently, and let our

Church spend the Tithe we give on whatever the Pastor or staff wants to as the churches did to which I was once affiliated, what will be our judgment since we supported with our Tithe things not sanctioned by God through the Tithe or Jesus in Matthew 25?

Answer for yourself: Can you see the connection with Eternal Life and proper Tithing?

Answer for yourself: What will happen to us come judgment day when Messiah reveals to all that the vast majority of Christianity and Pastors have robbed God and His people of the Tithe their whole lives, yet all the while mistakenly believing they have obeyed God because we did what our Pastor told us to do?

Answer for yourself: Understanding the following categories are those intended to be supported with the "Poor Tithe," are we to take seriously Jesus' comments that those who fail to support the sick, the lame, the blind, the widows, the naked, the hungry, those in prison, the thirsty, etc., are to considered "cursed" and told to "depart into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels?"

Answer for yourself: Understanding the following categories are those intended to be supported with the "Poor Tithe," are we to take seriously Jesus' comments that those who fail to support the sick, the lame, the blind, the widows, the naked, the hungry, those in prison, the thirsty, etc., are told "to go away into everlasting punishment"?

Answer for yourself: Can you not yet see for yourself that if you fail to repent and continue to support your Christian Church which devours the Tithe that this is your sure reward come the Millennial Kingdom?

Answer for yourself: Can you not yet see for yourself that if you fail to repent and continue to support your Christian Church which devours the Tithe that this is your sure reward come the Millennial Kingdom?

Answer for yourself: Can you not yet see for yourself that if you continue to support with your Tithe, knowingly or unknowingly, such things as the Church's mortgage of a large building, electric bills for such a super-structure needed to feed the lighting, refrigeration, the heating, building insurance, remodeling, sound systems, video projection equipment, tape recording equipment...that you fail to allocate such money God intended to go only to support the poor, the naked, the blind, the sick, the lame, the blind, the crippled, etc?

For every dollar you give to your Church which they don't allocate to areas where God commanded they be spent, then you rob God and His children of that dollar. For every dollar mishandled by the Church, and I assure you it is in the billions, then that much less of the Kingdom of God comes to the people who need it and to whom it was promised by God and Jesus.

The Kingdom of God comes to people through people in God's Name as we manifest it on this earth. The majority of such manifestation of the Kingdom of God come through your love as sent to others as their needs are met in the Name of God and not the name of the Government, State or Welfare program. Salvation is of God and not the State of Texas or the American Government.

Answer for yourself: If our gifts and offerings and Tithes are misdirected by the church because of the failure of our Spiritual leaders, Pastors, or Evangelists to handle the Tithe according to Scripture, then are we not guilty of robbing God and His people of what God desired they have? We sure are. You should certainly see that by now.

THE HOUSE CHURCH BECOME A SUPER-STRUCTURE

The pagan Roman Emperor Constantine began to build "corner church houses" that practically did away with

the church in the home. God knew what He was doing when He told us the church was to be in the home because it would not require \$10,000 a month to just keep the lights on and cooled in the summer. The Bible teaches us that money given to "mortar and concrete" instead to people's needs violates the intent of the Tithe. The Tithe is to finance the spread of the Kingdom of God.

Answer for yourself: So if we are not to use the Tithe to support the corner Church house, how is it to be done?

God commanded another tax over and above the Tithe that was to be used to support the Temple or the Church house. Whereas the Tithe varied among incomes, everyone paid the same 1/2 shekel tax that built the Temple (mortar and concrete). Everyone paid the same amount of tax! That was not the Tithe however! No one was neglected in order to support Ministry as does the Church today. Years ago, as a young Christian, I was told that it was God's will that we build a \$16 million dollar building to the Glory of God. I believed my Pastor and invested many thousands of dollars toward the endeavor. I was ignorant of the Bible and the principles of Tithing at that time of my life and only had zeal. Scriptural knowledge was replaced by my zeal for God. For after all I loved God and Jesus. My emotions led me astray and into sin. I was led to sin by my Pastor. He was on television constantly and we were constantly assured we were right. After all I was led to believe that big Ministry means God's approval. I was wrong....so wrong.

Now knowing the Scriptures which I was not familiar with then, I followed my Pastor and today have the dubious honor of raping the Children of God of thousands of dollars which could have clothed, fed, nourished, and helped thousands of people. Knowing what God has taught me since, I now see the error of my ways. I have repented before God for giving "His" money to such a cause and asked for forgiveness. Our Tithe at that Church build a building which would one day go into foreclosure. Fitting tribute to such ignorance and sin on my part. But many today are led in "noble" causes that clearly are not Biblical and Godly. Good causes are not always "Godly causes". We must never take upon ourselves the undertaking of goodly causes if it means we neglect Godly causes. If only the Christian Church knew the Scriptures better. Jesus said "ye do err not knowing the Scriptures". Only if you study will you be able to recognize error when spoken from today's pulpits, otherwise, your emotion and zeal will lead you to follow error into sin. The blind follow the blind and they both fall into the ditch. That was me. That no longer has to be you.

THE THIRD TITHE

There was also a third Tithe (Deut. 14:28f.), every third year, or twice in seven years. Some Scholars feel that the correct reading makes this a substitute for the second tithe in the appointed year. Henry Landsell, in The Tithe In Scripture, called attention to I Tobit 1:6-8 in the Apocrypha, and to Josephus (Antiquities, bk. IV), as well as to Jerome (Commentary on Ezekiel, XIV, I, 565) and Chrysostom (Homily LXIV on Matt. 20:27), to this tithe. This Tithe was a kind of social welfare tithe, to be shared with lowly foreigners, not as a hand-out, but in common feasting and rejoicing before the Lord.

Let us continue in the second article in this series.



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WOULD JESUS APPROVE OF THE WAY YOU HAVE BEEN TAUGHT TO TITHE? #2

JESUS ON TITHING

Jesus did not repeal the laws of tithing. Jesus did not condemn the Pharisees for Tithing: "these ought ye to have done, and not to leave the other undone", that is, "the weightier matters of the Law, judgment, (justice), mercy, and faith" (Matt. 23:23).

Answer for yourself: Have you taken to heart what I have shown you in this article and will you be able to say come judgment day that you have not neglected the Tithe and left it undone in your life?

Answer for yourself: Do you know that it is never to late to begin to devote yourself to the weightier matters of the Law such as justice and mercy as seen in obedience to God in Tithing?

Answer for yourself: Since reading this article thus far, have your Pastors and Preachers taught you correctly what the Bible instruct concerning the Tithe? For most of you this material is considered new if you will be honest with yourself and God.

I need to make an additional comment about the Levite-teacher. In addition to the "First lithe," the Second Tithe is recorded for us in Deut. 14:22-29 and was for Rejoicing before the Lord and the Levite, since was considered the poor of the land, was to be included in the celebration. The Levite at this time did not receive all the Tithe as he did every First and Fourth year.

Answer for yourself: When was the last time you were taught that part of your Tithe (the Tithe of the 2nd and the 5th year) was to be given to yourself as well as Levite in order to celebrate the Festivals?

Answer for yourself: When was the last time you were told the purpose of the second Tithe was to rejoice before the Lord "and thou shalt bestow the money on whatsoever thy soul desireth" in order to "rejoice, thou and thy household: and the Levite that is within thy gates"? Probably never.

This Second Tithe is required by God and is for your family's pleasure. You should also share it with the Levites who teach the "full counsel of God" and not denominational rhetoric. Because "the workman is worthy of his meat" there must be a substantial support for all who serve you in the Lord. I Timothy 5:17 says: "Let the elders that rule well be counted worthy of double honor, especially they who labor in the word and doctrine." The word "double honor" means double pay in the Greek.

Answer for yourself: Is it not the Lord's purpose that His faithful servants not live poorly?

IS ORAL ROBERTS RIGHT WHEN HE PREACHES "DON'T EAT YOUR SEED"?

When was the last time you were told that God wanted you to "eat your seed"? If you listen to Oral Roberts you have never heard that, but that is what God has said in His Word regardless of what Oral Roberts or other Charismatic teachers. That is right, God commanded you to eat your seed in the observance of Biblical Feasts and Festivals! The Second Tithe commands it (every 2nd and 5th year). Far too often your teachers have not done their homework properly. They have not studied the Word of God diligently. Nor have they told you the complete truth concerning the Tithe. Read it for yourselves. Ask your Pastor or Preacher why they have failed to share with you this part of the Tithe.

The "Second Tithe" is known as the "Festival Tithe". In a sense it is comparable to the modern idea of a family vacation, but with an enormous difference. Unfortunately, the Festivals of the Lord are often overlooked by the churches of today, but God's Word said they were to be celebrated forever!

Answer for yourself: Who is right....God or Oral Roberts?

Answer for yourself: What are you to do when you discover that non-Jewish believers like you and me, having turned from idols to serve the living God, and grafted into Israel as in the early Church, celebrated the festivals along side the Jews for 325 years until outlawed by the pagan Roman Emperor Constantine?

Answer for yourself: Did God, who is the same yesterday, today, and tomorrow, change His mind, or was it His desire and intention for His people to change what He spoke to all mankind as seen in our Church tradition today which violates what God originally said?

I COR. 11:2 SHOULD TEACH US THE TRUTH AS NON-JEWISH BELIEVERS

Study to show yourself approved! We are highly disobedient when we neglect to obey the Tithe correctly or the Festival days of the Lord which it is to finance. The ideas shared in this article today were held by Jesus as well and were not an option to Jesus, James and Paul. Look at I Cor. 11:2 for proof.

2. Now I praise you brethren that ye remember me in all things, and **keep the ordinances**, as I delivered them unto you.

Answer for yourself: What "ordinances" was Paul, the Apostle to the Gentiles (like you and me) bring these Greeks in Corinth?

Answer for yourself: Was he bringing them Aristotle, Plato, or Socrates' teachings?

Answer for yourself: Was he bringing them Stoic or Epicurean philosophy and theology? No!

The word for "ordinances" in the Greek means "statutes" and is related to the root word meaning commandments, customs, decrees, laws, tasks, and **appointments in time** (set times).

Answer for yourself: Did Paul have a watch to determine what time it was? No.

But he understood the Festival structure of Israel. The Festivals were set times for God and man to meet and fellowship. They were appointed times where we become one with God and the churches of today too often rob you of this most holy and important time that God has set aside for you. It is time to the Church to share their Tithes with lowly foreigners, not as a hand-out, but in common Feasts and Festivals and rejoicing before the Lord.

REMEMBER THIS, JESUS DID NOT REPEAL OR ABOLISH THE LAWS OF TITHING. RELIGIOUS INSTITUTIONS AND CHURCHES, TEACHING FALSE DOCTRINES, HAVE ESSENTIALLY RAPED THE BODY OF MESSIAH OF TRUTH CONCERNING THE TITHE AS

WELL AS THE FESTIVALS.

As stated before Jesus did not condemn the Pharisees for tithing: "these ought ye to have done and not to leave the other undone: that is, "the weightier matters of the law, judgment (justice), mercy, and faith" (Matt. 23:23). These needy ones were also cared for every year by gleaning, and by gifts. The Tithe is not a gift to the Lord nor to the needy. It is God's tax. **Only that which is above and beyond the Tithe is a gift or offering.** This Tithe was to be laid up within the local community "STOREHOUSE" (Mal. 3:10). The poor were to come to a community feast and they "shall eat and be satisfied" (Deut. 14:99). The payment of this Tithe would bring God's blessing upon His people and upon all the work of their hands (Deut. 14:29). No one is exempt from the payment of this Tithe! Let us not forget the Levite-Teacher, who teaches truth and not error, also is to be blessed with part of the "poor Tithe" for he is a living symbol of religion and Law in the community.

Answer for yourself: But would God have you support a Levitical teacher who has not taught you the truth?

Having "wrestled" with a Christian religious system that some feel is above repentance, God showed me that I was no longer to support such a system since coming to the truth or else I would now become a "PARTAKER OF HER SINS". Let us not forget that God gives "Jezebels" time to repent in the churches "of Thyatira" before He judges them as well as those who are her "bedfellows" (Rev. 2:21).

Answer for yourself: Now knowing the truth what will you do?

God holds you accountable for what you now know.

The purpose underlying the remembrance of the stranger and rendering him aid was a means by which Israel could spread the Word of God. Aid delivered to those who are in need is one of the oldest and most effective means for spreading the Kingdom of Heaven. All the more reason people are reached in the name of God through proper use of the Tithe which finances the Kingdom of God.

The "Poor Tithe" was also to be used for orphans and widows because God is "a father of the fatherless and judge of the widows" (Psm. 68:5). The fact that this tax was to be used for those who had lost the principle breadwinner of the family stresses God's concern for those who are without adequate protection and care. To be either is to be helpless. Since they are helpless God has appointed Himself as their Protector and Guardian. But God protects and guards through your righteous giving of the poor Tithe. This cannot happen as desired by God and to the degree He intends unless your Tithing is correct.

Look at Exodus:

And Ye shall not afflict any widow, or fatherless child.

If thou afflict them in any wise. and they cry at all unto me. I will surely hear their cry.

'I fend my wrath shall wax hot. and I will kill you with the sword: and your wives shall be widows. and you children fatherless.

Widows and orphans are especially helpless members of society because of their lack of a husband and father. This lack of continuing economic support means "chronic" poverty "unless" they are given aid periodically. This was one of the functions of the Poor Tithe in Israel. By aiding the fatherless and the widow as specific intervals, Israel would prevent the appearance of the problem of chronic and debilitating poverty. Yes, they would tend to remain poor, but there is a major distinction between being a poor member of an affluent society and existing in a perpetual state of chronic and destructive poverty (forcing one to turn to crime to survive). In addition such aid would prevent the breakup of the family unit through separation and divorce due to the lack of adequate financial support. This in turn brings social stability and promotes the Kingdom of Heaven. This principle is more readily understood if one recognizes that poor loans, rather than the Poor Tithe, were to be the means by which the poor of society were to be taken care of in Israel. These poor loans were emergency loans for the relief of emergency conditions. Since they were non-interest bearing, and were to be forgotten on

the Sabbatical Year, they were the means of relieving "temporary" conditions of poverty (Deut. 15: 7-11). But those whose conditions tended toward chronic and permanent poverty were to be striven periodic and substantial assistance by the Lord's Poor Tithe. The Poor Tithe was to be used by "the stranger, and the fatherless, and the widows "which are within thy gates" (Deut. 14:29). Notice that local giving was required because such giving presupposed that the "giver" knew local conditions.

Therefore, he would be without excuse if he failed to administer this Tithe correctly. He was to know the character of the people who were to receive his Tithe. This is almost impossible if you hand over the responsibility to Church leadership and yourself not have a hand in how your Tithe is spent. You, the giver, are held personally responsible to God for how and to whom God's Poor Tithe is administered. The Biblical principle is that we first give and meet the needs in our Jerusalem, next Judea, then Samaria, and only then the outer parts of the world. To give and meet the needs overseas and fail to meet the need of others sitting next to you in your pew, or your neighborhood is a sin against God.

The principle of the Poor Loan is that it is to be used to relieve temporary conditions that could lead to chronic poverty such as loans to pay for emergency medical expenses, relief of the unemployed, relief of financial problems, etc. In summary, the Poor Loan is to be given to the poor brethren who shows faith in his life. They are to be given to "enemies" as well as those whom we love. They are interest free. They require no security deposit and the loan is not to be longer than six years. If the loan is repaid in that time then it is to be canceled.

It seems we must address a few more important areas as we close this teaching. The poor were to receive ALL THE TITHE and not just a trickle-down from the overall Tithe as the churches of today practice. Giving a token amount from the overall budget of the Church does not cut it with God!

Answer for yourself: How much of the Tithe you give actually gets to the widows and orphans, let alone the Levite?

Answer for yourself: Does the Benevolence ministry get 1/3 of your Church's yearly income, and if not, why not now that you have seen for yourself?

Answer for yourself: Are you told to keep 1/3 of your yearly Tithe to help you, your family, and the poor celebrate, keep, and observe Passover, Shavuot (Pentecost), and Tabernacles, and if not, why not now that you have seen for yourself?

Too often the Preacher and the local organization (the Church budget) GETS THE MAJORITY IF NOT ALL OF IT! Too often the churches of today do not let the Tithe flow down Aaron's beard and it never gets to the feet (the congregation).

Having taught what Jesus both believed and would have taught about tithing, giving, and benevolence it is disappointing when one talks with fellow Pastors about these principles and you are only told "well I don't agree" or "we have always told the people this or that". I had one Pastor tell me that "we tell the people to give even if it hurts."

Answer for yourself: Would Jesus tell you to give to the building fund or rent for your Church till it hurts (because that is what your Church leadership needs it for)?

Answer for yourself: Would Jesus tell you to give your Tithe and go hungry?

Well that is in reality what the Church is doing, and worst of all, made you an accomplice to its theft of the poor when they collect money God destined to be used on the poor and use it for other causes such as the rent, insurance, etc.!

Once a Pastor many came to me and asked me to pray for their forgiveness since they had eaten their Tithe because they had no food.

Answer for yourself: Who is responsible for such bondage?

Were they ever so shocked when we opened the Word of God and exposed lies taught by their denomination passed off as truth to those not familiar with the Scriptures. The Bible teaches that those who teach error are "spots and blemishes" in the church: they are false prophets. They are those that deceive the flock God and this angers God. If you were without food in your house God would not only tell you but has **ALREADY TOLD YOU** to "eat your Tithe" as we have shown.

Answer for yourself: What about the seventh year?

Answer for yourself: Have you kept your Tithe? God says to but your Pastor may object. Shame on him for lying.

Remember Israel was sent into captivity for seventy years for tilling the soil the seventh year and tithing from it when God said to let the land "rest".

Answer for yourself: What blessings from God are we deprived of by our Pastors and Churches when we Tithe that seventh year?

Answer for yourself: Have we not learned anything from Israel's example or is our greed so great we don't care to obey God any longer?

We must study our Bibles if we are to live more Biblically obedient lifestyles.

Answer for yourself: Do you want God to bless the work of your hands?

God promised to bless you when you obey the Tithe.

Answer for yourself: Could God be withholding blessing from you and the churches of today because Christianity, for the most part, does not teach and practice the Apostle's Doctrine correctly and teach tithing incorrectly?

Answer for yourself: Would the God we love judge us even if we gave and gave but gave in error?

Ask Cain! Cain brought a sacrifice to God that came from a cursed source. God had previously cursed the ground. If we give our Tithe continually to the Church and not hold them accountable for how they spend the **LORD'S** Tithe and are unaware where it is applied will we be held blameless by God? Your teachers are without excuse!

Today, many people give generously to various causes, but their giving is impulsive and emotional. Often they are made to feel guilty as they are "whipped" and "driven" during the offering times in our churches. Many like to give to their churches or programs which will provide excitement and Hollywoodish productions: yet the poor and their needs take a back seat to the needs of the Pastoral Staff in order to solidify their jobs. Let's face it....in reality medical help and food are not given to the needed by the Church (1/3 of the budget) because the "show must go on!" Entertainment, utilities, bricks, and mortar get what God intended for His people. **GOD IS WATCHING AND WILL JUDGE! GOD IS ALREADY JUDGING!** How can America have so many churches, so many preachers on television, and we are losing our nation to sin, crime, drugs, Pornography, etc. God is judging. God's money must go to God's causes: Levites who teach the truth, musicians who sing the truth, yourself and your family at Festival and Sabbath times, and possibly most importantly, the poor, widows, the hungry, and orphans. The Tithe can no longer be channeled to "exciting" causes but must be given to Godly causes. The robbery must stop.

Are you ready to ask your Pastor such and Deacon Board some very pointed questions on how your Church is spending God's Tithe?

Help your Pastor and Preacher understand what we have shown you but don't be surprised if you don't get the reception you had hoped for, because if repentance is to come it must begin with Aaron's beard. You Pastor might have to get a real job. I quit robbing God and resigned the Church as it was structured in order to be more obedient in my life. He can too and still minister. I do.

It is my hope this teaching has helped you sort out for yourself God's design for Biblical Giving. Please pray about what has been shown you. What I have shared with you comes strictly from the Word of God. Please look up the Scriptures for yourself and speak to God about it. If this teaching has blessed you and instructed you "in a more perfect way" we would appreciate you pray about helping us at Bet Emet, as well as other Ministries like Bet Emet, who endeavor to return to the Faith once given to the saints. Correct understanding of God's Word and "rightly dividing it" will set you FREE! We hope you see us as one who tries to function today as a teaching Levite who is dedicated to truth at any price and who endeavors to restore Biblical Truth to the Christian Church as Jesus would have us do.

Answer for yourself: If Jesus did not intend to destroy the Law and contained within it the message concerning the Tithe, what gives us a right today to teach it differently today?

***IT IS TIME TO RESTORE THE HEBRAIC TEACHINGS OF JESUS' TO
THE CHURCH WHICH IS CALLED BY HIS NAME***

***I HOPE YOU ENJOYED THIS ARTICLE AND IT HAS CAUSED YOU TO THINK! PLEASE SHARE IT WITH
YOUR FRIENDS***



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DO YOU HAVE THE FAITH OF JESUS OR FAITH IN JESUS?

Many Christians suffer from what I call "double vision" when they behold Yeshua (Jesus). When he is referred to as "Jesus," they can vaguely envision him as a Jew. They almost never call him simply Yeshua, or "Jesus of Nazareth," or "the Nazarene," the way Jews do. They almost always refer to him as "our Lord Jesus" or as Jesus Christ. Yeshua the man may have been Jewish, but by deifying Jesus in a non-Jewish terms Christians have in essence read him out of his strictly Jewish context and distorted the real truths about him.

A related Christian problem is the inability to see Yeshua the Jew without also seeing him as the divine Christ the Jews had "rejected." This begins with the earliest documents of the Church & its sacred "scripture," the New Testament. To compound the issue, none of these scriptural writers were contemporaries of Yeshua. You might find that hard to believe but it can proven that the majority of the New Testament documents came from non-Jewish hands and not Jews, let alone the apostles. So much for "inspiration of Apostolic authority." The writers of these New Testament documents neither witnessed the events they described nor did they personally hear Yeshua say the words they quoted. This explains why so much paganism is put into the mouth of Jesus in the New Testament when any Jew knows that Judaism never taught nor believed much that comes from the mouth of Jesus in the New Testament (himself a Jew). The Four Gospels which have traditionally been regarded as the very oldest of the writings, are now almost universally understood by scholars to have actually been written after the time of Paul, or several generations after Yeshua died and by non-Jews no less! In fact no quote for a "gospel" can be found in any Christian writers' legacy until 200 A.D.! This is food for great concern! Although the Gospels sound as if they are contemporary eyewitness accounts, the Epistles of Paul were actually written closer to Yeshua's time than were the Gospels. And even they were not written during his lifetime.

Even more problematic, as Oxford scholar Geza Vermes has clearly demonstrated, is the fact that in his lifetime, Yeshua himself was most vague and evasive whenever asked whether he was indeed the Jewish Messiah. It was only after his death that first Paul, and then later, the writers of the Gospels, publicly proclaimed Yeshua as Messiah, and then developed their emerging new religion on the basis of their own perceptions of Yeshua which can easily be shown to have more in common with sun-worship and mystery religions than Biblical Judaism.

Let us concede for a moment that all of these records were not mere "hindsight" or a rewriting of Jewish religious history as a later generation of Gentile Christians saw it, but were based upon authentic oral traditions which remained faithful to the truth of past events, or of older teachings. Regardless of when or by whom they were written, what forcibly confronts a careful student of the Bible is the fact that both of them fail to deal fully with Yeshua, the man. Paul tells us very little about the life of Yeshua, and so he is hardly a good source in trying to uncover the Jewish Yeshua. From Paul we find only two references to what Jesus taught and both are "one" liners. From Paul we know only that Yeshua was crucified; that, as Paul believed, he was resurrected; that Yeshua had a brother named James; and that Yeshua taught that divorce was prohibited. As a basic architect of this new theology or as Paul became, the real founder of

Christianity. Paul was not interested in who Yeshua was as a Jew and what he believed, but rather, in what he was in his own estimation based upon his "vision" on the Damascus road...called "his" gospel by Paul: the divine, redeeming savior of mankind, whose Jewishness is only incidental to a larger universal mission. To Paul, the human career of Yeshua was seen as merely an interval in the immortal life of a divine being. For Paul the teachings and the message of Jesus was not important as determined by the lack of presentation or reference to them by Paul who is credited with writing 2/3 of the New Testament; and only 2 sentences are devoted to what Jesus taught and believed by Paul! Not only that but Paul alluded to only "one" of Yeshua's teachings in all of his writings which have become "scripture" for the Christian Church, and as stated above, that was on the issue of divorce. In other words, the life and teachings of Yeshua was secondary to Paul's theology "about Yeshua". If we only had Paul's accounts we would know absolutely nothing about Jesus and what he stood for!

A careful search of the Four Gospels reveals how difficult it is to separate the human from the divine Yeshua, even when studying these Christian sources which proclaim to be eye-witness accounts of his life, which they are not. **If one reads only the Synoptic Gospels one comes away with a human "messiah" of Judaism and that is what Judaism taught. But if one reads the Gospel of John you see the Essene's godman that comes from the core of Egyptian sun-worship and their astral worship.** Of course other Gentile nations will fall prey to these ideas as well but understand that **the New Testament presents two completely different views of Jesus.** Unless I knew better I would think that he had two personalities and needed psychoterapeutic drugs. Two of these Gospels, Mark and John, do not even discuss or describe his birth or boyhood. Instead, they present us with a mature Yeshua. Despite many differences and contradictions among the Four Gospels concerning certain events in Yeshua's life, all of them have one overriding interest in common: the events of his final week on earth, which center on his impending death, **yet these again are full of contradictions.** Concerning these events, there is some confusion: the trial and crucifixion, in John, take place on the day prior to Passover; in the other three Gospels, these events occur on the first day of Passover. The resurrected Yeshua, in Matthew, appears in Galilee; Luke identifies the location somewhere else altogether in Emmaus, near Jerusalem. Mark does not contain an account of the reappearance of the resurrected Yeshua at all. **Such discrepancies are numerous in the New Testament and conflicts among the passages abound to the discriminating reader. These discrepancies and problems are so vast that no one article could begin to touch them but you need to be advised that they exist and do so abundantly.**

Answer for yourself: What does this say for our cherished doctrines of inerrancy and infallibility, let alone authority for such documents to build one's life and trust upon for eternity? You will have to answer that for yourself but there are answers for these difficulties and none of them are reassuring.

Inspiration is not the same as inerrancy and infallibility!

THE DEJUDIAZING OF JESUS IN THE NEW TESTAMENT

Infinitely more significant than these textual irregularities and inconsistencies is the fact that not only later generations of Christian theologians but the New Testament writers themselves seem much less interested in the Jewish ordinances, traditions, and message of Yeshua than they are in explaining why they regard him as their supernatural Messiah. They seem to forget that Israel and the Jews are the hope and light for the nations; even themselves. There is good historical reason for this. At first, these documents are made to look as if the writers, presumably Jewish, were addressing only their own fellow Jews, urging them to accept Yeshua as the foretold Jewish Messiah. In putting Yeshua forth in this manner to their own people, it was of little importance to convince them that he was actually one of them; that was taken for granted. When one begins a critical study of these documents the internal evidences alone in each of the 4 Gospels betrays non-Jewish authorship because errors and mistakes are common which any 5 year old Jewish

child would not make let alone the Holy Spirit if He were behind such writings. Again, this is something quite disturbing when you see these things!

The Jewish people were already aware of Yeshua' message which was the same as the many prophets which had preceded him: God, Torah, repentance, and Israel. Yeshua was bringing the warning that the coming of the Kingdom was near along with judgment to those who will not repent. Yeshua knew what the Christian Church today does not; namely, the Kingdom of Heaven would not come nor Israel's Messiah and King be revealed unless Israel merited the Kingdom as God's Royal Priesthood for the world. The spiritual climate of Israel was such that they would miss their visitation and the Messiah would not be revealed and the prophecies not fulfilled. But this was not the fault of Jesus or any other who could be considered the Messiah in waiting.

THE FALSIFICATION OF THE CHRISTIAN'S BIBLES...BOTH OLD TESTAMENTS AND NEW TESTAMENTS

There is another problem that the Christian Church fails to understand at this point in the presentation of Jesus as the Jewish Messiah in the New Testament; namely, every Jew over the age of 5 years old knew fully well that the true Messianic Prophecies were not fulfilled before, during, or after Jesus' death. This made the selling of Jesus as Israel's Messiah hard if not possible for the Jew and does so today. This fact escapes the contemporary Christian because his "Christianized Bible" is full of false fulfillments that were created by purposeful mistranslation, misquotation, and lifting passages out of context, in order to present this Jesus of Rome's New Testament as the Messiah to the Gentile world. We must remember that the Gentiles of the world never knew what the true Jewish Scriptures really said concerning the Messiah. They knew no better and nether does 95 % of Christians today since they have never dreamed that their Bibles could be forged and are fraudulent in very important places dealing with Jesus.

It was extremely vital to writers of these New Testament documents to persuade others that Yeshua was indeed a "supernatural" Messiah. Let us not forget that conservative Biblical Judaism taught a human Messiah. One must look to the Essenes for this belief. This explains why it is that this aspect of Yeshua's divinity, rather than his humanity, unfortunately became the central concern & message of the New Testament authors or at least those who re-edited the New Testament documents at a later date. This Essenic theology from these apostate Egyptian Hellenized Jews became the theology of the later Christocentric Gentile Churches of history. Again, this was very easy for not only were the earliest Gentile Church Fathers taught by them in Alexandria, Egypt, but they, as sun-worshippers themselves, already had their dying godmen and Jesus was just made into "another" one. The true Jewish Scriptures never taught this, but when they were altered in such ways by the Essenes in 200 B.C.E. then the Greek translation of the Jewish Scriptures would carry this idea and this Greek translation became the foundation for every Christian Old Testament that would come later (even the Latin of the Catholic Church would be influenced by it). As if that is not bad enough every quote in the New Testament is taken from these corrupted Greek texts. This means that many of the concepts espoused as "messianic" are in reality the fruit of sun-worship and have been applied to Jesus and few know this has occurred.

Later, when it appeared that the Jewish community would not accept the "divine" Yeshua as its Messiah, not only because such ideas were totally foreign to normative Biblical Judaism and their religious writings, but the prophecies went without fulfillment. After the Jew's rejection of this "non-

fulfilling messiah, and after the Jew's rejection of this "divine Jesus" as Messiah instead of a human messiah anointed of God, then this "neo-pagan Christian message" was presented principally to the Gentiles, to whom the Jewish Bible, Jewish life, and traditions were alien, and in many ways too rigorous. To stress the Jewishness of Yeshua to a Jewish audience was totally irrelevant and even counterproductive considering the difficulties listed above. The Jewishness of Jewish fared little better when presenting him to the Gentile pagans as such Jewishness implied for them an ethical monotheism, let alone ethical and ceremonial rituals of Jewish religious teaching as given by God, which ironically, were given to not only the Jews but Gentiles as well as seen if one undertakes a serious study of the Torah and the Tanakh. Obedience and repentance has never been a popular message. It is not today as well! Easy believeism is the fruit of the corruption of the Christian's Bible as we literally are presented with a "get out of jail free" gospel. So not only the message of Jesus was changed but the ideas concerning the Jewish Messiah were altered in the selling of Jesus to the Gentile world as another in a long line of dying sun-godmen.

So instead of living the real message of Jesus the world is full of "believers" in the theology created around the identity of this man. Because of this the Kingdom of Heaven is postponed and will continually be until the truth is restored and there is a wholesale repentance within Christendom, not only concerning their idolatrous beliefs but their conduct and behavior as well since much that is sanctioned and taught by Christian Churches today is defined as sin in the Torah.

THE SUBORDINATION OF THE RELIGION OF YESHUA TO FAITH "IN" YESHUA

So upon examination of the evidence we find that the non-Jewish New Testament authors subordinated the "religion of Yeshua" (Sinai religion-Torah-Judaism) to their new religion-in-the-making; the "religion about the identity of Yeshua", which was centered not so much on his life, message, and teachings (which it should have been) as upon his mystical death and resurrection as emphasized by Paul. What the vast majority of Christians fail to realize is that Paul's Yeshua has more in common with pagan gods and false pagan religions than he does with Biblical Judaism and the Torah. But one must be educated in comparative religion to see and understand the above comment. This "Pauline Jesus" would later become crystallized as we have come to understand as "Pauline Christology", wherein all of life and creation are centered in the belief in the crucified and risen Christ. This unfortunately became the "official" salvation message of the post-Constantinian church of 325 A.D. Pauline Christology, and those who preached or accepted it, transformed the "religion of Yeshua" into the "religion about Yeshua"; no longer God's "anointed" messenger (anointed = messiah), but the eternal Christ who died to bring salvation to the whole world through his church.

We can now understand (as we see in Paul's writings) the Jewish ethical and religious teachings, traditions, and ordinances, as contained in the Torah, its laws, and the Hebrew prophets, were viewed as transcended, replaced, outdated, even overturned, by Paul's concept of the atoning death of Christ (as Paul would have us believe).

Answer for yourself: Once one understands how these New Testament documents were created and the origin for many of their religious concepts, one has to ask if God, the God of the Jewish Scriptures, agrees with what is said in certain places in the New Testament concerning Jesus...does he?

If you have never had the opportunity to study an unbiased look at the New Testament let alone its canonization and want to outside of the Christian box and closed mentality I strongly suggest you study:

<http://geocities.com/faithofyeshua>

PAUL'S MESSAGE AND YESHUA'S MESSAGE CONFLICT

Answer for yourself: Are you aware that [Yeshua taught a completely different gospel](#) for salvation than [Paul taught](#)? Have you ever noticed that?

Answer for yourself: But did Yeshua say that not one jot or tittle would ever pass away (Matt. 5:17)?

Answer for yourself: Who is right? Since these two different "gospels" contradict and conflict with each other in the "method" and "means" to obtain salvation then one thing is certain...only one is correct! Which one?

Answer for yourself: If you find out that Jesus is correct then the next biggest question to tackle is: [Are you really a follower of Jesus?](#)

The "identity" of Yeshua had become in Christian thought more important than what he stood for or the message he brought. In such a situation the Jewishness of Yeshua and his religion which was a model for all mankind was expressly rendered insignificant, as if it had never been a part of his coming. This explains why Yeshua, in Western countries, has been portrayed by artist and sculptors as if he were an Anglo-Saxon; and in other regions of the world as if he had lived and grown up in their own specific country as well. In bringing Yeshua to the world the vast majority of Christian churches have all but denied his Jewish heritage. To make this "Christ" accessible to everyone, he could no longer belong to one people in particular (Israel). His Jewishness was viewed as an impediment.

Thus, while Gentile Christianity borrowed the idea of messiah from Biblical Judaism, the pagans, whom they especially sought to convert to Christianity, were not taught about Yeshua the Jew, nor his message of salvation, only his deity and resurrection as the road to salvation. There is nothing new in this "revelation" at all; you only have to read about Osiris and Egyptian religion to see these same religious ideas, and don't forget that Egypt influenced the whole world.

This was done because the non-Jews of the world already had such prior beliefs concerning their solar-godmen and had to give nothing up to accept another godman. To teach the Jewish way of life would have ensured great difficulty in building a following. As stated, this presentation of Jesus as a sun-godman was not hard to do because familiar concepts tied to their pagan gods to which they were already familiar were "transformed" in a Jewish example of their gods. This "compromise" was an effective teaching tool and "bridge" used by Paul to reach the non-Jews and "soften" the acclimation of the Jewish faith to the non-Jews to which the concept of "Law" seemed foreign. Besides this was a personal justification to him since being rejected repeatedly by James and the Jerusalem church. I seriously doubt that Paul ever expected the results we have today because of his "hyperbole". So instead of Attis, for example, the concepts of Attis were attributed to Yeshua. In reality Yeshua became just another godman in the non-Jew's pantheon.

Most pagan converts to Christianity joined this universal religion of salvation because it offered each of them as individuals life everlasting. Its promises of eternal bliss for those who ONLY BELIEVED in its Savior was attractive to the multitudes of Gentiles because little commitment was needed let alone repentance. These non-Jews were "saved" by simple mental ascent to a religious doctrine

concerning someone regardless of how they lived their lives because another had died for them. Again, dear ones, this is not a new teaching among the Gentile world since the same religious concepts originated with sun-worship thousands of years before Jesus was ever born. The only requirement was to "believe in Jesus" to have eternal life. Along with this concept was the partaking in the "supper of their god" whereby believers took the "blood" and "body" of their god...thus rendering them like their gods...immortal. These Gentiles have been eating their "gods" for thousands of years before Jesus; again nothing new. The Passover was turned into Communion and we lose the message again of Jesus as found in the Passover. The bread become the body of their god miraculously and they drink his very essence (his blood). This is pagan to the core; you just don't know because again this New Testament presents this idea as if God gave it to us! Besides, what Christian Churches keep the festivals? Easter has replaced the Passover for Christianity just like the "historical Jesus" has been replaced by the "Christ of faith;" just like communion has replaced the Passover as well.

Oh by the way...these Gentile religious concepts are totally foreign to Judaism and had been for over 4000 years!

Answer for yourself: Is it not strange that we never find in the New Testament passages that show us that Yeshua ever taught such doctrines for eternal life like the ones Paul did? Can you find one instance where Jesus told anyone to believe in his death, burial, and resurrection for eternal life? If you want to see what Yeshua taught for Eternal Life try Matt. 19!

Take time right now to read Matt. 19:16-30 and Mark 12:28-34. You should see that Yeshua's teachings contradicts the salvation messages taught by most churches today...of only "believe" in Jesus!

Over time we find added to the salvation message of Yeshua such things added as:

- the acknowledgment of his death,
- burial,
- and resurrection,
- as well as the virgin birth
- and incarnation

as necessary elements for salvation. Belief in a set of theological doctrines began to replace and would finally replace the religion as taught by Yeshua; which was one of faith in the One God of Israel & repentance and obedience according to the revelation of this One God as found in the Torah with its ethical and ceremonial commandments imposed on followers of God, both Jew and non-Jew, as their Covenant stipulations and responsibilities to be in right standing with God!

In summary the prophet Micah gives us a thumb nail sketch of the way to eternal life when he said in Mic. 6:8

"He hath showed thee, O man, what is good; and what doth the Lord require of thee, but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God."

Today Christianity is full of pastors and teachers which advocate, not explicitly but implicitly, the

doctrine that conversion to Christ or belief in Christ involves "no spiritual commitment whatsoever". Those who hold this view of the gospel teach that Scripture promises salvation to anyone who simply believes the "facts" about Christ's identity as taught by Paul and who claims the gift of eternal life. There need be no real turning from sin, no resulting change in life-style, no commitment to God or the message of the Bible; not even a willingness to submit to the teachings and message of Yeshua. Obedience to the Laws of God are not necessary as we are no longer under such things. Those things, they say, amount to human works, which corrupt grace and have nothing to do with faith.

HOGWASH! I DARE ANYONE TO READ THE TORAH AND THE PROPHETS AND NOT SEE FOR YOURSELF WHAT GOD'S REAL MESSAGE OF SALVATION IS...IT IS NOT THE MESSAGE OF THE CHRISTIAN CHURCH TODAY...GOD DOES NOT CHANGE...MEN DO

A DEFICIENT DOCTRINE OF SALVATION...

The fallout of such thinking and Christian teaching is a deficient doctrine of salvation. It is justification without sanctification, and its impact on the church, as well as the world, has been catastrophic. The churches of today are populated with people who have bought into a system that encourages shallow and ineffectual faith. The majority of those sitting under such teachings are barren of any verifiable fruit in their lives. Most churches are dead institutions with little impact upon the world let alone their neighborhoods! Just pick up the newspaper and look at the headlines of this "supposed Christian nation" and you should ask yourself: "Where is the fruit of Christianity" on our streets of our nation? Jesus told us that we will know by the fruit. America prides itself on being a "Christian" nation...but look at the fruit of this country...if you have the honesty and courage to do so you will see that something is wrong with the message of the Christian Church that has produced such a sorry state in our country full of "Christians."

If you teach the wrong message you get the wrong results!

Yeshua gave this sobering warning: "Not every one who says to Me, 'Lord, Lord,' will enter the kingdom of heaven; but he who (believes or does?) does the will of my Father who is in heaven (notice the promise is not to those who just believe in Yeshua). Many will save to me on that day, 'Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in your name, and in your name cast out demons, and in your name perform many miracles?' And then I will declare to them, 'I never knew you; depart from me, you who practice iniquity (lawlessness)'" (Matthew 7:21-22). Practicing lawlessness is the same as practicing TORAHLESSNESS.

Just consider ONE aspect of the "faith of Yeshua"; namely obedience to the festival structure God gave Israel. I have already demonstrated to you repeatedly in prior articles that celebration of the festivals of the Lord was not optional to the Jew as well as the Gentile God-Fearers who repented of his sin and became a part of the Israel of God. It was the pattern. There are many others to consider as well...beginning with proper obedience of the church to the Tithe for example.

2 Thess. 3:6 records Paul's command to the followers of Yeshua :

"Now we command you, brethren, in the name of our Lord Yeshua Christ,

that you withdraw yourselves from every brother that walketh disorderly, and not after the tradition which he received of us."

Answer for yourself: What "traditions" could Paul have been bringing to these Gentiles in Thessalonica in Greece?

Within these traditions that Paul refers that was being brought to these Gentiles (who were turning from idols to serve the living God) was not to be more Greek philosophy or theology; he was to bring them the religion of Yeshua (Biblical Judaism) which was centered in the "faith of Yeshua" and not a "faith in Yeshua." Paul did not always do a good job here sorry to say...but that is a whole other can of worms when we deal with the real Paul of history and not the false picture painted of him in this "one book" we call the Christian Bible.

When we continue steadfastly in the Apostle's doctrines of Acts 2:42 we continue in the faith "of" Yeshua, not a faith "in" Yeshua.

Faith "in" Jesus would come later by those who would take Paul's writings and build a world religion on them. They would create in Jesus' name a new religion that would eventually end up completely separated from Jesus' faith and beliefs. And the world yet today does not know or even care to know that such a Gentile creationism is not any different from what they already believed as pagan Gentiles; namely, that they were "IN OSIRIS," or "in" their god whom they consumed in their Eucharists as they ate the body of their god and drank his blood. Little has changed.

Answer for yourself: Are you, as a follower of Yeshua, practicing a Torah observant life-style as Yeshua would have you do? Does your church and Pastor teach this or is his gospel that of Paul?

Answer for yourself: Are you a "true follower" of Yeshua and could you, after reading this article, consider yourself a "true follower of Jesus" as seen in the pages of the New Testament or can you begin to see that you have been led astray? Are you open to honest inquiry into the subject?

Answer for yourself: Is your church teaching you to sanctify the Sabbath as did believing Gentiles in the first century, or is your church substituting Sunday (Sun Worship Day) for the Sabbath?

Answer for yourself: Did you celebrate the festival of Passover this year or did you substitute the paganized cultic ritual of Ishtar (Easter) in place of it without full understanding of what you did? Or does your communion take its place?

Answer for yourself: Didn't God say that the Passover is to be celebrated forever?

Answer for yourself: Or will you be participating in the sanctification of a day set aside for fertility rites and fornication rituals as you celebrate EASTER this year as well as the other pagan feast days that have been adopted by the church?

Answer for yourself: Do you not know that to do so and observe Ishtar day (Easter) is idolatry?

That is violation of the First Commandment! Remember Yeshua said "depart from me" to those who thought they would be accepted by Yeshua. They felt they were accepted. They had been taught by their leader that they were accepted. They had been reassured by their religious leaders. **BUT THEY WERE NOT ACCEPTED!**

Yeshua was not speaking about an isolated group of fringe followers. There will be "MANY" on that day who

will stand before God, stunned to learn they are not included in God's kingdom. I fear that multitudes who fill church pews in the mainstream of the evangelical movement will be among those turned away because they did not do the will of the Father. They have followed the "evolved Catholic theology of Paul" by the anti-Semitic early Gentile Church and are guilty today of having a "faith in Yeshua" instead of obeying "the faith of Yeshua."

Answer for yourself: Are you willing to risk it?

You have been conditioned to believe that because you recited a prayer, signed on a dotted line, walked an aisle, had an emotional experience, were slain in the spirit, spoke in tongues, or had some other experience, you are saved and should never question your salvation. Scripture encourages us to examine ourselves to determine if we are in the faith (2 Cor. 13:5).

Answer for yourself: Why the need to examine if it were not possible to be deceived?

Notice that the New Testament, even though it contains errors, also contains truth. In the Gospels, one can find the Jewish "pattern" whereby non-Jewish believers are to be taught to follow the faith of Yeshua and be united with the Jews in the Israel of God. The Great Commission teaches that the non-Jews are to be "taught to observe those things commanded by Yeshua".

Answer for yourself: Can you ever find Yeshua in the Gospels ever commanding the teachings of Paul be taught or teaching the same message of salvation the way Paul does in his literature? **[THINK]**

One must go the the Pauline literature to find where one is taught to have faith in Yeshua for salvation. One only need to see where Paul, himself a Gentile convert, came up with that belief...try Tarsus...these doctrine were taught there where Paul grew up! Coincidence?

Peter wrote, "give diligence to make your calling and election sure" (2 Pet 1:10). It is right to examine your lives and evaluate the fruit you bear, for "each tree is known by its own fruit" (Luke 6:44).

The Bible teaches clearly that the evidence of God's work in a life is the inevitable fruit of a transformed behavior (1 John 3:10). But just a change in religious routine or behavior, if it does not conform to the truths in God's Word, is worthless, or at best compromised. One erroneous religious practice is not better than another. Our worship is tainted and God is not loved properly. Such is not to be desired; either knowingly or unknowingly.

Answer for yourself: Has your behavior, practices, and beliefs changed since encountering the Hebraic understanding of the Yeshua of the first century as well as his Gentile followers? Have you ever investigated the Jewish Jesus for yourself?

Answer for yourself: Does your life pattern the the life-style of a [follower of the religion of Yeshua](#) whereby you observe the Sabbath, keep the Seven Biblical Festivals, Tithe correctly, etc.,?

Remember that faith that does not result in righteous living is dead and cannot save (James 2:14-17). Professing Christians utterly lacking the fruit of true righteousness that comes through obedience (not another Gospel of "grace only" as preached by most churches today) will find no biblical basis for assurance they are saved (1 John 2:4).

Real salvation is an ongoing process as much as it is a past event. It is the work of God through which you are "conformed to the image of his son" (Rom. 8:29; 13:11). It is past time to find out the truth about the historical Jesus.

Notice we are to pattern our lives around Yeshua, and how he lived, not have a "mental religious belief system in agreement with some established Pauline or Gentile Catholic theology concerning his identity as they perceived it over 1800 years ago".

Answer for yourself: Have you looked lately to see how Yeshua lived and worshipped? Are you attempting to do the same?

Genuine assurance comes from seeing the Holy Spirit's transforming work in one's life, not from clinging to the memory of some experience or your church's teachings when you discover they are incorrect. Yeshua would have you repent of your incorrect beliefs and adopt his. God, in his love, changes lives when one comes to him in Jesus' name, or in Mohammed's name, or even others. Such is the love of God for His children. It is time we love Him back in the ways He commanded, and when shown the ways we have been taught are in error, then repentance is the order of the day.

Answer for yourself: Are you certain that what your church has taught you is not in error in many places? Have you looked or do you have the courage to do so? Do you even know what these "ways" are, or have you assumed that because you are moved with emotion in church that you cannot be in error? Better look again! God desires our emotions be tied to truth and not falsehoods.

Since beginning these teachings, I have shared with you about biblical giving where 1/3 of your Tithe should go to the teaching Levite and priest, 1/3 to the poor, and 1/3 to yourself in order for you and your family to celebrate and observe not only the weekly Sabbath was the Seven Festivals of the LORD as well. This is just one example among many where the Christian Churches have made grave mistakes and taught you to do the same. Such disobedience in how the tithe is used by the church is sin!

Answer for yourself: How has this message affected you?

Answer for yourself: Are you still supporting churches that do not teach you the truth of God's Word as held sacred by Yeshua and taught by him from his Bible that was not corrupted as ours has as I have shown you?

One only need look at these three sites and study them in detail to see this full story unfold for yourself:

<http://bennoah1.freewebsites.com>

<http://geocities.com/faithofyeshua>

<http://paganizingfaithofyeshua.netfirms.com>

Answer for yourself: Is your church revealing to you the real Yeshua of the Scriptures and how can you know without your personal study?

Answer for yourself: Shouldn't you support only those who are teaching the uncompromising truths of God's Word?

The question is "not who is your pastor, but who is your teacher?"

Answer for yourself: Were you aware of what the Word of God says concerning how the tithe is to be used or have you assumed the way your church does it is correct? Once you learn the truth will you repent of the errors of your giving, or now will you?

Answer for yourself: Have you taken the grace of God to excuse yourself from correctly or giving at all?

Answer for yourself: Having seen, in our other websites, what a true believing Gentile believed and practiced in the first century, have you began to seek God about you and your family sanctifying the Sabbath?

Answer for yourself: How can you not begin to sanctify the Sabbath, or tithe correctly, once you have come to the truth?

Answer for yourself: Have you prayed about your commitment to celebrating the Festivals of the Lord instead of the pagan rites given to you by contemporary Christianity?

Remember Paul's admonition to depart from brothers teaching not the traditions of the faith of Yeshua. It is a shame that we have this admonition but it seems he, or his epistles accomplish just the opposite.

This is not a religious game! This is not something I do because I have nothing else to do. God has called me to seek out the "faith once delivered to the saints" and deliver it once again (reawakening to the Hebraic roots of the Christian faith is currently occurring around the world)! This really began with the discovery of the Dead Sea Scrolls and will continue until God comes again to gather His elect. **Not all of Israel is Israel!** I am obedient to the commands of the Lord to the best of my ability in my life have repented when I discovered I have been mistaken in my religious beliefs and practices. Study can show this to you beyond any doubt. The question is what you decide to study and unbiased sources are available.

Answer for yourself: Have you? Will you?

It truly disturbs me that after having taught many for the last couple of years that the ears of many saints seem to be dull to these warnings.

Answer for yourself: Where are the questions that should come from these teachings?

Answer for yourself: Are you hearing the message?

Answer for yourself: How can we refute what Biblical history, culture, and language can show you about the errors taught by the churches today? Have you looked into this for yourself?

Answer for yourself: Is your church and Pastor attempting to adhere to the original faith of Yeshua or has contemporary Gentile Christianity taken it's place?

Answer for yourself: Do you really care? I assure you God does!

Please read 2 Thess. 3:6 again. It is written to you. You should fall on your knees and thank God in heaven for revealing to you that you have been participating in idolatry and didn't know it. Now you do.

Answer for yourself: What is your response?

Let me quote Paul, "This I say therefore, and testify in the Lord, that ye henceforth walk not as other Gentiles walk (most churches today), in the vanity of their minds, having their understanding darkened, being alienated from the life of God through the ignorance that is in them, because of the blindness of their hearts: who being past feeling" I pray you are not past feeling! (Eph. 4:17-19).

do you have the faith of jesus or faith in jesus?

Let us be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive" (Eph. 4:14).

You have been deceived long enough.

Answer for yourself: The big question: "do you really want to be like Yeshua?"

Help us get this message out. Please consider supporting the spread of the faith of Yeshua as Bet Emet attempts to preach faith, obedience, and repentance to a world that knows not the faith once given to the saints, nor that that the time is short before the judgment of God. [Help us take the real Yeshua and his message to the world.](#)

Shalom.



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JESUS' TEACHING ON THE GENTILE'S SALVATION HAS CHANGED: WHO, WHEN AND WHY?

Theological diverseness was an important aspect of the history of Judaism as well as the many sects within Biblical Judaism of the first century. If one consults a multitude of books on early church history one comes away from such an experience seeing that traditional Christian understanding of its own history - and the implicit understanding of most scholars - is that Christianity was a gradual or incremental evolution away from Biblical Judaism and a gravitation backward to pagan mystery religious doctrines that have more in common with astral and solar worship than with Moses and the Torah. If you think that statement is not true then I challenge you to do your own personal study in an unbiased way to refute it. You won't be able to because facts don't change; fables do. It can be proven by the testimony of many scholars today as well as the overwhelming evidence from archeology along with comparison of manuscripts that the later Gentile church modified or added to the tradition once handed them and taught them about the historical Jesus (Bart Ehrman, The Orthodox Corruption of Scripture). What started with the teachings of Jesus as the basic structure and true "gospel" which brought Biblical Judaism to it's zenith, ended up as a rejection of almost all of what he believed and stood far as Gentile neo-paganism successfully mutated Biblical Judaism and almost successfully destroyed all traces of it doing it. Rome had to do this since Jesus was a Jew and anyone familiar with that fact and what it entails would have a hard time swallowing Roman replacement religion. Keith Akers, in his The Lost Religion of Jesus, makes an astute comment: "Most modern 'historical Jesus' researchers, whether liberal or conservative, begin with this (unstated) view of history and the assumption that, if we can just identify what was added later and strip it away, we will see the 'historical Jesus.'" There is debate as to if this works. Although some scholars challenge this idea it seems flawless to me and a multitude of others who have sought and are seeking the truth concerning the historical Jesus. I can personally testify for myself that having adopted such a methodology for study over the last 18 years or so I can attest to its success in recovering as best as possible an accurate picture of Jesus within the religious pluralism of both Judaism of the first century as well as the Romanized version of him.

The history of Christianity that Keith Akers, B. Ehrman, and a host of other scholars propose, by contrast, is not one of smooth and natural development. It is rather a bumpy ride with a succession of crossroads and turning points that confronted Jesus' followers, both Jewish and Gentile. Events will occur that will cause fundamental alterations in the then current "orthodox" beliefs of Judaism and Jesus which later will come to be known as Gentile Christian doctrine and perspective. Coming to grips with these changes in the faith of Jesus is essential to understanding the teachings of Jesus, because it is through these changes that the Gentile church not only altered, but destroyed the historical Jesus and replaced him with a Christ of faith of their own making who was patterned after the Gentile godmen of the ages. Early Christian history seems so contradictory because it was "contradictory" - so many people were saying so many different things at such an early stage of Christian history. Religious pluralism thrived in this age of apocalypticism. This is the fruit of the apocalyptic enthusiasm that had gripped the nation prior to and

after Jesus' birth when the Jews' were desperate for deliverance and the hope of the prophets drew near.

The evidence for diversity in early Christianity is widespread and comes from the writings of early church leaders, from historical accounts, and the New Testament itself. The literature of early Christianity is often strongly controversial, and the bitterness of the attacks on other followers of Jesus who are "misrepresenting" Christianity is quickly apparent. If you read the above articles on the contrasting and **conflicting** [salvation message of Jesus](#) and [the salvation message of Paul](#) you saw such an example of conflicting teachings as both "paths" to salvation are diametrically opposed.

- Paul describes an angry confrontation he had with Peter in Galatians as with the host of Jews that continually followed him to undue his teachings let alone often beat him for the doctrines he was teaching that contradicted Moses and the Prophets
- Ignatius' letters to the churches on his way to martyrdom in Rome, around 100 A.D., literally castigate severely Judaism and Jewish Christianity. The Writings of Ignatius: Bishop of Antioch in Syria [ca 1-2 century] martyred in Rome by beasts (ca 105-116). On his way to Rome, he visits and then writes to various churches, warning and exhorting them to reject the Jews and anything Jewish (at that time the present faith of Jesus). He also writes ahead to Rome, and writes to Polycarp, bishop of Smyrna. Warned the church against heresies that threatened peace and unity, opposed Gnosticism and Docetism. In the Epistle to Smyrna, insisted Christ came in the flesh not just in spirit.
- Irenaeus, around 180 A.D., writes his Against Heresies where he attacks all beliefs others than his and labels all other "interpretations" as heresy.
- The Epistle of Barnabas [ca 130]: This letter, probably not authored by the NT Barnabas, repudiates the claims of Jewish Christians at the time who advocated adhering to observance of the Mosaic Law. Argued that Christ provided salvation and man is no longer bound by the Law. Compares holy life to unrighteousness.
- The Epistle of Mathetes (Believer/Disciple) to Diognetus: This Apologetic treatise? written perhaps ca 200, presents a rational defense of the Gentile's interpretation of Christianity
- Justin Martyr, around 150 A.D., writes his Dialogue With Trypho the Jew where we find replacement religion at its best as he builds his case that his brand of "Christianity" has replaced the Jewish faith and they the Gentiles are the new Israel of God and have again replaced the Jews in this distinction.
- Justin also wrote Apology and Second Apology where he attacked docetism. Justin admitted that traces of truth were found in the writings of pagan authors since all people shared in the generative or germinative Word (logos spermatikos), but he insisted that only Christian had a truly rational faith.
- Quadratus (second century) introduced himself as a Christian philosopher. Thus he began the dialogue which has extended to our own times between philosophy and theology. We knew of him only through Eusebius until a portion of his Apology was discovered written in Armenian. It was published at Venice in 1878. A complete version was found in a Syriac version on Mt. Sinai in 1889. According to Eusebius this apologia was delivered to Emperor Hadrian along with one by Quadratus; however some scholars believe that it was really delivered to Antonines Pius (D. 161). Whatever the occasion, Aristides defended the proposition that Christians had a more complete understanding of the eternal God than Jews or barbarians. He justified this by arguing that Christianity had a higher notion of God and more perfect rules for human conduct.
- Hippolytus, (170-236), in the third century wrote his The Refutation of All Heresies. According to his refutation, the Ebionites (the earliest Jewish followers of Jesus) followed the heresy of Cerinthus and Carpocrates. Cerinthus held that Jesus was born of Mary in the same way as all men and that Mary was not a virgin. He claimed that Jesus was more just and more wise than all the human race. And then Hippolytus adds: They live conformably to the customs of the Jews, alleging that they are justified according to the law, and saying that Jesus was justified according to the law. And therefore it was (according to the Ebionaeans,) that (the Savior) was named (the) Christ of God and Jesus, since not one of the rest (of mankind) had observed completely the law. For if even any other had fulfilled the commandments (contained) in the law, he would have been that Christ. And the Ebionaeans allege) that they themselves also, when in like manner they fulfill (the law), are able to become Christs; for they assert

- that our Lord Himself was a man in a like sense with all (the rest of the human family). But Ebionism was not only addressed as he ran the gamut of religious sects of his day; especially gnosticism.
- Origen (third century) comments that "many" Christians had differences of opinion with each other on "subjects of the highest importance" (De Principiis, Preface, section 2).
 - Tertullian is our earliest extensively preserved Latin Christian author [140-230], who aligned himself around 207 with the "Montanist" Christian movement that was considered "heretical" by the representatives of emerging mainstream Christianity. He is credited with writing five books Against Marcion, in addition to less lengthy polemical works such as Prescription Against Heretics, Against Hermogenes, Against the Valentinians, and Against Praxeus. Tertullian details for us his ideas on heresy in his Prescription Against Heretics, but like I said he himself joined the Montanists, who were themselves declared heretics at a later date by the official church.
 - Epiphanius was a bishop who is noted in the history of the early Christian church for his struggle against beliefs he considered heretical. His chief target was the teachings of Origen, a major theologian in the Eastern church whom he considered more a Greek philosopher than a Christian. Epiphanius' own principles were later discredited by the harsh nature of his attacks. He is credited with writing the Panarion which is a rather lengthy work directed against heresy in which he details and delineates the views of eighty various religious groups and of course denounces each one.
 - Theodoret was the bishop of Cyrus and a theologian, born at Antioch in Syria about 393; died about 457. His major works are the Compendium of Heretical Fables in which he describes and attacks sixty heretical groups.

From this short summary list above anyone can see for themselves that early Christianity was not at all stable and had not one set of adopted and supported consensus of religious opinion. That would come but not after centuries of councils where these ideas would be debated and even submitted to murder and violence before a consensus would be achieved in order to stabilize Gentile Christianity.

"Stability" is a characteristic of later Christianity, beginning about the time of Constantine and the council of Nicaea (in the year 325). It will take the power of Rome to bring religious ideas together and that itself will take centuries. After Constantine and the controversies raised at the council of Nicaea, there were still serious disputes, but they had a much narrower focus and did not occur nearly as frequently. Nicaea was the theological watershed and the death knell for Jewish Christianity. In fact, there were only three truly great heresies after this point.

The first was the monophysite controversy, which concerned whether or not Christ had one or two natures; later there was the split between Roman Catholics and Eastern Orthodox over the authority of the pope; finally, there was the greatest heresy of all, that of Martin Luther and others, which launched the Protestant reformation (Akers, The Lost Religion of Jesus, p. 10).

For over 1600 years following Constantine, controversy over doctrinal matters - while it did occur - was the exception rather than the rule. But during the first four centuries after Jesus, Christianity was even more doctrinally divided than it is today. Moreover, these disputes did not involve political questions of church authority, nor obscure theological points that most ordinary Christians had difficulty understanding; they involved the very nature of God, Jesus, and salvation.

In Christian history, these early theological disagreements are both admitted and denied. Eusebius' fourth-century Ecclesiastical History details for us these various theological disagreements which threatened the church but they are not presented as serious but just as bumps on the road of church history, due to the sorts of misunderstandings that were bound to arise as any message was carried forward. Eusebius, in his Ecclesiastical History, distorts the truth of the events he reports. He presents a story of the followers of Jesus as having established a church and who wrote down the teachings of the Christ. They, according to Eusebius, faced opposition, persecution, and even setbacks along the way, but in general the gospel gained increasing numbers of adherents as time progressed. What the casual reader of Eusebius fails to note is that all along this route of theological diversity the religious and religious belief system of Jesus and his first followers is continually being altered and changed by the Gentile juggernaut called Rome. Three hundred years

after the death of Jesus the Roman Empire is made to look as if only "embraced" and "sanctioned" an exiting faith instead of altering it almost beyond recognition as it conformed it to their already existing pagan ideas surrounding their sungods. Eusebius portrays Christian history as the record of revelation gaining increasing acceptance over time. That it did, but at the expense of the truth about a Jewish Jesus and his faith. Today we have the task of recovering the faith of Jesus, the faith once given to the saints.

From the above chart alone you should have seen that Christianity did not emerge as a gradual and natural evolution or development from the teachings of Jesus, Moses, or the Prophets. Rather, you should have seen that Christianity, as it has become today, is a rejection and continual modification of Biblical Judaism whereby the non-Jew, instead of finding his place within the Israel of God, has totally replaced it and its religious teachings by substitution and modifying their own. Due to these theological diversities or, as some have called it, theological crises that shaped the direction of the Gentile church, we have almost totally lost today the truths once held dear and sacred by Jesus, Moses, and the Prophets. If you see and understand what has been said then the reality of the situation should hit home hard; namely, that the historical Jesus has little if anything in common with the religious doctrines that exist and are cherished by those who believe to be his followers. I guess you might have to [ask if you really are a true follower of Jesus after](#) all if you are a Christian and adhere to their religious belief system as practiced in the Western Hemisphere today.



WHO ARE YOU GOING TO BELIEVE FOR YOUR ETERNAL LIFE: JESUS OR PAUL? #1

EXAMINING YESHUA AND HIS TEACHINGS CONCERNING ETERNAL LIFE

For many of our readers the information in this article will be startling. After reading this article you will see for yourself that if you follow contemporary Christianity and its teachings then you are following Paul and not Jesus/Yeshua, because Yeshua's message of redemption is entirely opposite to what Paul teaches. I can hear many of you say...."that's not so" or "he is wrong." Let me sincerely tell you that in the beginning, even after my seminary training I did not see it as clearly as I do today. But I beg of you to read this article and THINK...THINK....of what I will show you. For in the end, you are directly responsible before God, and HaShem is sending you and many of His children today appeals to repent and return to the true faith once given to the saints. Time is of the essence, and it will be horrible to die and find out that you followed the wrong faith...a faith that does not save.

One last thing; you might wonder what the end-result should be of such a series of studies. It is our hope at Bet Emet ministries that when you complete these articles the reader will be able to understand that Christianity is best understood and practiced from a Jewish viewpoint which restores the Sabbaths and the Seven Biblical Festivals. Such emphasis is almost totally lacking in the Christian church today. Also, a renewed emphasis in proper tithing and righteous giving hopefully will replace the current perversion of giving as seen in most churches and on televisions today. What you will come to see is that all these above things, and more, embody the true salvation experience. Let us begin...shall we?

YESHUA WAS A JEW...AND TAUGHT BIBLICAL JUDAISM

I think few will take issue with my statement that in the New Testament Yeshua is pictured as a Jew who believed in Judaism and taught others to be faithful to his religion's precepts and laws forever!

In this article I will quote many verses from the New Testament, and it is important to understand from the outset that although much in the New Testament is unreliable, when we find places in it which agrees with Moses and the Prophets we have found a witness to the Word of God as recorded in the Tanakh (the Jewish Bible). Let us not stagger at the comment that "much in the New Testament is unreliable," because in this article I will show you that many of these New Testament verses oppose Moses and the Prophet, let alone Yeshua's teachings, and are irreconcilably contradictory to the Gospel Yeshua preached which can be found along side them in the New Testament. Both passages confirming that Yeshua believed and both taught Moses and the Prophets regarding salvation, as well as verses contradicting what Yeshua taught, have remained included in the New Testament through the ages. These verses remain for a purpose today. They remain to show the careful reader and student the truth amidst fiction as written in the New Testament.

Likewise, the purpose could well be to reassure Jews who are in doubt about their Judaism, and are thinking of leaving Judaism for Christianity, that **Judaism and Torah has always been and will always be the road to God for the people of God; both Jew and Non-Jew.** Those unsure Jews and deceived Christians perhaps can have their belief in God, Torah, and Israel (Judaism) kindled and can be kept on God's pathway by the very same Christian Book through which they have unknowingly deserted their true people and God! Indeed, Jews who already have left their faith as well as Christians who are returning to the Jewish faith once given the saints are daily having their eyes opened to the truths I will reveal in this article. Prayerfully, many will return as baal teshuvah and through repentance turn to the God of Israel, who surely is waiting with fatherly understanding and forgiveness. ***Believe Yeshua in this matter - Eternal life is obtained through Judaism. Paul teaches otherwise and contradicts Yeshua on this matter.***

For devout Jews who were once Christians and Christians who have studied to see the errors of their prior faith and have returned to a more correct and Biblical Sinai faith, the revelations in this article will be very comfortable corroboration of their firm faith in the holiness of the religion of Yeshua; namely Biblical Judaism. Others who read these verses will bring to them their own heritage and will make of them what they will. In other words they will continue to selectively hear what they choose regardless of the facts presented here.

These pages of reverse proof-texts are intended to strengthen the course God set up for Jews as well as Non-Jews and to fortify their faith and devotion to His plan of salvation for all mankind. In effect, here you will discover confirmation of Biblical Judaism's everlasting truth and validity through the words of Yeshua and others in the New Testament. Often this confirmation will conflict with what Paul taught, but more on that later. Now, let's get into it.

WHO WILL YOU BELIEVE.....YESHUA OR PAUL? LISTEN.YESHUA SPEAKS!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!

Matthew 5:17-19, **"Think not that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfill. For verily I say unto you, Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one little shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled. Whosoever therefore shall break one of these least commandments, and shall teach men so, he shall be called the least in the kingdom of heaven: but whosoever shall do and teach them, the same shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven."**

Try and read the above passage over three or four times. Get the intent of Yeshua into your mind and soul. You can read this over and over and never end your astonishment; especially in light of what you have heard preached in your churches. **Remember, these are Yeshua's words saying he is here to follow the law of Moses, not end the law. Until the world ends, the law as written will be in effect.** Jews and Non-Jews who obey the law and teach it are greatly loved by God, while those who transgress the law and teach its transgression are not. Notice that although the word "fulfill" could mean "to complete or end," in this case and context it clearly means "to obey and do." We know this because the following sentence continues the idea that the law will not change until the world ends, which still has not occurred two thousand years later. Just look outside your window.

Luke 16:16-17, "The law and the prophets were until John (the Baptist): since that time the kingdom of God is preached, and every man presseth into it. And it is easier for **heaven and earth to pass, than one little of the law to fail.**"

Preaching the kingdom (God's rule and reign over mankind through submission to the King's decrees....laws and commandments) is emphasized since John the Baptist, Yeshua said. But the laws of the Torah are still effective and good, to be fulfilled until the world ends. **Notice for yourself that in no way does "until John" signify the end of the law, because the very next sentence substantiates the law's validity forever (easier for heaven and earth to pass....notice again that this has not occurred yet).**

Luke 16:19-20,22-24,27-31, "There was a certain rich man, . . . And there was a certain beggar named Lazarus, . . . the beggar died, and was carried by the angels into Abraham's bosom: the rich man also died, and was buried; And in hell he lift up his eyes, being in torments, . . . And he cried and said, Father Abraham, have mercy on me, . . . I pray thee . . . send him (Lazarus) to my father's house: . . . that he may testify unto them, lest they also come into this place of torment. Abraham saith unto him, They have Moses and the prophets; let them hear them. And he said, Nay, father Abraham: but if one went unto them from the dead, they will repent (Yeshua and not Paul). And he said unto him, If they hear not Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded, though one rose from the dead."

Answer for yourself: Is this a New Testament teaching?

Answer for yourself: Did you notice that Yeshua in the New Testament is teaching that making it to Abraham's bosom (Heaven) was connected to listening to Moses and the Prophets?

Answer for yourself: What is this parable from Luke really teaching?

Notice first that it is Yeshua and not Paul who is doing the teaching in this story. Yeshua clearly relates in this story that the laws of Moses and the words of the prophets which teach repentance lead the faithful to Abraham's bosom, instead of hell. Moses and the prophets are the pathway to eternal life in heaven according to Yeshua. Yeshua taught this and not Paul. If you will be honest with yourself most of you are typical Christians who read our articles, and the vast majority have been told by their Pastors and Churches that they are not under the Law (Moses and the Prophets), but rather, they are under grace (Paul). They have been told that the Law (Moses and the Prophets) has passed away for Christians and they are no longer under the Law but under grace (Paul's gospel). In other words you have listened to Paul more than you have to Yeshua.

Answer for yourself: But how can the teaching of Paul in this regard be opposite to what Yeshua said, and since opposite, who are you to trust for your eternal life?

Matthew 19:16-19 (Mark 10:17,19) (Luke 18:18,20), ". . . Good Master, what good thing shall I do, that I may have eternal life? And he said unto him . . . if thou wilt enter into life, keep the commandments . . . Which? Yeshua said, Thou shalt do no murder, Thou shalt not commit adultery, Thou shalt not steal, Thou shalt not bear false witness, Honor thy father and thy mother: and, thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself "

Answer for yourself: Did you notice that "having eternal life" is connected by Yeshua with "keeping the commandments" (all of these except one are categories of the law and commandments called The Ten Commandments and under each of these categories are grouped 613 other laws)?

Answer for yourself: Is Yeshua just referring to the Ten Commandments or is there something we as Non-Jews unacquainted with Yeshua's religion are missing in this teaching?

It may amaze you but upon my study of Biblical Judaism I have discovered that each Tablet of the Law was separated by commandments between man and God and between man and man. In other words, the First Tablet of the Law is dealing with how man relates to God according to God's commandments, and the Second Tablet of the Law is dealing with how man relates with mankind. But more than that, each of the Ten Commandments is best understood as categories consisting of many commandments within the 613 Commandments grouped under each of the ten headings. So in effect, when Yeshua tells this man "thou shalt not steal" he is telling the man to obey all the different facets of the broad commandment, because under such a heading the Bible enumerates the various ways such a commandments can be kept and broken.

Answer for yourself: Is Yeshua teaching that eternal life and salvation in Heaven is connected to keeping and observing the Laws of God? The answer to that question is yes.

There you have it. The way to eternal life for both the Jew and the Non-Jew and salvation in heaven, according

to Yeshua, is living like a good Jew and submitting to the laws of the commandments of God. These detailed instructions by Yeshua are plainly presented.

Notice that in the following verses the man asks what more he needed do. And Yeshua replies, to be perfect he should sell everything he owns and give it to the poor and receive treasure in heaven: "and come and follow me." The man, on hearing this, leaves disturbed because he has great wealth and doesn't want to lose it. There is no indication that the "follow me" means anything else but to accompany Yeshua penniless. The message remains intact that observing Torah law gives eternal life. Perfection is another story.

Mark 12: 28-31 (Matthew 22:36-40), "... Which is the first (great commandment in the law) commandment of all? And Yeshua answered him, The first of all the commandments is, Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God is one Lord: And thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and with all thy strength: this is the first commandment. And the second is like, namely this, Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself. There is none other commandment greater than these. (On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets)."

So, Yeshua selected Deuteronomy 6:4-5 and Leviticus 19:18 as the greatest two laws. This was very Jewish of him, as most rabbis would completely agree, especially Rabbi Hillel. He chose the Shema prayer, the Jew's affirmation of God's oneness and dedication to love of Him together with Judaism's great moral teaching of loving people with the love you have for yourself. What could be more indicative of the essence of Judaism?

Luke 10:25-28, "... Master, what shall I do to inherit eternal life? He said unto him, What is written in the law? how readeest thou? And he answering said, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy strength, and with all thy mind: and thy neighbor as thyself. And he said unto him. Thou hast answered right: this do, and thou shalt live."

Answer for yourself: Did you make the connection between "inherit eternal life" and "thou shalt live" as also referring to eternal life? I hope you did because this is typical of Hebrew parallelism.

Answer for yourself: Have you noticed that in Luke 10:25-28, Matthew 19:16-19, Mark 10:17-19, and Luke 18:18-20 something very important is repeated?

Answer for yourself: What is it?

Namely, that possessing and inheriting eternal life is always connected with **doing something..... not with believing something!**

Answer for yourself: How does Luke 10:25-28 teach us more than we learn from Mark 12:28-31?

The writer of the Gospel of Luke goes one step further than the just given, Mark 12:28-31. Here we have the New Testament teaching us of the indisputable link between the "doing" of the commandments of God and eternal life, which is the reward for obeying them.

Answer for yourself: Are you aware that Yeshua is teaching in the New Testament that eternal life is to be taught from the Law.....the same Law that tells us "what to do" and what you most likely have been told has passed away or which you are no longer under?

It is evident that Yeshua said, in the New Testament no less, that the law of Moses, as epitomized in Deuteronomy 6:5 and Leviticus 19:18, is the pathway to personal salvation and eternal life. Yes, Yeshua said this as found in the New Testament. Let us continue.

Mark 12:32-34, "And the scribe said unto him, Well, Master, thou hast said the truth: **for there is one God; and there is none other but he: And to love him with all the heart (alone as the one God), and with all the**

understanding, and with all the soul, and with all the strength, and to **love his neighbor as himself**, is more than all burnt offerings and sacrifices. ... Yeshua . . . said unto him, **Thou art not far from the kingdom of God . . .**"

Answer for yourself: Did you notice that acknowledging the oneness of God, and not the Trinity or triuneness of God, is connected with the reward of God's kingdom and eternal life?

Answer for yourself: Did you likewise notice that loving God and one's neighbor who is created in the likeness of God is connected with inheriting God's eternal life?

I John 5:3, "For this is the love of [for] God, **that we keep his commandments**; and his commandments are not grievous

Answer for yourself: Since we are told that loving God is connected to eternal life, did you notice the New Testament teaches **"how" the love for God is to be manifested?**

Answer for yourself: Does the New Testament teach us **that loving God is manifested through the keeping of the 613 commandments?** It sure does!

This is a straight follow-through of Mark 12:28-31, which connects the acknowledgment of the oneness of God, loving Him, and loving ones neighbor as written in the law, with the reward of God's kingdom. Burnt offerings and sacrifices are secondary to the commandments in Judaism and always have been. With no Temple, there is no doubt about this low degree of importance. This passage demonstrates Yeshua' Judaism through and through. Notice likewise that the term "Master" means good teacher, not anything more.

Matthew 7:12 (Luke 6:31), "Therefore all things whatsoever ye would that men should **do to you, do ye even so to them: for this is the law and the prophets.**"

If you thought that "do unto others" is not Judaic or that it is different from "love your neighbor as yourself" you see here that it is totally of Jewish origin. Yeshua declared that it is the law and the prophets. It is Judaic.

Luke 11:28, ". . . blessed are they that hear the word of God and keep it."

Notice also with me that when the writer of Luke penned this verse, that there was not a New Testament in existence and that the only possible identity we can give to "the word of God" is the Law, the Prophets, and the Writings....the Jewish Bible.

Matthew 7:21, "Not every one . . . shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven."

Again we find the expressed will of the Father in the Law, Prophets, and Writings...the Jewish Bible.

Matthew 3:15, ". . . it becometh us to fulfill all righteousness . . ."

These powerful statements are tucked in between verses which emphasize other ideas. But they can stand alone. And, standing alone they are Judaism's own. Yeshua believed that the will of God is revealed in the word of God, the Hebrew Bible. In the Hebrew Scriptures we learn the law of Moses (Torah) and the Prophets. Thereby, we can perform righteousness as God desires by adhering to what they teach. This Yeshua believed.

Luke 19:8-9, ". . . half of my goods **I give to the poor**; and if I have taken any thing from any man by false accusation, **I restore him fourfold**. And Yeshua said unto him, **This day is salvation come to this house forsomuch as he also is a son of Abraham.**"

What comes next is very important to keep your ears open. **It appears that Yeshua believed that even a partial fulfillment of the commandments of the Torah is sufficient to be accepted by God.** In the above verse it is recorded for us that Zaccheus repented by observing 2 commandments. **In fact, as taught by**

Yeshua, even by rectifying transgression of the Torah's laws and doing good deeds a person is deserving of salvation. As Jews trust, it is the trying to please God, it is the effort, not the success in total compliance with God's ordinances which is required of us to be righteous and gains us salvation.

Answer for yourself: How confident should we feel about our salvation if we have followed teachings that state that obedience of the law or the striving to observe the laws and commandments of God don't matter any longer because we are saved by “grace” or that this same law that Yeshua connects with eternal life has been taught to us as if it has passed away and of little importance in our lives any longer?

Answer for yourself: Are we absolved by God to not try to choose those things to please Him by keeping His commandments? Is this conduct really connected to eternal life as Yeshua taught, or is he wrong and Paul right?

All the more reason to study to learn how to acquire mitzvot and commandments, thereby taking upon yourself the yoke of the Kingdom of God. Such obedience to commandments is both pleasing to God as well as our demonstration of our love for Him and our fellow man. To do otherwise is not to love God, but rather, show our ambivalence toward Him and our neighbor.

Luke 13:28, "There shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth, when ye shall see Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, and all the prophets, in the kingdom of God, and you yourselves thrust out."

Keep your ears open for this as well. Here Yeshua said that the fathers of Judaism and the goodly Hebrew prophets are all accepted into the kingdom of God. **Evidently, good Jews need nothing more than the Hebrew religion for life eternal in Yeshua' own belief.**

Now for the hard part. Notice that Yeshua also said that many of his followers (the “ye” in the above verse) will not get into God's kingdom and inherit eternal life and salvation because of their sinfulness.

Answer for yourself: Does this same New Testament teach that “transgression of the law is sin”? Yes.

Answer for yourself: Did you notice what is missing from the above words of Yeshua?

There is no Pauline religious belief system mentioned as a means of salvation for the followers of Yeshua!

There is no Christological "belief" presented here as an antidote for spiritual wickedness for mankind.

There is no “easy believeism” taught by Yeshua or his Apostles as a way to eternal life; on the contrary, every time he and the other Apostles emphasize the same thing; namely an earnest attempt to live by the commandments and laws of God for eternal life!

If you have paid attention so far in this article I have shown you repeatedly that Yeshua repeatedly connects eternal life with keeping and observing the Law and Commandments of God.

Nowhere does Yeshua teach that a belief “in him” brings for its adherents eternal life! In fact he teaches just the opposite!!!!!!!!!!!!!!

John 4:22, "(to Samaritan) Ye worship ye know not what: we (the Jewish people) know what we worship: for salvation is of the Jews."

Yeshua "worships" what Jews worship, namely God.

Answer for yourself: Salvation is of whom...the Jews (Jewish theology) or the Christians (Christian theology)?

This passage from John 4:22 is even more startling when one realizes that the Samaritan woman who is part Non-Jew mixed with Jewish heritage and ancestry. In other words, she is a mixture; not only of blood line but religious teaching as well. She is a perfect example of the Christian today who follows Paul instead of Yeshua. He has part right and part wrong.

Lets look at Paul where he get some things correct.

I Corinthians 6:9-10, (Paul) "Know ye not that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God? Be not deceived: neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor abusers of themselves with mankind, Nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners, shall inherit the kingdom of God."

Answer for yourself: In this passage are you aware that Paul is in full agreement with Yeshua and his teachings on eternal life?

Answer for yourself: Are you aware that there are commandments in the Torah forbidding each of the above conducts?

Although Paul adds some of his own ideas, the listing of "thou shalt nots" is derived from the commandments. He stresses what he considers unrighteousness and Paul says that transgression of the Law prevents people from earning reward of heaven. Paul, here, reveals his faith in the teachings of the Torah and its stance on eternal life. Paul is in agreement with Yeshua and the other Apostles and their teachings on inheriting eternal life. So far so good.

But I wish I could end here but I cannot. In the next article we will look intently to where Paul deviates from and teaches against Yeshua's teachings concerning eternal life. This exercise will be difficult for many, but as I have tried to show you, such an exercise to recover truth is very necessary because your eternal life is dependent upon whom you believe and follow....Yeshua or Paul. More to follow in the conclusion to this article. Let us now look at Paul's Salvation Message and see if it agrees with what you just read.

Shalom.



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RABBI YESHUA AND HIS TEACHINGS ON THE GENTILE'S SALVATION

The Noahide Commandments are the Commandments given by the Torah to the Gentiles (first given to Adam and later given to Noah), which according to rabbinic tradition and the First Church Council in Acts 15:17-19 and Acts 15:28-29 (which was headed up by James, the Lord's brother and head of the Jerusalem church) were given by God to Gentiles like Adam and Noah, that if obeyed, will be rewarded with eternal life! According to rabbinic teaching & Acts 15 (which Yeshua believed and would have agreed with himself), those Gentiles who observe these precepts are assured their share in the World to Come, regardless of what fanciful interpretations were later to be invented by both the Catholic & Protestant churches and most probably heard in your modern churches. Yeshua was and is a Jew. He never ascribed to Baptist, Methodist, Catholic, Assembly of God, Church of Christ, or Mormon church doctrine. He believed and taught the truth as received from his Father in Heaven.

The Christian must come to an understanding that the religion of Yeshua (Judaism) has always recognized two different religious codes:

1. the 613 Laws and precepts given to the Jews following their liberation from Egypt, and
2. the earlier Noahide system of legislation for all mankind.

DID YESHUA INTEND TO REPLACE OR ABOLISH JUDAISM AND START A NEW RELIGION?

The eighteenth century Talmudist Rabbi Jacob Emden wrote a letter that has been discovered which states:

"Yeshua never intended to abolish Judaism, but only to establish a new religion for the Gentiles based upon the ancient Noahide Commandments transmitted by Moses on Mount Sinai."

Let me say that Emden more correctly should have said "RE-ESTABLISH" for the Gentiles the religious foundations that had previously been given by God to the Gentiles since the Garden of Eden and Sinai. Emden stressed in his letter that Yeshua brought about a "double blessing" to the world, by strengthening the Torah of Moses and at the same time removing idolatry from the midst of the Gentiles. Unfortunately, Emden's thesis in the letter never gained a substantial following by fellow Jews. The most obvious reason would seem to be the frequent harsh statements made by Yeshua against the rabbis and Jews of his time (Matt. 23). This chapter in Matt. 23 has seldom been correctly interpreted by the Christian Church because the church, for the most part, lacks the facts & information concerning the historical, religious, and political background surrounding Yeshua's statements which are necessary to correctly understand such a chastisement of a particular "sect" within the Pharisees, and not the Pharisees as a whole! Yeshua was not condemning the Pharisee movement, for he was proud to be one, especially a Pharisee belonging to

the School of Hillel. Yeshua was not replacing Judaism with Christianity!

Emden helps us understand the original intentions of Yeshua and Paul as he analyzes the beginnings of Christianity. According to the Jewish rabbi, Yeshua and his Apostles, which were later sent by Yeshua to the Gentiles acted entirely within the Halakhah (correct and accepted Jewish law) in re-creating and re-establishing the religion God had previously given to the Gentiles which was based on the Noahide Commandments (the basic seven Noahide Laws consist of prohibitions against idolatry, blasphemy, killing, stealing, sexual sins, eating the limb of a living animal (cruelty to animals), and the imperative to establish courts of justice). According to the Jewish Talmud and Tosefta, those Gentiles who observe these statutes are considered to be of the Hasidim (pious ones) of the Nations and merit a share in the World to Come. Even within the *Alenu* prayer which is prayed by Jews and "God-Fearers" every Sabbath, it states "May all inhabitants of the earth recognize and know....". This means the Gentiles. This prayer for Gentiles is another proof that the will of God is for Gentiles not to perish but have everlasting life. In the Mishnah (the Oral Law), in *Pirke Avot* 4.1 it states: "Every assembly that is for the sake of Heaven will in the end be established." Christian assemblies are for the sake of Heaven, yet I must sadly inform you that they have accepted "IN PART" the Noahide Commandments, but not totally! God had given them all to the Gentiles!

THE "FIRST" GREAT COMMISSION...NO...IT IS NOT WHAT YOU THINK

Yeshua and Paul were acquainted with the Essenes authors and their Scrolls. Many passages in the New Testament bear striking similarity to the Scrolls (see my previous newsletter about Yeshua and the Secret of the Dead Sea Scrolls). A comprehensive overview of the writings and materials available to us today reveal the Essenes to have been extremely pious Jews who scrupulously followed the Torah (the instruction and teaching of God, more commonly called the "Law"), whereas Yeshua and Paul are by many portrayed incorrectly as having forsaken their Jewish origins and replaced the Torah with a new religion-Christianity. This never happened; at least not by Yeshua! At least this is the general picture one is presented with; and one will not be able to see through it without diligent study. But this premise goes against Emden's letter. A Christian should know that the Talmud records for us that Moses commanded the Jews to spread the knowledge of the Noahide commandments to all mankind! Did you hear that? God commanded Moses to spread the knowledge of the Covenant with Noah and its requirements to all Gentiles in the world. Judaism acknowledges this "Gentile Covenant for Salvation" as from God since the time of Mount at Sinai. The questions we have to ask ourselves is this:

- Does history record for us such an ambitious attempt to bring the Noahide Laws to Gentiles, and if so, who was behind it and when did it occur?"
- Were the pious Essenes the ones who attempted such a mission to the Gentiles in the generation preceding Yeshua's birth?
- Did Yeshua and Paul, through their ministries, follow in the Essene's footsteps and try to bring to fruition what the Essenes began in the generation before their birth?
- Where do the Gentiles correctly fit into the teachings of Yeshua and Paul?

As Christians, we must constantly search for the correct interpretations of such an event if we are to correctly understand the Bible and its message to the Gentile and his salvation.

WE NEED TO STUDY THE HISTORY OF THE CHURCH

A passage in the Jerusalem Talmud records for us:

"Menahem the Essene and 160 Essene disciples left the Jewish community"

(remember not all Essenes lived in & around the Dead Sea) "about 20 B.C. on a mission to the Gentiles to take the "world" the Noahide Covenant, thus assuring obedient and observant Gentiles a place in the World to Come."

This Menahem served as a vice-president of the Sanhedrin under the sage Hillel who was the Nassi (President of the Sanhedrin) some thirty years before Yeshua's birth. The Mishnah makes quite clear that Menahem subjected himself totally to Hillel's authority (who loved the Gentiles), thus establishing a link between the Essenes and Hillel (who was a conservative Pharisee). Also of importance is the link between the two camps (Essenes & Pharisees) in that they were both known as "Hasidim." Menahem the Essene left Hillel's Sanhedrin for his mission to the world and was then replaced by the sage Shammai (who did not like the Gentiles). Shammai succeeded him as vice-president, probably about 20 B.C., and the influences of Hillel began to be replaced with those of Shammai.

STILL MORE QUESTIONS THAT NEED ANSWERS

- Was Menahem forced out by Shammai and his followers?
- Did Hillel's disciples join Menahem in his mission to the Gentiles?
- Did later rabbis approve of Menahem's mission to the Gentiles?
- Did Shammai lend his support to the Gentile mission or did he discourage the Jews from being a light to Gentiles?
- In the time of Yeshua did the teachings of Hillel or Shammai have influence over the people of Israel and direct the course of the nation?
- Which of these two Pharisee schools supported Yeshua and which did Yeshua rebuke in Matt. 23?
- Was Yeshua against all the Pharisees?

THE STORMY RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN HILLEL AND SHAMMAI

The first disputes regarding the Oral law (that was passed down for some 1700 years from Moses at Sinai) took place at this time between the sages and students of Hillel and Shammai (beginning about 20 years prior to Yeshua's birth). Their respective schools (Bet Hillel and Bet Shammai) were to clash over 350 times on issues of the Oral Law during the next hundred years. Nor were these always minor disputes for even once the Zealots connected with Shammai massacred and killed many of the Pharisees. The issues between Bet Hillel and Bet Shammai went to the very core of what Judaism stood for (and what Yeshua stood for). **One of the major areas of contention was Judaism's attitude toward salvation of the Gentiles.**

Answer for yourself: What side would Yeshua agree with?

The Schools of Shammai and Hillel both accepted all of the commandments contained in the five "written" books of the Torah (Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, and Deuteronomy). But the written law of Moses is too brief to be applied to practical issues of everyday life, and it was accepted that God also gave an oral and more detailed tradition was originally given to Adam, then to Noah, and finally handed down to Moses at Sinai. The debates of Bet Hillel and Bet Shammai centered on this oral tradition.

This oral tradition was passed down by Moses and it was forbidden to be set to writing. It was this Oral Law that later caused controversy among the rabbis; especially Bet Shammai and Bet Hillel. Finally, out of fear it would be forgotten due to all the persecution of Judaism and the deaths of its leaders at the hands of Gentiles, the sages permitted it to be committed to writing. The first major works were the Mishnah (200 A.D.) and the

Tosefta (4th century), followed by two Talmuds; the Babylonian Talmud and the Jerusalem Talmud (5th century). The Babylonian version is more popular than the Jerusalem Talmud. Also at this time, books of homilies known as Midrash began to appear. The two major commentaries to the Babylonian Talmud are those of Rashi and the Tosefta. Why did I mention these works? The Mishnah, Talmud and Tosefta are the works of primary interest and authority when researching the Jewish law and tradition that surrounded Yeshua and his teachings in the first century.

G-D CHOSE HILLEL'S INTERPRETATION FOR ALL TIME....A VOICE FROM HEAVEN

The School of Shammai came upon the Jewish scene 20 years before Yeshua's birth, and flourished for around 100 years. After the destruction of the Temple in 70 A.D., the seat of the Sanhedrin was relocated to Yavneh, where the Halachah (accepted interpretation of Jewish Law) of the School of Bet Hillel became once again the established Halachah (accepted interpretation for all issues of Jewish law). Also at this time it is recorded by the Rabbis that God, in a "bat kohl" spoke from Heaven and a Heavenly Voice was heard declaring the Law was to be from that time forward decided in favor of the interpretations of the School of Bet Hillel. Since that time all Jewry has accepted the teachings of Bet Hillel.

HOW COULD YESHUA REPLACE WHAT G-D APPROVED?

Now listen closely. Yeshua's debates with the Pharisees recorded in the New Testament were actually disputes with the Pharisees representing the School of Shammai and NOT the School of Hillel. Yeshua adopts the views of Hillel on "all" matters of halachah (interpretation) except on the matter of divorce, where he sides with the School of Shammai (strict interpretation). At the time of Yeshua the interpretations and teachings Bet Shammai were influencing Jewish life and institutions more than Hillel's, and it was this way for almost 100 years. Through Shammai's teachings Israel was "loosing her way." Hillel had died when Yeshua was 13-14 years old, and Hillel's influence in Israel was rapidly being replaced with the contemporary teachings of Shammai. Yeshua (who accepted and agreed with Hillel) and Shammai (and Shammai's many students) were to clash continually! The Shammai Pharisees (and not the Hillel Pharisees) were responsible for handing over Yeshua to the Chief Priest, and Sadducees and Romans for crucifixion, and this was a violation of Jewish Law. Couple this with the relationship the Shammaites had with the Sadducean Zealots in the priesthood, little wonder that the Chief Priests (Sadducees) capture Yeshua and hand him over to the Romans to be crucified. Notice that the Hillel Pharisees (whom the majority of the people supported and followed) had nothing to do with Yeshua's crucifixion (it was they who warned Yeshua to flee for his life in Luke 13:31). When you read Matt. 23 you cannot help but see Yeshua chastising the Pharisees; but what we fail to notice is that there were many sects within Phariseeism and Yeshua says "Pharisees who"....indicating that many were not to be included in his rebuke of the insincere Pharisees. Yeshua took odds with the Shammaite Pharisees, not the Hillel Pharisees!

The Christian Church's failure to understand this has led them to erroneously believe that Yeshua was rejecting his own religion rather than calling for repentance within it!

WE MUST UNDERSTANDING THE TIMES OF THE BIBLE IF WE ARE EVER TO GLEAN TRUTH

The Jewish people knew from ancient prophecy that their Temple in Jerusalem would be destroyed by the Gentiles (Dan. 9). Bet Hillel believed that reaching out to the Gentiles (since historically Israel had failed to be "a light unto the Gentiles" and had thereby violated the Second Tablet of the Law which carries the more severe punishment for its violation) was the correct approach to possibly avoiding

the coming destruction. Hillel and his students maintained that righteous Gentiles merit salvation just as Jews do (Hillel, like Yeshua, accepted the teachings connected with the Laws of Noah), and it was their hope that a mission to the Gentiles could avert the destruction of their land and win God's approval, thus influencing God to repent of the destruction prophesied. **Bet Shammai however looked down upon the Gentile world, holding that NOT even the most righteous Gentile could merit a share in the World to Come.** Shammai believed the Gentiles deserved "hell" and no attempts should be made to alter their destiny. The Jewish people and their teachers have since declared Bet Shammai's views to be null and void, as did the Heavenly Voice toward the close of the first century (just the way God spoke at Yeshua's immersion). Shammai and the Bet Shammai were indeed the Pharisees and priests that Yeshua of Nazareth and Paul of Tarsus had to contend with within the pages of our Bibles, and not the Hillel Pharisees. Paul the Apostle's insistence that Gentiles be admitted into the early Messianic Jewish Church was based on Bet Hillel's position that righteous Gentiles merit salvation. Let us not forget that it is recorded that Paul had studied under Rabban Gamaliel the Elder, a grandson of Hillel where he received such instruction! Now you can better understand that the anti-Jewish passages contained in the New Testament were directed against the Shammaites, and not the Judaism which followed Bet Hillel, or even today which follows the instruction and interpretations of Hillel.

UNDERSTANDING YESHUA AND PAUL

Yeshua and his disciples, especially Paul, warned all men everywhere not to "destroy" the Torah of Israel. A Jew is not permitted to leave his Torah, for Paul wrote in his letter to the Galatians Chapter 5 (remember Galatians was written to Gentiles) "I, Paul, say to you that if you (writing to Gentiles) receive **circumcision** (along with immersion that makes you a Jew), **the Messiah will do you no good at all**" [the opportunity to become part of the Israel of God without circumcision will be available to you since it will be through Yeshua's ministry that the Laws of Noah, which did not require circumcision, were to be taken to the non-Jewish world. I will deal with the meaning of that last phrase in more detail in a future newsletter. But for now, Paul goes on to say "You can take it from me that every man (Gentile) who receives circumcision [conversion] (whether a Jew by birth or a converted Gentile) is under obligation to keep the **"entire"** Torah" (613) [this is simply because when a non-Jew underwent circumcision he was making "full conversion" whereby he would be obligated for the whole 613 Commandments anyway]. Paul is teaching us that a Gentile (like you and me) who is immersed in repentance and who is circumcised [makes conversion] is obligated to keep the entire Torah! Did you hear that?

Answer for yourself: What about Paul and his teaching that the Law is passed away? It must now be obvious that Paul never intended for that to be your understanding; he never said that! Our problem is that we misinterpret the teachings of Paul not having a proper background necessary to understand correctly what he is saying. Let us begin with what happens when we are "Born-Again".

WHAT DID **"BEING BORN AGAIN"** MEAN TO YESHUA? THEN SHOULD I NOT AGREE WITH HIM? JOHN 3 AS YOU HAVE NEVER SEEN OR UNDERSTOOD IT BEFORE

Before going on we must address a very important question: What happens when I am Born-Again? In answering this we must deal with a very important issue that is often overlooked. When a Gentile turns from idols, repents, and accepts the faith of the One God of the Universe, he identifies with God. As Gentiles we identify with God through the one he sent to reveal Himself; namely Yeshua and his ministry which brought the non-Jews of the world the knowledge of God, Torah, and Israel. Sadly, however, by the time Yeshua came knocking on your door he had been completely altered whereby he no longer was a Torah observant Jew, but rather came dressed like Zeus and Constantine. As Christians you were taught that

you were buried into the likeness of Yeshua's death, and raised in newness of life through identification with God through the mikvah bath (water immersion). Christians call it baptism. A more correct understanding is that the non-Jewish believer in God (in the act of repentance and faith) literally stands at his own Sinai, is immersed and repents of sin and begins a new life with God as did his Gentile forefathers (the Egyptians are a type and shadow of Ephraim, the other house of Israel) and says, like the Jews of old did, "All that the Lord has spoken we will do" (Ex. 19:8). Notice that the Bible say "all" the people said it at Sinai (this included the mixed-multitude of Gentiles and Jews together)! Included in that group were a mixed multitude of Gentiles along with Jews/Semites that teaches us a very important lesson for our lives. At Sinai both Gentiles and Jews/Semites confessed adherence to the Covenant offered by God. God had previously instructed that they "wash their clothes", which is an idiom for immersion in water of their bodies (this was their Born-Again experience with the God of Israel). This might be startling to you but the concept in the Gospel of John, chapter three, concerning being "Born-Again" is not the invention of Yeshua. Being "Born-Again" is a Jewish concept that has existed since the Garden of Eden and Adam. Now hear this...this immersion and repentance from sin is to be repeated throughout one's life. Examples in scripture that the children of Israel were "Born-Again" repeatedly (immersed and attained a new-heightened status before they met with God) are before each Sabbath, each Feast and Festival, following repentance of sin, and for a lady, after her menses on a monthly basis before she could return to her husband's bed. Yeshua was immersed repeatedly in his life, yet the only one recorded for us is the one immersion the day before he observed the Yom Kippur Festival (Day of Atonement). **Being "Born-Again" is not a concept originated by the Gentile church. It is a Jewish concept!** Amazing! As the repentant person entered into the immersion bath (this "watery womb" and "watery tomb") he would then emerge as if "Born-Again" from a watery grave and a watery womb (with a re-newed status before God). He is then considered a new creation (2 Cor. 5:17)! If you were Jewish you would have been instructed correctly concerning the mechanics of Biblical Immersion (being Born-Again) since you were a child, and would not have to be like many Christian Gentiles who have not had the truth concerning such an important doctrine, not to mention is resultant responsibilities of obedience to Torah. It is startling that such a Jewish concept is considered the backbone of the Christian faith and the Christian fails to have the correct understanding regarding immersion and being Born-Again as Yeshua understood it. As believers we should have understood it correctly from the beginning, which we have not. A Gentile entered into the watery tomb and watery womb and emerged, no longer considered a Gentile, the old things have passed away (his condition of being a Gentile), behold God made all things new (he now is a part of Israel)! He was now considered a citizen of the Israel of God! Upon emerging from the watery tomb in which he was "Born-Again" he had the status of a Jew. He became Israel! He was considered as if he had always been Israel, for he had no past and it was forbidden to bring up his past for it was as if he had always been Israel.

ARE YOU TRULY GRAFTED INTO ISRAEL OR NOT?

The Gentile, after turning from idols and repentance (as a sign of his faith in the One God of Israel), and after following immersion in the Mikvah (baptism), was grafted into Israel as Paul would later tell us. The repentant Gentile believer chose God and His Torah. He chose to become "chosen". Since he is Israel, then these commandments given to "Israel" now apply to the Gentile Christian who considers himself a follower of Yeshua, his teachings, and His God. Is that your understanding? It was Yeshua's understanding and still is his today. The tragedy of the matter is that the Contemporary Christian Church has not studied to know who they are. They are included in the House of Ephraim; they are Israel. The Commandments of God as seen in the Torah are for them, not just the Jew born in the land!

LET US BE SURE WE UNDERSTAND EACH OTHER

A "Gentile" is a term signifying a non-Jew, who is NOT a "son of the covenant" and is only subject to the seven Noachide Laws. Once a Gentile came to the understanding of the one true God, he would turn from idols and worship the God of Israel. These were the **"God fearers"**, who accepted certain basic Jewish obligations along with the Noachide precepts. According to this, idolatry, shedding of blood, and grave sexual sins were forbidden to Gentile believers. These were originally the Noachide precepts accepted also by the Synagogue on which the Gentiles were obliged. Let me remind you that we see in Acts 15 (at least 25 years after the death of Yeshua) the admonition for the Gentiles to adhere to Noachide Laws to be accepted in the believing community of Israel (it was James as leader of the Jerusalem church who referred back to the Noahide Laws in addressing the question of Gentile salvation). It is logical that the Apostolic Church of Jerusalem should accept the view of the Synagogue on the conditions which Gentiles needed to fulfill in order to be "saved" and accepted in the "family of Israel". **It can be easily shown that the fulfillment of other commandments of Judaism were not prohibited to Gentiles. On the contrary, the Noachide precepts were only seen as the minimal condition for Gentiles to be recognized as "God-fearers"**. These were so understood by the uncircumcised "God-fearers" themselves, who were attracted to the Jewish way of life and accepted many Jewish commandments without becoming full proselytes (Sabbath, festivals, Tallith, etc). This was also the attitude of Gentile Christian "God-fearers", as may be seen from the Epistle to the Galatians; many of them wished to observe as many Jewish precepts as they could. It is evident that, while the leadership of the mother Church in Jerusalem decided to lay no burden upon the Gentile believers beyond the Noachide precepts, it did not object to their voluntarily observing more (Col. 2:16-17). Among the figures of the early Church who instructed Gentile Christians to observe more precepts than these essential "Noahide" ones was Peter, as we know from Paul's criticism of him for demanding that Gentiles live like Jews (Gal. 2:14). **Rather than interpreting the apostolic decree of Gentiles adhering to the Laws of Noah as a minimum, Paul saw in the Noachide precepts the maximum obligations of Gentile Christians. Rather than Peter being incorrect, a more comprehensive understanding of the Bible reveals Paul to be incorrect.**

GET IT CORRECT PAUL ...OR DON'T TEACH IT AT ALL

Paul remarks in a letter to the Corinthians (1 Cor. 7) that the circumcised (Jews or converted Gentiles) should not remove the marks of circumcision, nor should the uncircumcised (Gentiles become Jews) circumcise themselves. Wait a minute. **Paul contradicts himself (like a lot of preachers today)**. In Galatians 5 he says "if you Gentiles get circumcised" and then he says "don't do it", can't he make up his mind?

Answer for yourself: In Acts 16 Paul circumcised his disciple Timothy. Timothy was not a Jew was he?

Answer for yourself: If he was a Gentile why bother, right?

This contradiction of Paul is very puzzling.

Answer for yourself: Sadly many have incorrectly interpreted Paul as teaching that circumcision was abandoned with the coming of Yeshua, but was it?

Acts 16 is over 20 years after Yeshua and Paul is still circumcising!

Answer for yourself: We have failed to understand properly, so what is the clear truth of the matter?

Yeshua and his Apostles did not wish to destroy the Torah (Law) from Israel, God forbid; for it is written so in Matthew 5:17, Yeshua having said, "Do not suppose that I have come to abolish the Torah. I did not come to abolish, but to fulfill. I tell you this: So long as heaven and earth endure (*do they yet exist today?*), not a letter, not a stroke, will disappear from the Torah (*the Law*) until it is achieved. If any man therefore sets aside even the least of the Torah's demands, and teaches others to do the same (*the majority of Pastors who preach the contemporary Christian message*), he will have the lowest place in the Kingdom of Heaven, whereas anyone who keeps the Torah, and teaches others so, will stand high in the Kingdom of Heaven."

Bet Emet Ministries teaches Gentile and Jewish commitment and observance to the Torah, not because we desire to be "high" in the Kingdom of God, but because we love God and His Word, and would never think of destroying it by misinterpreting it or failing to study to arrive at the correct meaning of these truths for the people of God today.

It is therefore exceedingly clear that Yeshua never dreamed of destroying the Torah as have the majority of churches today that carry his name but substitute "another Gospel" for the true Gospel of Christ.

WHAT TO DO WITH TIMOTHY?

Paul does not contradict himself because of his circumcision of Timothy, for the latter was the son of a Jewish mother, and a Gentile father (Acts 16), and Paul knew that the child of a Jewish mother is considered a "full Jew", even if the father should be a Gentile. Paul thus acted entirely in accordance with the Halakhah (interpretation of Jewish Law) by circumcising Timothy. This would be in line with his position, following the Jerusalem Council of Acts 15 in 50 A.D., that no longer will Gentile believers be required to "become fully converted Jews" to be accepted into Israel; that the Gentile believers could now remain as "God-Fearers" and be accepted fully by the Jews (1 Cor 7, Acts 15). Gentiles no longer had to "convert" to Judaism and become "fully Jewish" for inclusion with equal standing within the Israel of God. The Gentiles as "God-Fearers" were to also be accepted as grafted into Israel (as demonstrated by Cornelius in Acts 10 who was a "God-Fearer" and who had not yet been circumcised). It is important to note that as a "God-Fearer", Cornelius yet observed the Noahide Laws, honored the Sabbath, and ate kosher (proper killing, dressing and preparation of animals intended for food as well as the removal of all blood). The baptism of Cornelius into the Holy Spirit as had been the Jews earlier in Acts 2 during the Festival of Pentecost was the evidence needed to convince the Jerusalem church that the middle-wall of partition was being removed between Jews and "unclean Gentiles". From this we learn that obedience to the Noahide Laws, without circumcision (to remain only as a "God-Fearer" and not fully convert to Judaism), was no longer to be a barrier between the "unclean Gentiles" and the Jews.

For example, table fellowship at the Shabbat (Sabbath observance) and the Festivals could now be shared together! This was understood from Peter's vision in Acts 10 concerning "unclean foods" which the Lord cleansed (symbolic of cleansing of men, and not the animals designated as unclean in Leviticus). Shammai's "Eighteen Measures" (one of which commanded Jews not to eat or enter into the homes of Gentiles-remember Shammai hated Gentiles) was overturned by God with the revelation at Cornelius' home. God corrects Shammai and those that followed his teaching. Peter's vision of the unclean foods represented the "unclean Gentiles" which God had cleansed; the vision was not meant to tell Peter that God had cleansed the "unclean foods". Let us not confuse this issue.

HOW DOES G-D VIEW YOU TODAY KNOWING THIS?

Timothy had to be circumcised since he was Jewish (because his mother was Jewish) and, therefore, was required to observe all the commandments of the Torah (613). Gentiles who observe the Noahide Laws are forbidden to observe "ALL" the Torah like a Jew is required, unless they desire to be circumcised and identify totally with the Jew and his Torah (full-conversion); if so then they are no longer "God-Fearers" but have become full-fledged Jews and undertake all the 613 Commandments. Following Immersion into Israel the Gentile is no longer considered a "Gentile", he is now Jewish (either partly or completely depending upon circumcision). All who become circumcised (converted) following immersion

are bound by all the commandments (613). Understanding the immersion process is crucial for the Christian; once you are immersed in faith and repentance, and you identify with Israel, you emerged from that watery womb and tomb as a Born-Again "God-Fearer" who is grafted into Israel. You became "Israel" and are a Spiritual Jew (regardless if you were aware of it or not). You are not considered a "partial-Jew" unless you are uncircumcised. If you are circumcised you are then considered a "Full-Jew"!

Answer for yourself: Did you hear that?

The majority of you set in your churches thinking you are "Christians" and God's Word says you are "Jewish" (children of Abraham) and are the Israel of God. You have not replaced Israel, you became a part of Israel. You are obligated to observe the Torah (that part of the Law that refers to you according to your Covenant stipulations) and, because of your lack of study, you have let your unlearned pastors and teachers tell you repeatedly that you are "under grace" and "not under Law." You are under both! I just showed you that a proper understanding of immersion and the teachings of Yeshua & Paul tell you otherwise. Now, let me ask you as a Christian an important question.

Answer for yourself: Who are you going to believe; your pastor or Yeshua and Paul?

Answer for yourself: With such an obligation to the "Christian" who now becomes aware that he is either "part-Jewish" or "fully-Jewish" (Judaism is not a race but a religion; the religion of Yeshua) what are you to do concerning the Commandments which are addressed to you requiring your obedience to the Shabbat (Sabbath), Pesach (Festival of the Passover), Hag HaMatzah (Festival of Unleavened Bread), HaBikkurim (First Fruits), Shavuot (Festival of Pentecost), Rosh HaShannah (Jewish New Year), Yom Teruah (Festival of Trumpets), Yom Kippur (Day of Atonement), and Sukkot (Festival of Tabernacles)?

Surely you should want to begin to observe and keep them according to Scripture. Failure to do so is sin!

IS IT BEGINNING TO MAKE SENSE?

Christian scholars have assumed from certain passages in the Gospels that Yeshua wished to give a new Torah to take the place of the Torah of Moses. He could not do such a thing unless he sinned.

Answer for yourself: How could Yeshua have then said explicitly that he came only to fulfill it?

The truth of the matter is that Yeshua never came to abolish Judaism, but only to re-establish the religion for the Jews and the Lost Sheep of Israel (assimilated Gentiles from the captivity of Northern Israel). In the unique situation we find in the first century this referred from that time onward the faith that God had given them from the beginning-Noahidism! Nor was this religion new, but actually ancient; it being the observance of the Seven Commandments of Noah, which were forgotten purposefully by Shammai and his students in their bigotry toward the non-Jews. Such men and ideas were influencing the people of Israel in Yeshua's day; thus Yeshua came not for those who are well but those who need a physician and who are sick; sick with hatred for the Gentiles whom God loved and to whom He had called Israel to be a light unto to show them the Torah (the Noahide Laws). God had intended for the Gentiles to be redeemed all along. Yeshua came for the "lost sheep of the house of Israel"; who had lost their way and purpose for the truths that they had been entrusted with. These truths were not only for them, but the Gentiles as well. It is important to understand that as there were "people who were lost" in Israel, there were others like the Essene Menahem and the Hillel Pharisees who had not "lost their way" and needed little if any correction by Yeshua!

WHAT REALLY HAPPENED WITH THE GREAT COMMISSION?

Yeshua's Apostles, in fulfillment of the Great Commission of their master, established these Seven Commandments anew (Acts 15, Acts 21). However, those born as Jews (with Jewish mothers), or those Gentiles where were immersed and circumcised as "full-converts" to Judaism (Ex. 12:49; one law shall be to him that is home-born, and unto the stranger) are obligated to observe all 613 of the commandments of the Torah without exception.

Answer for yourself: Are you a circumcised Gentile Christian who has been immersed in Yeshua's name and "Born-Again" into Israel? Then that means you!

For the uncircumcised Gentile God reserved the Seven Commandments which they have always been obligated to be adhered to and fulfilled by non-Jewish believers. It is for that reason that they were forbidden pollution of idols, fornication, blood, and things strangled (Acts 15). Yeshua's Apostles also forbade them circumcision (to do so would mean full conversion) and the Sabbath observance (exactly like the Jews observed it). The mandatory observance by "God-Fearers" was similar, but not exactly alike the Jewish observance.

This may sound so different from what your traditional Christian message has been, but your Christian message is incorrect if it does not agree or line up with the Apostle's Doctrine. All of what I have shared with you is in accord with the law and custom of the Torah, as expounded by the Jewish sages, the true transmitters from Moses at Sinai, and understood by Yeshua of Nazareth in the first century (they sit in Moses' seat...listen to what they say). **Our understanding today is incorrect if it violates the truths as Yeshua understood them.** We do not know more about salvation than Yeshua. **It was to the Hillel Pharisees Yeshua referred to in Matt. 23 who set in Moses' seat and to whom we are to listen for correct doctrine.** **We are not to follow the examples of any leaders if they do not line up with the Apostle's Doctrine of Acts 2:42.** **This teaching on immersion and conversion is Apostolic Doctrine as Yeshua taught his disciples, and any other interpretation other than his is NOT correct.** **We are not to follow any Pharisee's examples unless they live what they preach (that means the Pharisee Preachers of today who fail to teach and live the truth of Apostolic Doctrine)! Yeshua tells us not to follow them unless they agree with him! Good advice. This same admonition is given in Deut. 17:8 ff., where the authority to teach and lead the people were given to the religious leaders God put over the people of "Israel". These occupy Moses' seat.**

IT IS TIME TO GET SERIOUS ABOUT WHAT WE LEARNED

Answer for yourself: Do the Baptists, Methodist, Catholics, Assemblies of God, or any other denomination or non-denomination occupy Moses' seat? **No.** The Catholic and Protestant denominations are far from being Jewish. Salvation is of the Jews according to Yeshua.

Answer for yourself: Do you dare tell him he made a mistake?

It was these Sages and Pharisees who said that it is forbidden to circumcise a Gentile who does not accept upon himself the yoke of "ALL" the Commandments. In America male babies are circumcised apart from the truths of God's Word (we are commanded to circumcise on the 8th day and not within the first 2-3 days of a newborn's life) and thus their circumcision would not apply. That means circumcision that does violate Scripture does not automatically make you a "full-fledged" Jew. You are still a "God-Fearer". **Identification with**

Israel is by faith and free will. You must choose to stand at your personal Sinai and say to God *"I will do all that you say"*.

Answer for yourself: Do you want to obey God? Do you want to honor His Name with your life?

Going to churches that teach error does not accomplish anything. It is bondage just like Egypt!

Answer for yourself: Have you ever been to Sinai? Will you ever go? Have you chosen to return to your Egypt

of ignorance and false traditions and false religion that amount to idolatry?

The Sages likewise said that the Gentile is commanded NOT to "fully" observe the Sabbath as does the Jew (yet he is to remember and keep it). Acts 20:6 recounts for us the Gentile believers and how they were taught by Paul to remember and keep the Sabbath. It is here we find the Gentile Church keeping Jewish ordinances well over thirty years after Yeshua's death.

Answer for yourself: What would later change this pattern?

As far as the Gentiles ("God-Fearers") were concerned, they were **not** commanded to observe all the Torah (the 613 mitzvot). The Gentile "God-Fearers" did not have to accept all the 613 mitzvot and are not enjoined to observe all of the 613 commandments. However, it is completely different as far as Jews are concerned, for they became obligated to fulfill the Torah because God delivered them from the bondage of Egypt to be the people of His possession. Therefore they and their children became subject to it forever and so are those Gentiles who make full-conversions to Judaism.

LET US PUT IT ALL TOGETHER NOW

It should be easy to see that Yeshua and his Apostles never meant to abolish the Torah of Moses from one who is born a Jew. Likewise, did Paul write in his letter to the Corinthians (1 Cor 7) that each should adhere to the faith in which each was called. They therefore acted in accordance with the Torah by forbidding circumcision to Gentiles, according to Halakhah, as it is forbidden to one who does not accept the yoke of the commandments (all 613). They knew that it would be too difficult for the Gentiles to observe the Torah of Moses. Let us not forget that the Gentiles never had the Revelation of the Torah at Sinai, the Ark of the Covenant, the Tabernacle, the Two Tablets, the prophets, or the Temple & Tabernacle services as were given to Israel. The Gentile's only experience was that they were strangers from the Covenant promises of Israel, aliens for the commonwealth of God's people, without hope and without God in the world.

The rabbis thus took the Gentiles the revelation of God and instructed them not to be circumcised unless they wished to be fully converted to Judaism (this had no bearing upon immersion since it was required for "partial" as well as "full" conversion). It would suffice that the Gentiles observe the Seven Noahide Commandments, as commanded upon them through the Halakhah from Moses at Sinai. This was the minimum requirements for inclusion into Israel.

Rabbi Emden was correct; Yeshua brought a double kindness into the world. On the one hand, he strengthened the Torah of Moses majestically. Acts 24:20 states that many thousands of Jews were believers in Yeshua as Messiah in the first century and zealous for the Torah (Law); this was over 30 years after Yeshua's death and resurrection. The ministry of Yeshua helped return the "children of Israel back to their Fathers; the Patriarchs and their faith" and thus fulfill Malachi's prophecy.

On the other hand, Yeshua did much good for the Gentiles (provided they do not turn about his intent as they please, as some foolish ones have done because they did not fully understand the intent of the authors of the Gospels and epistles). Yeshua obligated his Apostles to fulfill the Great Commission by taking the Gentiles (as a minimum) the Seven Commandments of Noah so that they should not be as the beasts of the field and continue to live their lives as pagans and animals. He also bestowed upon them ethical ways, and in this respect he was much more stringent with them than the Torah of Moses. It is not necessary to impose upon Jews such extreme ethical practices, since they have been obligated to the yoke of Torah since Sinai. Israel took the oath at Sinai and are already trained in proper practice and nature of the Second Tablet of the Law (ethical monotheism and the horizontal relationships man-to-man). It would be for Paul to constantly correct, reprove, teach Apostolic Doctrine, and instruct the Gentiles in his travels since it was to his audience he would write "you are strangers from the Covenant promises, aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, without hope and without God in the world".

If Christians would study they would understand what I have detailed in this teaching. No longer would the Church erroneously teach to abolish the Torah of Moses and Yeshua. Such sin and foolishness would and should cease.

Because of these errant scholars, hatred has increased toward the Jews who are blameless of any guilt concerning Yeshua's death and proceed innocently to observe their Torah with all their heart (intellect), soul (dedication and commitment to action) and might (resources and property). The leaders of the Churches of Yeshua should study to learn correctly for themselves before they lead their people into sin and astray from the will of God for their lives. The Jew is the brother of the Christian. Ephraim (the grafted-in Gentile) and Judah make up Israel. As members of the Christian faith, how good and pleasant it might be if you would observe what was commanded to you by your first teachers, sent directly to you by Yeshua, with his message, and not the message that Roman anti-Semitism has created these last 2000 years.

Now...you have heard the truth....maybe for the first time in your life. Let us act according to the truth as Yeshua understood it. Shalom.



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RABBI HILLEL AND THE GENTILE'S SALVATION

Tradition records for us three heathen who appeared before the two leading rabbis of their time, Hillel and Shammai (both contemporaries of Yeshua in the first century) for the purpose of coming to the God of Israel through "conversion". The first potential convert was interested in accepting only the written law's authority, but not the oral tradition; the second, and most famous, asked to be taught the entire Torah (the main essence of the religion of Yeshua) while standing upon one foot, while the third aspired to become a convert so that he might attain the office of high priest. Shammai rebuffed them and drove them off with a "builder's measuring rod" harshly, while Hillel's gentleness and patient instruction won them over to the faith of Yeshua. Hillel and Shammai flourished during the era of the Second Temple, or end of first century B.C.E. and the beginning of first century C.E., and were contemporaries of Yeshua.

LET US TAKE A CLOSER LOOK...TO UNDERSTAND WHAT WE JUST READ....

Shammai's actions are rather baffling. He scolded the first heathen and had him removed from the premises whereas the latter two were repulsed with a "builder's measuring rod". Many have believed that Shammai was either in the building business or a carpenter by trade. This is all the more puzzling since one of Shammai's favorite teachings was (Avot 1:15) "to receive all men with a cheerful countenance." Was it generally his practice to use his building rod on those he disagreed with?

And Hillel's instruction to the famed second heathen defies comprehension. To his request to be taught the entire Torah while standing on one foot, Hillel replied, "What is hateful unto thee, do not do unto thy neighbor-this is the entire Torah; the rest is commentary." This negative metaphoric contraction of the 613 commandments of the Torah finds no counterpart in Talmudic literature. Two interpretations exist today: 1). God is referred to in scripture as "neighbor" or "friend," or 2) that the prohibitions of theft, adultery and "most commandments" of the Torah can be classified in this vein. Later commentators adopted the more literal view that Hillel was referring to the Golden Rule, love thy neighbor as thyself (Lev. 19:18), but his reference to it in a negative form was in order to incorporate certain halakhic principles into the teaching.

TWO TYPES OF "GRAFTING OF GENTILE BELIEVERS INTO ISRAEL" EXISTED IN ANCIENT TIMES...THE GER TZEDEK & GER TOSHAV....& THE LAWS OF NOAH

Gentiles were grafted into Israel as either a "Ger Tzedek" or a "Ger Toshav."

The Ger Tzedek accepted all 613 commandments of the Torah, and after circumcision and or ritual immersion, was recognized as a full Jew.

The Ger Toshav obligated himself only to the Seven Noahide Commandments, after which he was permitted to settle in the Land of Israel, and the Jewish community became liable to see to his economic well-being.

Judaism considers the **Seven Noahide Commandments** to be the cornerstones of all religion and civilization, **having been incumbent upon the human race since the time of Adam**. Judaism accepts the opinion today of Rabbi Hillel (a contemporary of Yeshua) that a non-Jew who accepts these Commandments as divinely ordained and practices them is considered one of the Hasidim (righteous ones) of the Nations, and merits a share in the World to Come. Judaism has always viewed other religions from the perspective of whether or not they conform to the Noahide Commandments.

According to Exodus 23:33, **idolaters were not permitted to live in ancient Israel**, lest they cause the people to sin. If a Gentile wished to settle there, he would appear before three learned men, **accept the Noahide Laws**, and would then be permitted to settle with the status of the **Ger Toshav**. Convert #2 sought this Ger Toshav status from Hillel. When he inquired to be taught the entire Torah while standing on one foot, he was not jesting; he was referring to the Seven Noahide Commandments, which can easily be imparted in a brief span of time (as one stands on one foot). Hillel's reply to **"thy neighbor,"** was referring to the second party involved which was understood to represent God, one's fellow man, and the animal world as well. Hillel was actually offering a brief synopsis of the Noahide Commandments.

A CLOSER LOOK AT RABBI SHAMMAI AND HIS VIEWS ON GENTILE SALVATION

Rabbi Eliezer ben Hyrcranus, a leading sage of the first century A.D., was a member of the School of Shammai. He held the opinion, as did Shammai his teacher, that a Gentile who observes the Noahide Commandments does NOT merit a share in the World to Come. This was also the stance of the School of Shammai and was prevalent in Israel before the time of the death and resurrection of Yeshua. It would be a direct result of Yeshua's ministry that this situation would change.

Unlike Shammai, Hillel and his students maintained that righteous Gentiles merit salvation just as Jews do (Hillel, like Yeshua, accepted the teachings connected with the Laws of Noah), and it was their hope that a mission to the Gentiles could avert the destruction of their land and win God's approval, thus influencing God to repent of the destruction prophesied in Daniel chapter nine (now you understand another reason for Hillel's and Yeshua's support for a Great Commission to take the Gentiles the Torah). **Bet Shammai (the school of Shammai) however looked down upon the Gentile world, holding that NOT even the most righteous Gentiles could merit a share in the World to Come.** Shammai believed the Gentiles deserved "eternal separation from God" and no attempts should be made to alter their destiny. The Jewish people and their teachers have since declared Bet Shammai's views to be null and void, as did the Heavenly Voice toward the close of the first century (just the way God spoke at Yeshua's immersion). **Shammai and his students from the School of Bet Shammai were indeed the Pharisees and priests that Yeshua of Nazareth and Paul of Tarsus had to contend with within the pages of our Bibles, and not the Hillel Pharisees.** Paul the Apostle's insistence that Gentiles be admitted into the early Messianic Jewish Church was based on Bet Hillel's (School of Hillel) position that righteous Gentiles merit salvation. Let us not forget that Paul had studied under Rabban Gamaliel the Elder, a grandson of Hillel where he received such instruction! **Now you can better understand that the anti-Jewish passages contained in the New Testament were directed against the Shammaites, and not the Judaism which followed Bet Hillel, or even today which follows the instruction and interpretations of Hillel. Yeshua was closer to Bet Hillel positions than Bet Shammai's positions as recorded in the New Testament.**

When each of these three heathen in our story requested Shammai to instruct them concerning the Noahide Commandments, **Shammai would have advised each that a Ger Toshav, Ger Hashar or even an observant Noahide, received no reward in the afterlife.** It was this figurative "measuring rod" (his erroneous interpretations of Torah which in this instance taught obedience without immortality) that repulsed the Gentile. The allusion to the tool is not to be taken literally. Shammai would use the same "measuring rod" on the third heathen, by advising him that a Ger Tzedek (a full-convert) had no rights to the high priesthood.

Hillel gently pointed out that any Jew not born as a Kohen (descendent of Aaron) was similarly not entitled to the office.

In the case of the first convert, who expressed an interest in the written law only and not the Oral Law or tradition (a Sadducean position-like the Christian church of today) was a blatant act of heresy. Therefore one can understand another reason that Shammai threw him out. Hillel's (who believed in the Oral Law as well) gentleness won him over.

The gratitude of the two Ger Tzedeks and the "one-footed" Ger Toshav to Hillel are expressed in the Talmud's concluding comment:

"Some time later the three met in one place; they said, Shammai's impatience sought to drive us from the world, but Hillel's gentleness brought us under the wings of the Shekhinah (Divine Presence)."

Thus we can conclude that the term "conversion" was to be understood as the transformation of a pagan into an observant Noahide who observed the Seven Laws of Noah as seen by James' insistence in Acts 15

A FIRST GREAT COMMISSION AND MISSION TO THE GENTILES BY THE HASIDIM

Moses obligated the Jews to spread the knowledge of the Noahide commandments to all mankind. A well known statement of Hillel states (Avot 1:12), "Be thou of the disciples of Aaron, one who loves peace, pursues peace, loves mankind, and draws them nigh to the Torah." Hillel was alluding in this quote to a movement to spread knowledge of the Noahide Commandments to all mankind (Gentile Torah). What better way could one show love for all mankind than to try to bring personal salvation to the Gentiles through faith and observance of the Noahide Laws? With that understanding it is not surprising that Hillel acts as he does with the three heathen men as he explains to each what the Torah expected of them as observant Noahides.

Yeshua exceeds Hillel in that he desires that his followers, as Hasidim of the Nations (righteous Gentiles), do even more than the required minimum (Laws of Noah). Such is seen in Yeshua's positive statement: "do unto others as you would have them do unto you," which when observed, goes far beyond the minimum observance of the Seven Laws of Noah. Hillel thus lays the halakhic groundwork for the salvation of all mankind, and Yeshua concurs. Historically such an outreach to the non-Jewish nations was undertaken by Hillel and various Essenes in 20 B.C.E. in hopes of averting the destruction of the Temple as prophesied by Daniel.

THE "SECOND MISSION" TO THE GENTILES...THE GREAT COMMISSION OF MATTHEW 28

Yeshua would later command his Apostles to go into all the world and make disciples of all nations (the Gentiles). Inherent in this is the commandment for the Gentiles of all nations to adhere to the Laws of Noah as the basic minimum that God required for the gift of eternal life. It is in this message that a Gentile becomes a "God-Fearer", is immersed in Yeshua's name and identifies with his God, and is "Born-Again". He now is no longer a Gentile but is a "new-creation" and has become a citizen of the Israel of God. He has the option to later convert fully (circumcision) to the religion of Yeshua if he so desires.

Once a Gentile came to the understanding of the one true God, he would turn from idols and worship the God of Israel. Such Gentiles were the "God fearers", who accepted certain basic Biblical and Jewish obligations along with the Noachide precepts. According to this, idolatry, shedding of blood, and grave sexual sins were forbidden to Gentile believers. These were originally the Noachide precepts accepted also by the Synagogue on which the Gentiles were obliged. Let me remind you that we see in Acts 15 (at least 25 years after the death of Yeshua) the admonition for the Gentiles to adhere to Noachide Laws to be accepted in the believing community of Israel. James, the pastor of the Jerusalem Church, calls these Noachide Laws and Commandments "necessary" and mentions as well that they seemed good to the Messianic believers as well as the Holy Spirit in Acts 15. For me this puts Divine approval of the decision of the Church Council to impose these "necessary" things upon the non-Jews for acceptance into the Israel of God. It is logical that the Apostolic Church of Jerusalem should accept the view of the Synagogue on the conditions which Gentiles needed to fulfill in order to be saved. It can be easily shown that the fulfillment of other commandments of Judaism were not prohibited to Gentiles. On the contrary, the Noachide precepts were only seen as the minimum condition for Gentiles to be recognized as God-fearers. These were so understood by the God-fearers themselves, who were attracted to the Jewish way of life and accepted many Biblical and Jewish commandments without becoming full proselytes (Sabbath, festivals, etc). This was also the attitude of Christian "God-fearers", as may be seen from the Epistle to the Galatians; many of these Gentile believers wished to observe as many Jewish precepts as they could. It is evident that, while the leadership of the Mother Church decided to lay no burden upon the Gentile believers beyond the Noachide precepts, it did not object to their voluntarily observing more (Col. 2:16-17). Among the figures of the early Church who instructed Gentile Christians to observe more precepts than these essential ones was Peter, as we know from Paul's criticism of him for demanding that Gentiles live like Jews (Gal. 2:14). Rather than interpreting the apostolic decree as a minimum, Paul saw in the Noachide precepts the maximum obligations for Gentile Christians. Rather than Peter being incorrect, a more comprehensive understanding of the Bible reveals Paul to be incorrect (see Isa. 56 where God is pleased that the non-Jewish believer goes beyond the minimum).

SEPARATION IS INEVITABLE

The liberation of Gentile Christianity from the responsibility to the Biblical and Jewish commandments was a necessary step in order for Christianity to become a Gentile religion, separate from Judaism. It is impossible to know whether Paul was aware that by his "Gospel" he helped to achieve this aim in that he does not speak explicitly about the necessity of separating Christianity from its Jewish roots and he never says that this was his intention, but it is clear that in fact such was his historical role. Paul would later teach that the Jewish way of life in many aspects would have had no validity for Christians, but the mother Church in Acts felt differently. For Christian "God-fearers" it was not easy to accept Paul's demand; the complete or partial rejection of Jewish precepts was for many Gentile Christian "God-Fearers" a painful operation. But if Christianity was to become a world religion it had to become "free from the Law". Only a Christian free from the law could separate himself from Judaism and embark upon a path that rejected the very tenants and foundations of Biblical Judaism; the religion of Yeshua.

FULL CONVERSION AND THE GER TZEDEK

With the rise of Christianity the teachers of Israel sought to distinguish between the heathens of the past and those Gentiles who were subject to religious values and morality. The very term "Ger Tzedek" (righteous gentile) stands for the gentile who turned from idols and made a sincere conversion to the faith of Yeshua in the first century. Such a person was respected and welcomed by the Jewish community. The "Ger Tzedek" submitted to circumcision, immersion, and brought a sacrifice to the temple. Upon completion of such, he was considered as "one born in the land." He had full status as a Jew.

PARTIAL CONVERSION AND THE GER HASHAR/GER TOSHAV

There are two other terms for righteous Gentiles: Ger Hashar, and Ger Toshav. In the Bible the Ger Hashar is seen as "the stranger in the gate", and the Ger Toshav was known as "the stranger in the land." These also accepted the faith of Israel (ethical monotheism) and were immersed, but withheld themselves from circumcision. Such "Righteous Gentiles" had a place in the world to come, and it was believed that in the age of the Messiah all Gentiles would come to recognize the one true God according to Zech 14:9.

LETS MAKE IT EASIER STILL SHALL WE?

Once the Ger Tzedek was accepted as a Jew, he was entitled to all the privileges that Jews born into the faith enjoyed. Such converts to Judaism were numerous before the rise of Christianity. Within Palestine and outside, wherever Jews came into contact with pagans, Judaism held a strong attraction. It was expected of the Gentile that given enough time, he would develop from the Ger Hashar to the Ger Tzedek (make a full conversion to Judaism). The later development of Christianity offered the attraction of monotheism and at the same time imposed fewer restrictions on its new adherents than did Judaism. Commencing with the fourth century, when Christianity became the official religion of the Roman Empire, Jews were restricted in their own worship and were no longer permitted to continue their missionary activity and we find the conversion of the Ger Hashar, Toshav and Tzedek dwindling. In spite of the peril to Jews and proselytes alike, we read throughout history of various instances where Christians joined the ranks of the oppressed Jews once they had been shown and taught the truth.

TRINITARIANISM AND NOAHIDISM...WHAT IS THE TRUTH FOR THE CHRISTIAN?

Judaism ruled that Trinitarianism is not to be considered an idolatrous practice if adhered to by a Gentile, whereas it would be so if practiced by a Jew. The above opinion was rendered by R. Jacob Tam; an outstanding twelfth century Tosafist and grandson of Rashi. R. Tam expressed such a concept as within the idea of "Shittuf" (belief in God the Father, along with an additional deity). Such a belief is permitted to Gentiles (Christians) without them being considered idolaters by Jews and Judaism.

Traditional Christians believe in the divinity of Yeshua, and many have even sought to convert Jews to this belief. This is not allowed for a Jew as it constitutes gross idolatry before HaShem. Gentile Christianity needs not make Jews idolaters by spreading their own corrupt theologies. In this regard we can find only two occasions where Yeshua is asking Jews to believe in him as the Son of God (notice I did not say as God the Father or God the Son):

- 1). When healing a blind man in John 9:35.
- 2). Before raising Lazarus from the dead in John 11:26.

A blind man was considered by the Talmud to be the equivalent of a dead person, and this had halakhic implications (a blind person was exempt from all the Commandments of the Torah). Thus he is exempt from the commandment requiring him to believe in only "one" God. It is believed that Yeshua is introducing an halakhic concept here, namely, that Shittuf (Trinitarianism) is permitted in order to save a Jewish life (both the blind man and Lazarus were considered dead, exempt from idolatry as understood by normal Judaism, and could now believe in Yeshua as God's Son for healing and life after death). For although the Talmud rules that a Jew must give his life rather than practice idolatry (murder and sexual immorality as well), Yeshua would have interpreted this to apply to actual idolatry (worship of sun, rocks, fertility cults, etc.), or at least a lesser form of it. Such a belief in a second deity is permitted to Gentiles in Judaism, despite the Noahide Laws and their ban on idolatry. The ban on idolatry in Noahidism accepts Shittuf (it allows the belief in Yeshua as God). Let me also note that the Messiah of God has a beginning and no end where as God has no beginning and no end. God created from Himself the Spirit of the Messiah before the foundation of the world to act as the redemptive aspect of God to man! This anointing has come upon many but on Yeshua

I believe unlike any other.

At the same time we must remember that even some Christians do not interpret Yeshua's references to himself as the Son of God, as an allusion to his divinity or equality with the Father.

WHO WERE THE LOST SHEEP OF ISRAEL?

In Matthew 10:5 Yeshua informs us that he came to preach "only to the lost sheep of Israel." We can now understand that he wished his fellow Jews to accept Bet Hillel's view that Gentiles too merit salvation. Much Jewish suffering could have been avoided, including the Temple's destruction in the first century, had the Shammaites abandoned their hatred of the outside world and accepted Yeshua's message of love for God and your neighbor (the Gentile).

We can even see in Yeshua's statement to his disciples in Matt. 28:19 (the Great Commission), that following his death, they are to "make disciples of all the Nations (Gentiles).

In this we see Yeshua's love for the Gentile. Again Yeshua is negating the views of Bet Shammai (which had poisoned the people of Israel with hatred for the non-Jews (Gentiles) after Hillel's death), while actually confirming Bet Hillel's position that the Gentiles too merit that the message of salvation be given to them.

BIRD'S EYE VIEW OF EARLY CHRISTIANITY...A JEWISH FAITH

Such a restoration of the Early Church's Belief System as taught and handed down by Yeshua reveals to us what "true Christianity" is to be all about. Gentile converts to Yeshua's movement within Judaism were first taught the "Noahide Laws" which consisted of laws on idolatry, blasphemy, unchastity, bloodletting, robbery, eating the flesh of still-living animals, and courts of justice.

Every Gentile entering the Yeshua Movement was obligated to obey the Noahide Laws. In addition they adhered to the Ten Commandments. Besides remembering and keeping the Sabbath observance, they refraining from riotous living, they supported the Temple with the Temple 1/2 shekel tax (notice this is a "usage tax" and is not the tithe), and they observed and kept the Festivals of the Lord. They were not required to be circumcised, but they were required to observe the laws of Kosher and refrained from eating unclean foods in order to not become an obstacle that would prevent worshipping with the Jews and sharing Sabbath meals where they both partook of the Lord's Supper together, as well as share the Feasts and Festivals.

Answer for yourself: Has your church or Pastor taught you "THE" Faith Once Given To The Saints as I have shown you in this article?

Answer for yourself: If not, maybe you should look somewhere else where in truth the real message of Yeshua is being taught? Shalom.



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RABBI HILLEL & GENTILE INCLUSION INTO THE FAITH OF JESUS

Tradition records for us three heathen who appeared before the two leading rabbis of their time, Hillel and Shammai (both contemporaries of Yeshua in the first century) for the purpose of conversion. The first potential convert was interested in accepting only the written law's authority, but not the oral tradition; the second, and most famous, asked to be taught the entire Torah (the main essence of the religion of Yeshua) while standing upon one foot, while the third aspired to become a convert so that he might attain the office of high priest. Shammai rebuffed them and drove them off with a "builder's measuring rod" harshly, while Hillel's gentleness and patient instruction won them over to the faith of Jesus. Hillel and Shammai flourished during the era of the Second Temple, or end of first century B.C.E. and the beginning of first century C.E., and were contemporaries of Yeshua.

LET'S TAKE A CLOSER LOOK

Shammai's actions are rather baffling. He scolded the first heathen and had him removed from the premises whereas the latter two were repulsed with a "builder's measuring rod". Many have believed that Shammai was either in the building business or a carpenter by trade. This is all the more puzzling since one of Shammai's favorite teachings was (Avot 1:15) "to receive all men with a cheerful countenance." Was it generally his practice to use his building rod on those he disagreed with?

And Hillel's instruction to the famed second heathen defies comprehension. To his request to be taught the entire Torah while standing on one foot, Hillel replied, **"What is hateful unto thee, do not do unto thy neighbor-this is the entire Torah; the rest is commentary."** This negative metaphoric contraction of the 613 commandments of the Torah finds no counterpart in Talmudic literature. Two interpretations exist today: 1). God is referred to in scripture as "neighbor" or "friend," or 2) that the prohibitions of theft, adultery and "most commandments" of the Torah can be classified in this vein. Later commentators adopted the more literal view that Hillel was referring to the Golden Rule, love thy neighbor as thyself (Lev. 19:18), but his reference to it in a negative form was in order to incorporate certain halakhic principles into the teaching.

TWO TYPES OF CONVERSION EXISTED IN ANCIENT TIMES

Gentiles were grafted into Israel as either a "Ger Tzedek" or a "Ger Toshav." The Ger Tzedek accepted all 613 commandments of the Torah, and after circumcision and or ritual immersion, was recognized as a full Jew. The Ger Toshav obligated himself only to the Seven Noahide Commandments, after which he was permitted to settle in the Land of Israel, and the Jewish community became liable to see to his economic well-being.

Judaism considers the **Seven Noahide Commandments** to be the cornerstones of all religion and civilization, having been incumbent upon the human race since the time of Adam. Judaism accepts the opinion today of

Rabbi Hillel (a contemporary of Jesus) that a non-Jew who accepts these Commandments as divinely ordained and practices them is considered one of the Hasidim (righteous ones) of the Nations, and merits a share in the World to Come. Judaism has always viewed other religions from the perspective of whether or not they conform to the Noahide Commandments.

According to Exodus 23:33, idolaters were not permitted to live in ancient Israel, lest they cause the people to sin. If a Gentile wished to settle there, he would appear before three learned men, accept the Noahide Laws, and would then be permitted to settle with the status of the Ger Toshav. Convert #2 sought this Ger Toshav status from Hillel. When he inquired to be taught the entire Torah while standing on one foot, he was not jesting; he was referring to the Seven Noahide Commandments, which can easily be imparted in a brief span of time (as one stands on one foot). Hillel's reply to "thy neighbor," was referring to the second party involved which was understood to represent God, one's fellow man, and the animal world as well. Hillel was actually offering a brief synopsis of the Noahide Commandments.

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Unlike Shammai, Hillel and his students maintained that righteous Gentiles merit salvation just as Jews do (Hillel, like Yeshua, accepted the teachings connected with the Laws of Noah), and it was their hope that a mission to the Gentiles could avert the destruction of their land and win God's approval, thus influencing God to repent of the destruction prophesied in Daniel chapter nine (now you understand another reason for Hillel's and Yeshua's support for a Great Commission to take the Gentiles the Torah). Bet Shammai however looked down upon the Gentile world, holding that NOT even the most righteous Gentiles could merit a share in the World to Come. Shammai believed the Gentiles deserved "hell" and no attempts should be made to alter their destiny. The Jewish people and their teachers have since declared Bet Shammai's views to be null and void, as did the Heavenly Voice toward the close of the first century (just the way God spoke at Yeshua's immersion). Shammai and his students from the School of Bet Shammai were indeed the Pharisees and priests that Jesus of Nazareth and Paul of Tarsus had to contend with within the pages of our Bibles, and not the Hillel Pharisees. Paul the Apostle's insistence that Gentiles be admitted into the early Messianic Jewish Church was based on Bet Hillel's position that righteous Gentiles merit salvation. Let us not forget that Paul had studied under Rabban Gamaliel the Elder, a grandson of Hillel where he received such instruction! Now you can better understand that the anti-Jewish passages contained in the New Testament were directed against the Shammaites, and not the Judaism which followed Bet Hillel, or even today which follows the instruction and interpretations of Hillel.

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A MISSION TO THE GENTILES BY THE HASIDIM

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THE GREAT COMMISSION OF MATTHEW CHAPTER 28

Yeshua would later command his Apostles to go into all the world and make disciples of all nations (the Gentiles). Inherent in this is the commandment for the Gentiles of all nations to adhere to the Laws of Noah as the basic minimum that God required for the gift of eternal life. It is in this message that a Gentile becomes a "God-Fearer", is immersed into Yeshua and identifies with his God, and is "Born-Again". He now is no longer a Gentile but is a "new-creation" and has become a citizen of the Israel of God. He has the option to later convert fully to the religion of Yeshua if he so desires.

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FULL CONVERSION AND THE GER TZEDEK

With the rise of Christianity the teachers of Israel sought to distinguish between the heathens of the past and those Gentiles who were subject to religious values and morality. The very term "Ger Tzedek" (righteous gentile) stands for the gentile who turned from idols and made a sincere conversion to the faith of Jesus in the first century. Such a person was respected and welcomed by the Jewish community. The "Ger Tzedek" submitted to circumcision, immersion, and brought a sacrifice to the temple. Upon completion of such, he was considered as "one born in the land." He had full status as a Jew.

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- 1). When healing a blind man in John 9:35.
- 2). Before raising Lazarus from the dead in John 11:26.

A blind man was considered by the Talmud to be the equivalent of a dead person, and this had halakhic implications (a blind person was exempt from all the Commandments of the Torah). Thus he is exempt from the commandment requiring him to believe in only "one" God. It is believed that Jesus is introducing an halakhic concept here, namely, that **Shittuf** (Trinitarianism) is permitted in order to save a Jewish life (both the blind man and Lazarus were considered dead, exempt from idolatry as understood by normal Judaism, and could now believe in Yeshua as God's Son for healing and life after death). For although the Talmud rules that a Jew must give his life rather than practice idolatry (murder and sexual immorality as well), Jesus would have interpreted this to apply to actual idolatry (worship of sun, rocks, fertility cults, etc.), or at least a lesser form of it. Such a belief in a second deity is permitted to Gentiles in Judaism, despite the Noahide Laws and their ban on idolatry. The ban on idolatry in Noahidism accepts Shittuf (it allows the belief in Jesus as God). Yeshua is the Messiah of God and God created from Himself the Messiah before the foundation of the world to act as the redemptive aspect of God to man!

At the same time we must remember that even some Christians do not interpret Jesus's references to himself as the Son of God, as an allusion to his divinity or equality with the Father.

WHO WERE THE LOST SHEEP OF ISRAEL?

In Matthew 10:5 Yeshua informs us that he came to preach "only to the lost sheep of Israel." We can now understand that he wished his fellow Jews to accept Bet Hillel's view that Gentiles too merit salvation. Much Jewish suffering could have been avoided, including the Temple's destruction in the first century, had the Shammaites abandoned their hatred of the outside world and accepted Yeshua's message of love for God and your neighbor (the Gentile).

We can even see in Yeshua's statement to his disciples in Matt. 28:19 (the Great Commission), that following his death, they are to "make disciples of all the Nations (Gentiles).

In this we see Yeshua's love for the Gentile. Again Yeshua is negating the views of Bet Shammai (which had poisoned the people of Israel with hatred for the non-Jews (Gentiles) after Hillel's death), while actually confirming Bet Hillel's position that the Gentiles too merit that the message of salvation be given to them.

BIRD'S EYE VIEW OF EARLY CHRISTIANITY

Such a restoration of the Early Church's Belief System as taught and handed down by Yeshua reveals to us what "true Christianity" is to be all about. Gentile converts to Yeshua's movement within Judaism were first taught the "Noahide Laws" which consisted of laws on idolatry, blasphemy, unchastity, bloodletting, robbery, eating the flesh of still-living animals, and courts of justice.

Every Gentile entering the Yeshua Movement was obligated to obey the Noahide Laws. In addition they adhered to the Ten Commandments. Besides remembering and keeping the Sabbath observance, they refraining from riotous living, they supported the Temple with the Temple 1/2 shekel tax (notice this is a "usage tax" and is not the tithe), and they observed and kept the Festivals of the Lord. They were not required to be circumcised, but they were required to observe the laws of Kosher and refrained from eating unclean foods in order to not become an obstacle that would prevent worshipping with the Jews and sharing Sabbath meals where they both partook of the Lord's Supper together, as well as share the Feasts and Festivals..

This was the plan of God. What is your experience, and if you do not line up with what was given to the Gentiles by the Apostles and Yeshua, don't you think that your experience should change?

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We hope you enjoyed this article. Please copy and share it with your pastor or friends.

Each newsletter entails long hours of research and development. God has called us at Bet Emet to help rediscover the faith of Jesus in these last days. The publication you are holding in your hand is the end work of many hours of research and study. We endeavor to bring you the facts concerning the issues discussed as if you had sat at the feet of Yeshua as he taught.

God's truth must be given to those who hunger and thirst for righteousness in order that they be filled.

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SPIRITUAL UNION OF THE GENTILES WITH ISRAEL-THE DYNAMICS OF EPHESIANS CHAPTER TWO EXPOUNDED

To understand correctly how the Gentile Christian Church is to relate to the Israel of God we must begin with the writer of the Ephesian epistle of whom the vast majority of scholars believe was the Apostle Paul. Paul, the Apostle to the Gentiles states that the Gentiles, like you and me, have been quickened or made alive in a spiritual sense by Yeshua because our sins and trespasses had separated us from God.

THE STATUS OF THE GENTILE-PAGAN ACCORDING TO PAUL

Let us notice in Ephesians 2:1-22 that Paul was speaking to Gentile Ephesian converts (like you and me) who had turned from a life of sin, and had turned to obeying Yahweh. In Ephesians 2:1-2, KJV, we read: I And you [hath he quickened!, (Gentiles) who were dead in trespasses and sins; 2 Wherein in time past ye walked (before your repentance, faith in one True God) according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit (of the world) that now worketh in the children of disobedience.

Please note that Ephesians 2:1 says that these converts "WERE" (past tense) cut off from Yahweh, having no hope.

WHY WERE THE GENTILES CUT OFF FROM GOD?

Answer for yourself: Just what SEPARATES one from Yahweh? Given up? Read on please.

The Scriptural answer to what separates one from God is found in Isaiah 59:1-2 KJV:

I Behold, YAHWEH'S hand is not shortened, that it cannot save, neither His ear heavy, that it cannot hear: 2 BUT YOUR INIQUITIES have separated between you and your FATHER, and YOUR SINS have hid His face for you, that HE WILL NOT HEAR.

Notice, the Apostle Paul says that these Ephesian Gentiles WERE in TIMES PAST disobedient and that they were NOT "disobedient" at the time he was speaking to them. And, when they WERE DISOBEDIENT, they WERE cut off from Yahweh, as ALL SINNERS ARE!

Remember that the New Testament defines "SIN" as the breaking of Yahweh's Laws, as I John 3:4 clearly states:

4. Whosoever committeth sin transgresseth also the LAW: for sin is the transgression of the LAW.

Answer for yourself: Do you realize that if the Law of God (Laws of Moses-Torah) is not valid today, then we are not sinners, since "sin" is defined in the New Testament as transgression of the Law? I bet you didn't.

Answer for yourself: How can we pride ourselves any longer that we are not under these Laws when the non-Pauline parts of the New Testament testify to the eternal validity of God's Laws?

Answer for yourself: Does not Yahweh teach us that if we say "we have not sinned" then we are LIARS? Thus, the Law is valid today!

Answer for yourself: If I John 3:4 is a New Testament Scripture, then how is it possible that "sin" can be defined as "transgression against the LAW" if the LAW HAS PASSED AWAY AND WE ARE NO LONGER UNDER LAW BUT UNDER GRACE? It is not possible. Thus you can now easily see that the teachings you have heard since childhood declaring that the Law has passed away and that we are "under grace only" are not only inaccurate, but sinful teachings that have deceived you and let many of you into sin by faulty conduct and behavior as a Christian whereby often we break these Laws and Commandments often out of just ignorance of them, let alone willfully.

Answer for yourself: Let us notice in Ephesians 2:1-22 that Paul was speaking to whom... Gentile believers or Jewish believers? Gentile believers like you and me.

Answer for yourself: Are you beginning to view God's Law in a somewhat more positive light since you see that the Law has not passed away? I hope so but this will become abundantly clear as we continue to read this series of articles.

Before these Gentile Ephesians turned TO Yahweh in OBEDIENCE to Him (OBEDIENCE TO THE COMMANDMENTS of their respective Covenant...thus ceasing SINNING in their conduct and behavior), they previously had lived in the "way of this world" (flesh), and NOT the "Way of Yahweh".

The Apostle Paul then continues speaking to the Ephesians, saying in Ephesians 2:3-5, KJV:

3 Among whom also we all had our conversation (our manner of life) in times past in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind, and were by nature the CHILDREN OF WRATH, even as others. 4 But Yahweh (God), Who is rich in mercy, for His great love wherewith He loved us, 5 Even when we were dead in SINS,....

Before the CONVERSION of these GENTILE EPHESIANS, they lived in SIN. The death penalty...which is exactly "what" one earns for committing SIN, as Romans 6:23 says (THE WAGES OF SIN IS DEATH)...hung over them, just as it does for anyone who PRACTICES SIN (remember transgression of the LAW is defined as "sin" in the New Testament). Only those who turn FROM sin, turn FROM breaking the Law, and turn TO Yahweh in OBEDIENCE to Yahweh's Every Word" will be given the gift only Yahweh can give...Eternal Life! We will be given access to the Tree of Life!

As we Read in Isaiah 59: 1-2, it is OUR SINS (INIQUITIES) that separate us from God.

59:1 Behold <2005>, the L-RD'S <3068> hand <3027> is not shortened <7114> (8804), that it cannot save <3467> (8687); neither his ear <241> heavy <3513> (8804), that it cannot hear <8085> (8800): 2 **But your iniquities <5771>** have separated <914> (8688) between <996> you and your God <430>, and your sins <2403> have hid <5641> (8689) [his] face <6440> from you, that he will not hear <8085> (8800). {have hid: or, have made him hide}

Lexicon Hebrew 5771

05771 `avon {aw-vone'} or `avown (2 Ki 7:9, Ps 51:5 [7]) {aw-vone'} from 05753; TWOT - AV - iniquity 220, punishment 5, fault 2, Iniquities + 01697 1, mischief 1, sin 1; 230

- 1) perversity, depravity, iniquity, guilt or punishment of iniquity
- 1a) iniquity
- 1b) guilt of iniquity, guilt (as great), guilt (of condition)
- 1c) consequence of or punishment for iniquity

This same English word is defined in Strong's Concordance in the New Testament in Matt. 7:23 as "those not submitted to Jewish LAW") and it is our breaking of Yahweh's Law, that cuts us off from Yahweh.

JESUS SAYS SOMETHING VERY STARTLING...WHICH IS COMPLETELY OVERLOOKED IF YOU ONLY READ THE ENGLISH

These same Scriptures tell us that the REASON Yahweh will NOT listen to someone, is BECAUSE they are a SINNER...they practice sin. For your information this is the same word used by Yeshua in Matt. 7:23 where he tells "many" who come to him expecting "acceptance" to depart from him because they practice iniquity (Strong's number 458 & 459 meaning "the practice of not submitting to Jewish Law".

23 And <2532> then <5119> will I profess <3670> (5692) unto them <846>, <3754> I never <3763> knew <1097> (5627) you <5209>: depart <672> (5720) from <575> me <1700>, ye that work <2038> (5740) iniquity <458>.

Lexicon Greek 458

458 anomia {an-om-ee'-ah} from 459; TDNT - 4:1085,646; n f AV - iniquity 12, unrighteousness 1, transgress the law + 4060 1, transgression of the law 1; 15

- **1) the condition of without law**
 - 1a) because ignorant of it
 - 1b) because of violating it
- **2) contempt and violation of law, iniquity, wickedness**

Lexicon Greek 459

459 anomos {an'-om-os} from 1 (as a negative particle) and 3551; TDNT - 4:1086,646; adj AV - without law 4, transgressor 2, wicked 2, lawless 1, unlawful 1; 10

- **1) destitute of (the Mosaic) law**
 - 1a) of the Gentiles (notice this carefully)!!!!!!
- **2) departing from the law, a violator of the law, lawless, wicked**

Answer for yourself: Is transgression of the LAW of Moses (following the Cross in the New Testament) considered "sin?" Definitely yes.

Answer for yourself: Please note that Ephesians 2:1 says that these converts "WERE" (past tense) cut off from Yahweh, having no hope because something had separated them from Yahweh. What does Isaiah tell us in 59:1-2 that separated the Gentiles from God? Our iniquities, our sin which is transgression of the Law.

Answer for yourself: The New Testament, in I John 3:4, defines "SIN" as what?

Transgression of, violation of, and ignorance of the Mosaic Laws.

Answer for yourself: Does Matt. 7:21 teach us in the New Testament that those who are without the Law, or who are ignorant of the Law, or who violate the Law, or who are destitute of the Mosaic Law (usually Gentiles) are told by Yeshua to depart from him? Yes.

Answer for yourself: Does Matt. 7:21 teach us in the New Testament that those who depart from the law are "wicked?" Yes.

Answer for yourself: Does Matt. 7:21 teach us that if we are ignorant of the Law, thereby showing our contempt of it, should we expect to likewise hear "depart from me" from Yeshua in the world to come? Yes.

Answer for yourself: Does Matt. 7:21 teach us in the New Testament that those who violate the Law and are destitute of the Mosaic Law are told by Yeshua to depart from him. Yes.

Answer for yourself: If your church has taught you that the Law has passed away, thus making you destitute of the Law of Moses, should you expect that Yeshua will tell you to depart from him as well? Yes.

Answer for yourself: Do you realize that if the Law of God (Laws of Moses-Torah) is not valid today, then we are not sinners? Is that possible since that Yahweh teaches us that if we say "we have not sinned" then we are LIARS? This should be clear by now.

Answer for yourself: If I John 3:4 is a New Testament Scripture, then how is it possible that "sin" can be defined as "transgression against the LAW" if the LAW HAS PASSED AWAY AND WE ARE NO LONGER UNDER LAW BUT UNDER GRACE? **Obviously for the New Testament church the Laws of Moses had not passed away, and within them are contained the Laws of Noah which are the stipulations and responsibilities for the Covenant given to the Non-Jews according to Acts 15 and other places.**

Answer for yourself: Is transgression of the LAW following the Cross in the New Testament considered "sin?" Yes.

Answer for yourself: Before the CONVERSION of these GENTILE EPHESIANS, they lived in SIN. What did one earn for committing SIN which is defined in the New Testament as transgression of the Law? Death and separation from God.

Answer for yourself: Romans 6:23 says THE WAGES OF SIN IS DEATH and death hung over all men, just as it does for anyone who PRACTICES SIN. Then is it a true statement that only those who turn FROM sin, turn FROM breaking the Law, and turn TO Yahweh in OBEDIENCE to Yahweh's Every Word" will be given the Gift only Yahweh can give...Eternal Life? Yes.

Answer for yourself: Do you find it difficult to believe that this is the same word used by Yeshua in Matt. 7:21 where he tells "many" who come to him expecting "acceptance" to depart from him because they practice iniquity (Strong's number 458 & 459 meaning the practice of not submitting to Jewish Law)? Not any longer.

NOW FOR A BIG QUESTION

Answer for yourself: Are you aware that many of these laws which the Christian has been told has passed away, laws within these "Mosaic Laws" intended for non-Jewish and Gentile "believers," are commandments instructing non-Jewish believers how to **worship properly** and how to **give their tithe properly [which 99.9% of Christianity does not do correctly]**; something that few churches I have seen has right or obeys correctly?

Answer for yourself: Are you now aware that our failure to heed these commandments is sin and that our "strange fire" and false worship given to God instead of these selected commandments which should be obeyed in our worship of the Creator both displeases and hurts Him?

Answer for yourself: Can you begin to see the importance of identifying with Israel who has always revered the Covenant Law instead of organizations (Churches) that teach the Law has passed away? I hope so.

Please understand that before the Word of Yahweh was given to the Gentile People as a whole, they were **cut off** from Yahweh. Before this, **ONLY** the Tribes of the Children of Israel were given Yahweh's Laws, which GUIDED one to faith and obedience, thus culminating in Yahweh's SALVATION.

AN EXAMPLE FOR ALL TIME-CORNELIUS OF ACTS 10...IF YOU ARE A GENTILE BELIEVER YOU BETTER LISTEN TO THIS

It is impossible to read and understand correctly the New Testament without some basic background knowledge in such areas as culture, politics, language, literature, and religion. It just so happens when we read of Cornelius in Acts 10 that almost all of Jewish evangelism to the non-Jew was ceased. Converts were accepted but no longer were the Covenant of Noah and the Laws of Noah being taught or preached to the non-Jew as their way of Salvation. Such was the bigotry and hatred of the Jew to the non-Jew in the first century. Yahweh's message of Repentance, Conversion, and Salvation was not going to be again preached to the Gentiles until AFTER Yeshua came and died. Yeshua's death and believed resurrection was the catalyst that motivated these "brainwashed Jews" to break from current Jewish teachings and theology as implanted by R. Shammai, and others, and repent and go into all the world whereby they would literally "teach" the non-Jew to observe those things in the Law which God had given them and required of them. Not only would the Apostles scatter following the persecutions in Israel but Paul would make three such journeys to the non-Jews with the **Laws of Noah as well as invitation to enter into the Covenant of Noah.**

Acts 11:18 When they heard these things, they held their peace and glorified Yahweh, saying, Then hath Yahweh also to the NATIONS (GENTILES) granted REPENTANCE UNTO LIFE.

Acts 11:34 Then Peter opened his mouth, and said, Of a truth I perceive that YAHWEH is no respecter of persons: 35 But in every NATION (Gentiles; according to Baalam's prophecy Israel is never to be counted among the nations, thus he is referring to ALL GENTILE NATIONS) he that "feareth Him" and "worketh righteousness" is accepted with Him (this is true Biblical SALVATION for all mankind).

Notice this verse mentions both FAITH and OBEDIENCE THAT CULMINATES IN RIGHTEOUS WORKS...FOR SALVATION

Notice this statement by the Apostle Peter was the response to previous revelation that the Gentiles could be accepted by Yahweh if they responded in faith (feared Him) and practiced righteousness (understood as obedience to faith that culminated in good works which was the accurate response to faith).

Yahweh is NOT a "Respecter of persons." ONLY those who REVERE Him (by OBEYING His word, and who WORK RIGHTEOUSNESS) by practicing and obeying Yahweh's Commandments, Laws, Statutes, and Judgments in their daily lives, are accepted BY YAHWEH.

Before Yahweh opened the "Way of Salvation" to the Gentiles, it was considered UNLAWFUL [according to Shammai's 18 articles], even to The Believers (who were then all Hebrews, by the way), to rub elbows with the Gentiles. However, this "artificial separation" was not an Ordinance from Yahweh or part of the Written Law, but from the oral teachings of Rabbi Shammai, and others, who hated Gentiles and was one of the leading Torah scholars of the day. This ordinance was stated by Peter in Acts 10:28, KJV:...it is an unlawful thing for a man who is a Jew to keep company, or come unto, one of another nation...

According to THESE ordinances attributed to Shammai, it made NO DIFFERENCE that any Gentile might *be practicing RIGHTEOUSNESS...as Cornelius (a GENTILE was doing)* in Acts 10:1-2, KJV:

10:1 <1161> There was <2258> (5713) a certain <5100> man <435> in <1722> Caesarea <2542> called <3686> Cornelius <2883>, a centurion <1543> of <1537> the band <4686> called <2564> (5746) the Italian <2483> [band], 2 **[A] devout <2152> [man], and <2532> one that feared <5399> (5740) God <2316>** with <4862> all <3956> his <848> house <3624>, which <5037> gave <4160> (5723) much <4183> alms <1654> to the people <2992>, and <2532> prayed <1189> (5740) to God <2316> always <1275>.

The word translated 'devout' in Acts 10:2 is word #2152 in Strong's Greek Dictionary: the word 'eusebes', and means: well reverent, pious.

Lexicon Greek 2152 eusebes {yoo-seb-ace'} from 2095 and 4576; TDNT - 7:175,1010; adj AV - devout 3, godly 1; 4

1) pious, dutiful

Answer for yourself: Acts 10:1-2, KJV states: Cornelius...a Centurion of the Italian Band. A DEVOUT man and one that FEARED YAHWEH with all his house. The word translated 'devout' in Acts 10:2 is word #2152 in Strong's Greek Dictionary: the word 'eusebes', and means: well reverent, pious. In other words, Cornelius, a Gentile after the cross, was making himself HOLY by KEEPING what? **The Commandments of God.**

Answer for yourself: Only "living by" the HOLY Laws and Commandments of Yahweh makes one "holy" because it separates the obedient person from the majority of mankind who do not obey the L-RD. If one lives any other "way," then he lives in "what" since he transgresses the Law? Sin.

In other words, Cornelius was making himself HOLY by KEEPING the Laws of Yahweh! Only "living by" the HOLY Laws and Commandments of Yahweh makes one "holy" because it separates the obedient person from the majority of mankind who do not obey the L-RD. If one lives any other "way," then he lives in sin...and Yahweh then, correctly, considers that person to be a SINNER. Yahweh, assuredly, is no "Respecter of persons", so even IF a GENTILE OBEYS HIM, then that Gentile is ACCEPTED BY HIM. Yahweh has proven this through the instructions He gave through Moses, saying previously in Exodus 12:48-49, KJV:

48 And when a **stranger <1616>** shall sojourn <1481> (8799) with thee, and will keep <6213> (8804) the Passover <6453> to the L-RD <3068>, let all his males <2145> be circumcised <4135> (8736), and then let him come near <7126> (8799) and keep <6213> (8800) it; and he shall be as one that is born <249> in the land <776>: for no uncircumcised person <6189> shall eat <398> (8799) thereof. 49 One <259> law <8451> shall be to him that is homeborn <249>, and unto the stranger <1616> that sojourneth <1481> (8802) among <8432> you.

The above passage, since it included circumcision, refer to "conversion" of the non-Jew to Judaism. Cornelius was not circumcised, but yet was "accepted" by God as were full-converts since they both

"feared" God and "worketh righteousness." The only difference would be their Covenant responsibility: the full-convert would be responsible for all 613 like the Jew whereby the Godfearer, like Cornelius, would only be responsible for the Covenant of Noah with its 66 Commandments.

The word translated 'stranger' in this verse is word # 1616 in Strong's Hebrew Dictionary: the word "ger", and means: **foreigner, alien**. This is the Gentile like you and me!

Lexicon Hebrew 1616 01616 ger {gare} or (fully) geyr (gare) from 01481; TWOT - 330a; n m AV - stranger 87, alien 1, sojourner 1, stranger + 0376 1, stranger + 04480 1, strangers + 0582 1; 92

- 1) sojourner
- 1a) a temporary inhabitant, a newcomer lacking inherited rights, ie. Gentile
- 1b) of foreigners in Israel, though conceded rights

Answer for yourself: Did the text of Exodus 12:48 say that there is ONLY ONE LAW for both Jews and Gentiles? Sure did!

Answer for yourself: In Exodus 12:48-49 (KJV) it states that when a STRANGER shall sojourn with thee...ONE LAW shall be to him that is homeborn, and unto the STRANGER that sojourneth among you. Notice both the Gentile and Jew have only one Law, thus they shared the SAME what? **Covenants.**

We need to stop and understand that within the Laws of Moses, taken as a unit, within them are Covenant stipulations and laws that are for the non-Jew according to the Laws and Covenant of Noah. This are again assumed and added to for the Jew where the 66 are added to thereby culminating in 613 for the Jew, but again within them are the 66 for the non-Jew's relationship with God.

Answer for yourself: The word translated 'stranger' in this verse is word # 1616 in Strong's Hebrew Dictionary is the word "ger", and means what? Gentile.

CONCLUSION

Well, if you read this then you notice right off the bat that this is not the traditional message of the Gentile Church or it's interpretation of Pauline Christianity today. The issue boils down simply to this. We have religious documents in the New Testament which have been altered in many places [this website along with our others have proved it] and forgeries among the New Testament passages when compared to the Hebrew Scriptures are evident to those who have done enough study to spot them. **Consequently there are two different and conflicting messages in the New Testament regarding how one is obtain Eternal Life and Salvation:**

[Paul's gospel](#)

[and Jesus' gospel.](#)

Be not mistaken; they are not the same; one comes from a synthesis of mystery religions, astral worship, gnosticism and a little Judaism and the other from Abrahamic faith as handed down by Biblical Judaism. If you fail to discern this fact then you have not studied enough your faith and the true origins of Christianity and because of this you will be unprepared to meet God in the judgment after death. Thus the need to study to see these things for yourself in order that you can **[be a true follower of Jesus](#)** and be certain before you die that you have made your election and calling certain. Blessings...Craig Lyons M.Div.



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THE NON-JEWISH CHRISTIAN...A FELLOW CITIZEN OF ISRAEL WITH THE JEW

In reading a book recently entitled The Day America Told the Truth, by James Patterson and Peter Kim, I ran across a survey in which people were asked to rank 73 occupations for their honesty and integrity. Americans said that the four sleaziest ways to make a living in America are: drug dealer, organized crime boss, TV evangelist, and prostitute. Notice that prostitution was considered a more "honorable way to make a living than TV evangelism.

Answer for yourself: How could Christianity evolve into something that would allow such to occur?

The involved study that follows will thoroughly answer that question to your satisfaction.

The Rabbinic Sages were often heard saying "Kol hatchalot kashot;" which is Hebrew for "all beginnings are difficult." Fostering the renewal of Gentile Christianity to its Judaic root after being estranged from it for nearly two millennia, is no exception. Just as physical birth and spiritual growth involve pain, so too the revitalization of Gentile Christianity. Today, more than at any other time, there is a sense of urgency within the Gentile Church to understand in Hebraic terms its faith and calling. While the Rabbinic Sages maintained that all beginnings involve difficulty, they also insisted that the greater the degree of hardship, the greater the reward. In this case, continuity with the Olive Tree will bring the life, power and stability that the Gentile Church so desperately needs in our world today.

As Gentiles, we should long for a deeper and more fruitful relationship with the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, with the King Messiah, and with Israel. We should long to be restored and reconciled to the Olive Tree of the Israel of God.

The purpose of this document is to provide Gentile Christians in multitudes of various denominations with a basic overview of the story of the Olive Tree of Israel as it has developed historically and theologically over the last two millennia. It is hoped that it will serve as a simple resource from which you can glean a better understanding of and appreciation of the condition of the Gentile Church which originally was conceived within Yeshua's Movement within Judaism in the first century. It is hoped that this study will act as a catalyst for further study and the development of a sincere desire for not only a understanding the Jewish roots of Christianity, but serve as a source of Biblical illumination that will lead the Gentile Christian to a more Biblical obedient life-style which is pleasing to our Father in Heaven. Ultimately, it is hoped that many will re-evaluate their existing religious belief system in view of the new facts that will not only be presented but which will illuminate and challenge the disobedience of the Gentile Church as it exists today. It is my hope that your congregational life in your existing church will be affected in such a positive manner that you will begin to adjust your lives and begin to fully engage yourself in the rich heritage and life of the Olive Tree of Israel. Lastly my prayer for you is that together we can begin to believe, practice, observe, and celebrate all that being "engrafted" into the Olive Tree of Israel offers us.

Now if the Root [of the Olive Tree] is holy, so are the branches. But if some of the branches were pruned, and you [Gentiles] were grafted in among other branches and have become equal sharers in the rich root of the Olive Tree,

then don't boast as if you were better than the natural branches! However, if you do boast, remember that you are not nourishing the root, the root is nourishing you!

So you will say, "Natural Branches were pruned so that I might be grafted in," They were pruned, but so what! They were pruned because of their unfaithfulness. However, you keep your place only because of your faithfulness. So do not be arrogant; on the contrary, be terrified! For if the God of Israel did not spare the unfaithful Natural Branches, he certainly will not spare you!

So take a good look at God's kindness and his severity; on the one hand, severity toward those who were pruned; but on the other hand, God's kindness toward you Gentiles-provided you maintain yourself in that kindness [toward the Olive Tree]! Otherwise, you too will be cut off! Moreover, the pruned branches, if they do not persist in their unfaithfulness, will be grafted back in; because God is able to graft them back in. For if you [Gentiles] were cut out of what is by nature a wild Olive Tree and grafted, contrary to nature, into a cultivated Olive Tree, how much more will these Natural Branches [Jews] be grafted back into their own Olive Tree!

For brothers, I want you to understand this truth which God formerly concealed but has now revealed, so that you will not imagine you know more than you actually do. It is that unfaithfulness, to some degree, has come upon some of Israel, until a fullness of Gentiles has come [to be grafted] in to the [Olive Tree] and that in this way all that is of Israel will be saved [that is share in the life and power of God in this world and the world to come]. ([Paul], [Apostle] to the Gentiles, Letter to believers at Rome 11:16-26).

INTRODUCTION: EXAMINATION OF THE OLIVE TREE

The Olive Tree was a primary source of food, light, hygiene and healing during Biblical times. To the Gentiles in the west the Olive Tree, with its gnarled trunk and soft gray-green leaves does not appear to be an especially impressive tree. Yet to those in the Middle East, it is admired for its artistic appearance and its bountiful nourishment. Its fruit has been eaten as a major food staple for nearly 7000 years. In addition it has been the source of cooking and lighting oil (Exodus 27:20, Leviticus 24:2) as well as medicine and anointing for religious ceremonies (Exodus 30:25-26). As an export it brought great wealth to the nation (1 Kings 5:11).

Being cultivated in Israel for nearly 7000 years, the Olive has always been considered with special, almost mystical, significance. Both Traditional Jews and Gentile Christians believe it was the olive branch that the dove brought back to Noah from Mt. Ararat (Genesis 8:11). Even in Greek mythology, when the gods held a contest to see which of them could produce the most important of all gifts to mortal man, it was Athena who won the contest when she produced the Olive Tree. It is no surprise then, that Paul, a Jew with Roman citizenship, preaching to Greeks, selected the Olive Tree, to illustrate a central theological point of his gospel (Romans 11-26).

Of Israel, Jeremiah the prophet wrote, *The Lord called you a thriving Olive Tree, with fruit beautiful in form*, (Jeremiah 11:16). Hosea the prophet said, *Israel's splendor will be like the Olive Tree*, (Hosea 14:6). David, King of Israel, declared, *I am like a green Olive Tree flourishing in the house of God*, (Psalms 52:8).

Paul uses this symbol of the living and growing Olive Tree to show that the destinies of faithful Jews and Gentiles are inextricably bound together. Paul's analogy of the Olive Tree represents the proper relationship between the Jewish people and Gentile believers in the God of Israel. In Paul's mind, Gentile believers, find their true identity **ONLY** in connection with Israel, the Jewish people, and the Covenants of God. Paul implies that Gentile believers are spiritually fed, sustained and supported by their relationship with Israel, the true Olive Tree.

Answer for yourself: Paul, a Jew with Roman citizenship, preaching to Greeks and Gentiles, selected what as the example to illustrate the Gentile's being grafted into the people of God as seen in Romans 11-26? The Olive tree.

Answer for yourself: What did the prophets Jeremiah and Hosea use to compare the people of God in Jeremiah 11:16 and Hosea 14:6? The Olive Tree.

Answer for yourself: Paul uses what symbol to illustrate the intertwined destinies of faithful Jews and Gentiles who come together in the one faith in Yahweh? Olive tree.

Answer for yourself: In Paul's mind, Gentile believers find their true identity only in connection with what other people of God? Israel.

Answer for yourself: Paul implies that Gentile believers are spiritually fed, sustained and supported by their relationship with the true Olive Tree. To what nation of people did he refer? Israel.

Answer for yourself: Did Paul teach that the Gentile Christian Church supports Israel or did he teach that Israel supports the Gentile Christian Church? Israel supports the Gentile church.

Answer for yourself: Does Paul imply that Israel is spiritually fed, sustained and supported by their relationship with the Christian church or did he say that the Christian Gentile church is supported and finds its support in Olive Tree of Israel? The Christian Gentile church is supported by Israel.

Paul used the image of the Olive Tree because of some of its most remarkable features. It is a tree with extreme longevity, easily outliving all other fruit trees (notice the symbolism of Eternal Life). The tree is hearty and grows for centuries. In Israel, Olive Trees fall into three categories: very young trees (those planted 50 years ago), moderately young (50 to 300 years old) and mature trees, some of which grow from root systems 2000 years old. No matter what the conditions: hot, cold, dry, wet, rocky or sandy soil, the Olive Tree will live and produce fruit. Its most remarkable characteristic is its tenacity and long life. It is said that you can never kill an Olive Tree. Even when cut down, or burned, new shoots will emerge from the root (Psalms 128:3). Again, this parallels the history of the Jewish people who, because of anti-Semitism and anti-Judaism have been persecuted repeatedly by Gentile nations, wars, and invasions; yet continually outlive their captors. Nations that conquered and subjected Israel to repeated slavery are not to be found in the world today, yet Israel survives as a testimony to the eternal plan of God for Israel.

The Mount of Olives in Jerusalem is a testament to this longevity, where trees hundreds of years old can be found. In Matthew 26:36 Yeshua retreated to pray after the Passover meal to a place where abundant Olive Trees and an Olive press were located. It was called Gethsemane, or in Hebrew "gat *shemen*." The Hebrew term for press is "gat" and the word for oil is "*shemen*," thus "gat-shemen" or Gethsemane.

Herein lies Israel's likeness to the Olive Tree. Their longevity as a culture, is a derivative of their unique faith, tradition and commitment to Torah. Their understanding of God and His relation to their lives and history, gave them a sense of identity, destiny, and mission which in turn, sustained and enabled them to withstand hostile forces of assimilation and disintegration. It becomes obvious, why Paul, uses the Olive Tree image to illustrate the unity between Israel [the cultivated Olive Tree] and Gentile believers [wild olive branches].

Although denied by much of Gentile Christianity today, the most important point is that Gentiles apart from Israel [the Olive Tree] have no prospects of life [spiritual blessings] which is found in the rich sap of the life-giving root of the Olive Tree.

Answer for yourself: What was the rationale of the prophets and the Apostle Paul in choosing Israel to be likened to the Olive Tree? Its long life.

Answer for yourself: Although denied by much of Gentile Christianity today, is the most important point for understanding by the Gentile Christian is that apart from whom [the Olive Tree] the Gentile believer has no prospects of life [spiritual blessings] which is found only in the rich sap of the life-giving root of the Olive Tree? Yes.

THE ROOT OF THE OLIVE TREE

The roots of the Olive Tree are extremely sturdy and are the reason why the tree is able to thrive in terraced hills or valleys, rocky or fertile soil. The roots run deep and allow the tree to produce fruit in great heat with a minimum of water. Some have argued that the root in Paul's analogy represents the Messiah or his Messianic movement. But this view confuses the expression *root of Jesse* (Isaiah 11:10) or *root of David* (Revelation 5:5) with Paul's root of the Olive Tree (Romans 11:17b). David Bivin, in his *The Identity of the Root of the Olive Tree in Romans 11*, published in Jerusalem by the Jerusalem School of the Study of the Synoptic Gospels, states that the context of Sha'ul's letter supports the conclusion that the **root represents the Patriarchs in general and Abraham in particular**. *God's sovereign plan in history was to establish his covenant with mankind through a man called Abraham. He was a semite, a descendant of Noah's son Shem* (Genesis 11:10-32). The Patriarch Abraham was the first person to be identified as a "Hebrew" (Genesis 14:13). The Jewish people trace their ancestry to Abraham as the father (root) of the nation of Israel. It was Isaiah who proclaimed God's word, *Look to the rock from which you were cut...look to Abraham your father* (Isaiah 51:1,2). When God called Abraham he promised he would give the land of Canaan to his offspring (Genesis 12:7, 13:14, 17:8). He further promised that he would have numerous descendants (Genesis 12:2, 13:16,15:5).

Gen. 12:2 And I will make of thee a great nation, and I will bless thee, and make thy name great; and thou shalt be a blessing:

Gen. 13:16 And I will make thy seed as the dust of the earth: so that if a man can number the dust of the earth, [then] shall thy seed also be numbered.

Gen. 15:5 And he brought him forth abroad, and said, Look now toward heaven, and tell the stars, if thou be able to number them: and he said unto him, So shall thy seed be.

He also promised that *All gentiles on earth would be blessed* through his seed (Genesis 12:3, 18:18, 22:18).

Gen. 12:3 And I will bless them that bless thee, and curse him that curseth thee: and in thee shall all families of the earth be blessed.

Gen. 18:18 Seeing that Abraham shall surely become a great and mighty nation, and all the nations of the earth shall be blessed in him?

Gen. 22:18 And in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed; because thou hast obeyed my voice

Kefah [Peter] acknowledged that his fellow Jews were physical descendants of Abraham, and heirs of these promised blessings (Acts 3:25).

Acts 3:25 Ye are the children of the prophets, and of the covenant which God made with our fathers, saying unto Abraham, And in thy seed shall all the kindreds of the earth be blessed.

In Paul's mind, the Gentile believers in Yahweh were also heirs, partakers and sharers of Yahweh's promises as *spiritual* descendants of Abraham (Galatians 3:7,8,14).

Gal. 3:7 Know ye therefore that they which are of faith, the same are the children of Abraham. 8 And the scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the heathen through faith, preached before the gospel unto Abraham, [saying], In thee shall all nations be blessed.

Answer for yourself: Is the "good" news given to Abraham concerning the death and resurrection of Yeshua or that all Gentile nations will have the opportunity of spiritual blessings in that they will have opportunity to come to Yahweh in faith; thus being blessed? Come to faith in God.

Gal. 3:14 That the blessing of Abraham might come on the Gentiles through Jesus Christ; that we might receive the promise of the Spirit through faith.

1 Peter 1:21 Who by him (Yeshua) do we believe in God, that raised him up from the dead, and gave him glory; that your faith and hope might be in God.

Answer for yourself: God worked mightily through Yeshua who commanded in the Great Commission that the Torah be taken to the Gentile in order that their faith and hope might be in Yeshua or God? God.

Their origin in Abraham is their faith in the message of the servant of the LORD (Yeshua), who is himself of the seed (Galatians 3:16) of Abraham (Galatians 3:16).

Gal. 3:16 Now to Abraham and his seed were the promises made. He saith not, And to seeds, as of many; but as of one, And to thy seed, which is Christ.

Thus the biblical phrase, *our Father Abraham* (James 2:21, Acts 7:2) expresses a family relationship that every person of faith has with Abraham, the *man of faith* (Galatians 3:6-9).

Gal. 3:6 Even as Abraham believed God, and it was accounted to him for righteousness. {accounted: or, imputed} 7 Know ye therefore that they which are of faith, the same are the children of Abraham. 8 And the scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the heathen through faith, preached before the gospel unto Abraham, [saying], In thee shall all nations be blessed. 9 So then they which be of faith are blessed with faithful Abraham.

The argument is based on the belief that those who display Abraham's faith and deeds are Abraham's offspring (James 2:23).

James 2:23 And the scripture was fulfilled which saith, Abraham believed God, and it was imputed unto him for righteousness: and he was called the Friend of God.

Answer for yourself: Sha'ul's letters supports the conclusion that the root of the Olive Tree represents the Patriarchs in general and who in particular? Abraham.

Answer for yourself: God's sovereign plan in history was to establish his covenant with mankind through what man and what people? Abraham.

Answer for yourself: When God called Abraham he promised him in the Abrahamic covenant that besides the Jews, what group of people on the earth would be blessed through his seed (Genesis 12:3, 18:18, 22:18). Gentiles.

Answer for yourself: In Paul's mind, the Gentile believers in God were also heirs, partakers and sharers of God's promises as spiritual descendants of whom (Galatians 3:7,8,14)? Abraham.

Answer for yourself: According to James, those who display Abraham's faith and deeds are Abraham's what (James 2:23)? Seed.

Answer for yourself: To understand correctly how the Gentile Christian Church is to relate to the Israel of God we must begin with what epistles in the New Testament? Ephesians, Romans, Galatians.

Answer for yourself: Paul, the Apostle to the Gentile states that the Gentiles, like you and me, have been quickened or made alive in a spiritual sense by whom because our sins and trespasses had separated us from God? Yeshua.

1 Peter 1:21 Who by him (Yeshua) do we believe in God, that raised him up from the dead, and gave him glory; **that your faith and hope might be in God (notice he did not say that one's faith need be in "Jesus").**

If according to Peter you believe in God today because of Yeshua and his ministry which fostered a movement from within Biblical Judaism to the non-Jewish world whereby the non-Jew could come to the saving knowledge of the God of Israel then let us continue to search for deeper meaning as to our status in the

Covenanted People of God....the Israel of God. Shalom.



WHO ARE YOU GOING TO BELIEVE FOR YOUR ETERNAL LIFE: JESUS OR PAUL? #2

EXAMINING WHERE PAUL DEPARTS FROM YESHUA AND HIS TEACHINGS CONCERNING ETERNAL LIFE

Paul shaped the Gentile Church after 70 C.E. in a manner which stripped away all links to Judaism and cursed it at the same time. The New Testament in places says Judaism is bad and abandoned by God, while Christianity is good and beloved. In other places the New Testament teaches just the opposite as you were shown in article one of this series. In places the New Testament says the law of Moses is not valid and the Covenant is dead for the Jews. Instead of Moses being taught to all mankind, Paul teaches that the Church's laws and the existing Covenant is dead for the Jews as well as Non-Jews. Instead, the Church's laws and the New Covenant take their place. While Paul advanced separation from Judaism, Yeshua announced Judaism's greatness. The same New Testament in which you just saw Yeshua promote Judaism, in other places debases Judaism through Paul. I just showed you that Yeshua was a practicing, believing Jew who taught faithfulness to his religion's Torah and the Jewish way of salvation. Yeshua affirmed Torah, Moses, and the Prophets as the way to God and eternal life. He and his family all observed the Jewish customs, holidays, and Saturday Sabbath in the synagogue. Yeshua said personal salvation is obtained through Judaism and not another way. In fact Yeshua would command that such teachings be taken into all the world whereby all Non-Jews be taught to "observe those things" Yeshua had commanded of his followers. Paul and his brand of Christianity, in contradiction to all that had been both believed and taught before by Moses, the Prophets, as well as Yeshua, has announced a new way to salvation, through belief in Yeshua's vicarious atonement for sins and resurrection, not through faith in God and obedience to Him through His commandments, but through belief in Yeshua's death for sins and resurrection from death.

Answer for yourself: Can you find just one time where Yeshua teaches the same salvation doctrine as espoused by Paul?

What I ask you to do is keep the teachings of Yeshua in focus as you read Paul. **The New Testament, in places, contradicts itself. That is a fact.** You must be sharp enough to see it for yourself when you read. **No matter what Paul says he cannot invalidate Yeshua's own words in the same book.** It is a matter of who you will believe. If you listen to Yeshua, as I have laid out for you, you see that he proclaimed continually Judaism's eternal truths. Paul will not. Now let us look at Paul.

PAUL CONTRADICTS HIMSELF....DID YOU EVER SEE IT BEFORE?

What is the most perplexing for me when studying Paul is that he is not consistent in what he says. Most of you have never probably seen this but I will in the remaining pages attempt to reveal to you the contradictions that come from the mouth and pen of Paul regarding salvation. When we look at Yeshua his message is consistent

with what has always been taught by Moses and the Prophets. But with Paul we have another matter because he won't always agree with what he has said before. But if you are not sharp in your Bible study you can easily overlook such things. Let us begin out critical examination of the message of Paul on salvation.

Remembering what Yeshua just said about eternal life and observance of the commandments let us contrast Paul's view on the matter.

Answer for yourself: Does Paul in Romans 2:13 agree or disagree with what Yeshua has said about eternal life and the observance of the commandments of God? Well, lets read it and see.

Romans 2:13 For not the hearers of the law are just before God, but the doers of the law shall be justified.

So far so good. Paul in this verse agrees with the message of Yeshua regarding acceptance and eternal life with God..

But just wait. Now on the back of the same page in my Bible where the above verse was quoted from Paul, we see Paul writes something totally different and contradictory to the teachings of Yeshua in Romans 3:28:

Romans 3:28 Therefore we conclude that a man is justified by faith without the deeds of the law.

Answer for yourself: In light of what I just showed you can you justify Paul's quick turn-around on this doctrinal stance so quickly, let alone a change in the same epistle?

Notice that within the space of 44 verses Paul reverses completely his stance on justification and righteousness through obedience to the law and commandments of God. Just 44 verses!

Answer for yourself: Did Paul teach "doing the Law" for justification AFTER THE CROSS in Romans 2:13? DEFINITELY YES!

Answer for yourself: Does Paul contradict himself in Romans 3:28? DEFINITELY YES!

Answer for yourself: So what are we to believe in the face of such contradictions of Paul when contrasted with the teachings of Yeshua and the other Apostles which teach otherwise than Paul?

Answer for yourself: Seeing this material for yourself, who are you going to believe for your salvation....Yeshua, Moses, and the Prophets and their message of salvation or Paul and his message whatever it is in its final form?

I Corinthians 6:11

And such were some of you: but ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified in the name of the Lord Yeshua, and by the Spirit of our God.

Please take note that the above verse says that those who "were" transgressors had been helped by the Christologic message of Paul and belief in his gospel which taught justification of the unGodly through belief in the death and resurrection of Yeshua for eternal life.

Answer for yourself: How did that happen?

Let us understand what is really being said by Paul in this verse. Let us remember that Paul has just previously taught in 1 Corinthians 6:9-10 that the heathen who are guilty of the transgression of the Laws of God is led to death and separation from God, let alone the loss of eternal life. Having understood this, then we can understand his message intended for Non-Jews whereby he uses "Yeshua" literally as bait to get the Non-Jew to

believe in “Paul’s Yeshua” as a way for their eternal life. Let us understand that Paul used cunning (become all things to all men in order to win some) in not telling the heathen he has to accept the Torah right off the bat, but rather shrewdly uses this “Pauline Yeshua” and relaxation of the Torah in his effort to win converts from the heathen gradually. Because Paul’s adherents among the Non-Jews, in patterning themselves after such a Jewish Rabbi and his ethical teachings, would gradually develop lives of ethical and moral conduct which would assure that they become more Godly than before. Such is repentance which is the first step in coming to God. Of course, if you give up evil you are closer to God, Christianity's way, Judaism's way, or any other way.

But there is one important difference from those who Paul was attempting to teach and you...the reader of this article. You are not like the heathen, but rather, most likely have been raised in church most of your life. With your religious background and your love for God most of your life what excuse do we have not to obey God fully and choose those things which please him which I have demonstrated is His Law?

Luke 1:46-47,50-55, "And Mary said, My soul Both magnify the Lord, And my spirit hath rejoiced in God, my Savior. And his mercy is on them that fear him from generation to generation. He hath showed strength with his arm; he hath scattered the proud in the imagination of their hearts. He hath put down the mighty from their seats, and exalted them of low degree. He hath filled the hungry with good things; and the rich he hath sent empty away. He hath helped his servant Israel in remembrance of his mercy; As he spake to our fathers, to Abraham, and to his seed for ever."

Answer for yourself: Did Mary, Yeshua' mother, call the God of Judaism, the same God who gave her People the Torah for salvation her Savior or did she, based on her new revelation, call her son Yeshua the “new” Savior?

Mary knew what most Christians don’t. That’s because today’s Christians have read and believe Paul more than the Gospels. God alone is the Savior not Yeshua or His Messiah. Hence, Jews have salvation by God the Father and need no second or alternate source of salvation. She spoke of God's greatness and His help of His servant, Israel. She spoke of God's message to Abraham's children, that the Covenant is eternal. This was the understanding of Mary after she was allegedly informed that she would have, according to the New Testament, a miraculous virgin birth and that the child would be the Messiah. As you surely can see, she spoke as a traditional, believing Jewish person, not the holy figure of Christianity.

Luke 1:6, (Luke) "And they (Zacharias and Elizabeth) were both righteous before God, walking in all the commandments and ordinances of the Lord blameless."

Answer for yourself: According to the New Testament does “walking in the commandments and ordinances of the Lord” allow a person to be “blameless” before God? It sure does.

Jews as well as Non-Jews can be free of sin, blameless, following the law of Moses, as exemplified by these two people. Therefore, we know according to the New Testament witness that the law does give justification for eternal life.

Again let us see what Paul has to say on the matter.

Romans 4:3, (Paul) "For what saith the scripture? Abraham believed God, and it was counted unto him for righteousness."

Answer for yourself: You most likely have heard this passage your whole life. But do you know what believing truly consists of as spoken of in this verse?

Believe without response, or as James said it “faith without works is dead” is the meaning of the passage. Abraham believed God according to the revelation of God and **RESPONDED** because of that belief. He took his son to Mount Moriah to be offered to God. Abraham had faith and he had a concrete response to that faith.

Consequently, righteousness in God's eyes is believing God's instructions and doing as God commands. In Abraham's situation, it was offering his son Isaac as a sacrifice. **In our situation, it is obeying and following God's commandments in His Torah and His laws, not just believing they exist.**

Answer for yourself: Do you find that following God's commandments somewhat difficult or foolish to keep and observe since the vast majority of Christianity today teaches because of Paul that the Christian is no longer under the law but under a grace which allows him to break and not keep these laws at will?

Lets see what Paul has to say about being righteous and walking in the commandments and ordinances of God.

Answer for yourself: Is this Paul's doctrine as well and does he agree with Yeshua and the Apostles on this major issue? No, again we see where Paul contradicted the teachings of Yeshua.

Rom 3:20-22 Therefore **by the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified** in his sight: for by the law is the knowledge of sin. 21 But now **the righteousness of God without the law is manifested, being witnessed by the law and the prophets:** 22 Even the righteousness of God which is by faith of Yeshua Christ **unto all and upon all them that believe:** for there is no difference:

Remembering what you previously read in the first article concerning the teachings of Yeshua, let us examine closely the above passage from Paul for contradictions to what both Yeshua, Moses, and the Prophets taught.

1. Moses (the Law) and Prophets **NEVER** taught that obedience of God's laws did not justify, in fact it was just the opposite they taught; namely, that obedience to the laws of God does justify.
2. Moses (the Law) and the Prophets **NEVER** taught that righteousness existed apart from obedience to the laws of God, in fact they taught just the opposite.
3. Paul discounts what Moses, the Prophets, and Yeshua all taught and held in common, and substitutes his own theology that replaces 4000 years of Biblical Truth with a **"BUT NOW"** theology of justification before God through belief in Yeshua' death and resurrection.

Answer for yourself: Who are we to believe? What do the other Apostles have to say?

I John 5:2-3, (John) ". . . we love the children of God, when we love God, and keep his commandments. For **this is the love of God, that we keep his commandments: and his commandments are not grievous.**"

Earlier I stated that we love God by keeping his commandments. Now we see the second phase of the Greatest Commandment: loving His children and our neighbors. Notice also that ironically only by loving our neighbor are we actually loving God! **Such loving of God and our neighbor requires fidelity to His laws, which are not hard to bear or perform. So, we read here in the New Testament that the commandments of the Torah are to be kept and can be kept. These laws should be observed to demonstrate our love of God and our fellow man.**

Answer for yourself: Can I obey literally all of God's laws?

It may be beyond human ability to perform all our duties to God, always and perfectly. But, God gave the commandments which are not hard to uphold, when you use all your good intentions with all your heart. **God's laws require your effort, not perfection.**

Again let us look at Paul.

Romans 3:24 Being justified freely by his grace **through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus:** 25 Whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God; 26 To declare, I say, at this time his righteousness: that he might be just, and the **justifier of him which believeth in Yeshua**

Again you should notice Paul is teaching a completely different message from what Yeshua, Moses, Prophets, and the Apostles taught. **Again Paul stands alone in his belief. No where is any of Paul's theology can we find references to what Yeshua, Moses, the Prophets or other Apostles taught.**

Rom 10:9-16

9 That if thou shalt **confess with thy mouth the Lord Yeshua,** and shalt **believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead,** thou shalt **be saved.** 10 For with the **heart man believeth unto righteousness;** and with the mouth confession is made **unto salvation.**

Again we see that **Paul has a different way of salvation from what was taught by Yeshua, Moses, the Prophets, and the Apostles as demonstrated in the first article in this series.** Paul stresses "faith only" for righteousness and not what Yeshua, Moses, the Prophets, and the other Apostles taught; namely walking in the commandments of God for righteousness.

Answer for yourself: Who are you going to trust for correct teaching for eternal life...Paul or Yeshua, Moses, the Prophets, and the Apostles?

If you are honest with yourself up to now I have repeatedly shown you that Yeshua's message revolved around keeping the Commandments and ordinances of God. Yeshua both taught and knew for certain that love for God and those created in His image could only be accomplished by adhering to a standard of righteousness (God's laws) set by God and not by man. Thus the need and availability of God's laws and commandments, **which when earnestly attempted to keep produces acceptance and salvation. Remember God requires our effort and not our perfection.**

Again look at Paul and his views on the law.

Romans 7:12,14,16,22, (Paul) "Wherefore the law is holy, and the commandment holy, and just, and good. For we know that the law is spiritual: . . . I consent unto the law that it is good. For I delight in the law of God after the inward man:"

I Timothy 1:8, (Paul) "But we know that the law is good, if a man use it lawfully;"

Answer for yourself: Does it stand to reason that God would need to replace something that is holy, just, spiritual, and good?

Answer for yourself: Did you notice that Paul even said that he delights in the law of God after the inward spirit?

2 Timothy 3:16-17, (Paul) "All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works."

Answer for yourself: Are you aware that when Paul wrote this in his letter to Timothy that there was only the Jewish Scriptures (Law, Prophets, Writings) in existence and that the New Testament would not be canonized till 397 A.D. (almost 300 years later)?

Answer for yourself: Are you also aware that Paul is saying that the Law, the Prophets, and the Writings are, at the time of writing of this epistle which is around 30 years after Yeshua's death, profitable for DOCTRINE, REPROOF, CORRECTION, AND INSTRUCTION?

Answer for yourself: Don't you find it rather strange that something that is profitable for doctrine, reproof, correction, and instruction for the first church is considered passed away by today's church?

Answer for yourself: Are you aware that Paul's writings and his theology were not, even by him, considered

Scripture?

You should not find these facts surprising since the creation of a New Testament or the creation of an alternate view of salvation and how to attain it was the furthestmost thing from anyone's mind at this time....except Paul's.

I Peter 1:25, (Peter) "But the word of the Lord (the Law, Prophets, and Writings) endureth for ever...."

Understanding when Peter wrote this Paul's teachings were very limited in scope and accepted by only a few. In fact scholars today teach us that in no time during Paul's life did he have over 50 adherents to his message. In fact Paul would later say "all in Asia have forsaken me." All in Asia? This again shows you his message had a very limited scope since men from James continually followed him around to "undo" his teachings. Thus you can better understand why Paul was required to appear before James twice in his life. Literally this was to answer charges as seen in Acts 21:21: "And they are informed of thee, that thou teachest all the Jews which are among the Gentiles to forsake Moses, saying that they ought not to circumcise their children, neither to walk after the customs."

What I have demonstrated to you in this article is that Yeshua continually walked after the customs of Moses and the Prophets. Paul did not. Tragically we have grown up in Churches which did not follow Yeshua, the Prophets, or the customs as well. We grew up most likely in Churches that followed Paul and literally oppose the teachings of Yeshua, the Prophets, and the Apostles.

Answer for yourself: How are we to reconcile that the Law endures forever but your church teaches that Christ is the end of the Law and that the Law has ceased and that we are no longer under the Law but grace?

Amazingly, the verses presented above from the pen of the Apostle Paul and Peter affirm the validity of the laws and the commandments of the Torah. They are described as sacred and beneficial, effective and everlasting. So you must face the fact that after the cross Paul at one time believed the laws of God to be holy, just, spiritual and good. So did Peter for that matter.

Stop here and ask yourself this:

Answer for yourself: If the Torah is all these things of God, shouldn't the laws be performed and Biblical Judaism, which is the embodiment of such laws, be observed by all Jews and Non-Jews?

Romans 10:5, (Paul) "For Moses describeth the righteousness which is of the law, That the man which doeth those things shall /live by them."

Answer for yourself: Did you again notice that the Apostle Paul states in agreement with Moses that "righteousness is of the law" and "that those do those things in the law" shall "live" by them (eternal life)?

But again another conflict of Paul is seen below.

Romans 3: 21 But now the righteousness of God without the law is manifested, being witnessed by the law and the prophets;

Answer for yourself: How are we to understand Paul's comments about a righteousness "without the law" in light of Yeshua's teachings that connect all righteousness with observance of the commandments?

Answer for yourself: How do you reconcile that Paul speaks of "righteousness without the law" in Romans 3:21 and "righteousness which is of the law" in Romans 10:5?

Answer for yourself: Are you willing to trust contradictions like this from Paul for your eternal life?

Answer for yourself: Although we are warned by Paul not to believe another "gospel," is it not evident to you

that in comparison to Yeshua and his message about eternal life that ironically it is Paul who teaches “another gospel”?

Answer for yourself: Which of the two teachings are we to trust for our eternal life as taught by Paul....”the man which doeth those things (law) shall live (eternal life) by them” [Romans 10:5] or [Rom 10:9] “That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Yeshua, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved”?

The Hebrew Bible teaches that the Torah's laws lead to virtue, which is rewarded by everlasting life. Paul, in this passage from Romans 10:5 admits that this is the message of Moses in the Holy Scriptures, who communicated God's will to the Hebrew people. Then he contradicts again this only 4 verses later!

James 5:16, (James) ". . . The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much."

I John 3:22, (John) "And whatsoever we ask, we receive of him, because we keep his commandments, and do those things that are pleasing in his sight."

Answer for yourself: Could some of our prayers not being answered and our lack of receiving what we ask of God be because we believe we are under grace and not under the law and commandments of God and don't attempt to know let alone keep as many of them as possible?

These two verses, from two different Apostles, show that keeping commandments and being righteous are connected. Both lead to God's hearing us, being pleased, and helping us. The verse quoted is very Judaic in nature, and that's a fact.

James 2:8, (James) "If ye fulfill the royal law according to the scripture, Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself, ye do well."

Answer for yourself: Is James telling us we “do well” if we fulfill and keep the law? Sure is.

A person is good if he obeys the golden rule as given in the law of Moses.

James 1:27, (James) "Pure religion and undefiled before God and the Father is this, To visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and to keep himself unspotted from the world."

Here is the golden rule made specific and said to be the basis of religious requirements. Also, to be pure from worldly evils in general makes for a religious person. These are Jewish ideas, totally.

Let us look again at Paul.

Galatians 3:21, (Paul) "Is the law then against the promise of God ? God forbid: for if there had been a law given which could have given life, verily righteousness should have been by the law."

Here is where you have to read close as well as remember what you have already learned from reading Yeshua and the other Apostles regarding the law and its connection with eternal life. Strange as it may be to read, Paul is, in the first part of the verse anyway, seemingly lending support to the validity of the law of Moses. Now for a problem which most fail to grasp its significance. Paul is double-minded. Remember I told you that he contradicts not only himself but Yeshua and the other Apostles? Here again is another place where Paul deviates from the message of the other Apostles as well as the early church. For Paul says "if the law could be effective Moses' law would suffice for salvation. Paul is in reality stating that it is his personal feeling that no such law exists which is connected to salvation. For Paul the condition "if such a law existed" indicates that such a law and condition does not exist...at least for Paul!

Answer for yourself: What? Is this a complete reversal by Paul of what he has said previously in some of his other epistles let alone a complete contradiction of the teaching of Yeshua and the other Apostles? It sure is.

Answer for yourself: Well, have you with your own eyes earlier in this article already seen that Yeshua said that keeping the commandments is the path to salvation and the law is effective to this end? If you read the article you have. This produces quite a dilemma for the Christian.

Answer for yourself: Does Paul agree or disagree with the teachings of Yeshua regarding salvation and eternal life? He does not!

Therefore, Paul, if he "believes" Yeshua, must conclude that righteousness is obtained by one's effort to follow and pattern one's life after the Scriptural laws. But this is not the message of Paul therefore we must question if Paul really "believed in Yeshua."

Notice that Paul actually contradicts Yeshua on this essential matter and, in effect, created Christianity's separation from its Hebraic roots in Judaism.

Paul claims that sin is not overcome, but is created, by the law. Ironically, it is Paul's teaching, not Yeshua', which invalidated the law for the budding Church. Such destroys the teachings of Yeshua and the other Apostles!

WERE WE WARNED ABOUT PEOPLE LIKE PAUL BY YESHUA? AND HAVE WE HEEDED THE WARNING?

Let's read what Yeshua said about this kind of opposition. In Matthew 10:24 (Luke 6:40) (John 13:16) Yeshua said, "The disciple (Paul) is not above his master (Yeshua), nor the servant (Paul) above his lord (Yeshua)."

Answer for yourself: So we ask, whose statements take precedence...Yeshua's or Paul's?

Answer for yourself: Who is to be believed...Yeshua or Paul?

You have to decide that for yourself. We only desire to lay the materials out for you in such a way that you can make an intelligent decision.

Answer for yourself: What will you trust for your salvation...the message of Yeshua or Paul?

Answer for yourself: Which is truly linked to eternal life and God's salvation.....Christologies (believing in Yeshua) or Judaics (following the faith of Yeshua)?

Answer for yourself: What is the real message of salvation of God since the New Testament teaches two ways which are mutually exclusive of each other.....faith in Yeshua or adopting the faith of Yeshua?

Let me warn and encourage all of our readers that if you should "believe" on Yeshua to be saved, believe his teachings about the eternal and effective holy law of God revealed by Moses and begin to do them. Begin a life before God where you tell Him that His laws and commandments are important to you and that you choose to try to do them to the best of your ability because you know they please Him. Begin to live by as many as possible for in them you demonstrate your love of God and those created in His image. And you will be saved as a Jew or a Non-Jew.

Paul also writes as follows:

Romans 14:14, (Paul) "I know. . . that there is nothing unclean of itself: but to him that esteemeth any thing to be unclean, to him it is unclean."

Certainly, this is true. Jews consider things unclean because God announced it in the Torah, not because they are unclean of themselves. The law of kashruth (kosher) is God's law, as detailed by those who seek Him. God's ordinances create uncleanness, not the thing itself. And Jews and Non-Jews who want to please God and get close to Him keep the kosher laws. This is what God desires of us.

Romans 3:1-2, (Paul) "What advantage then hath the Jew? or what profit is there of circumcision? Much every way: chiefly, because that unto them were committed the oracles of God."

Romans 9:4, Romans 10:2, (Paul) "Who are Israelites: to whom pertaineth the adoption, and the glory, and the covenants, and the giving of the law, and the service of God, and the promises: For I bear them record that they have a zeal of God . . ."

Romans 11:29, (Paul) "For the gifts and calling of God are without repentance."

Acts 2:5 (Author) "And there were dwelling at Jerusalem Jews, devout men . . ."

Jews have a fervor for God and are devout, said Paul. In other words, Biblical Judaism promoted enthusiasm for God. Jews were given the Covenant, the law, the prophets, and the promises. Jews minister to God by being His Chosen People. There is benefit, much benefit, in being Jewish. Paul even bolsters the firm foundation of the Torah, God's gift, lasting for eternity, without God changing His mind, without repenting of His Torah. That is what Paul actually said.

Notice that Paul, however, in a complete reversal of what he said elsewhere, is recorded to having believed that all these positive features of being Jewish are canceled, and of no avail, due to the Jew's lack of belief in Yeshua the Christ. We will leave Paul's reasoning and reversal to others. Instead, we ask you to keep in mind his positive appreciation of Judaism. **And also remember that Yeshua said, in effect, that Judaism is of God. Yeshua, himself, taught that "Jews for Judaism" is the way even for the Non-Jew.** We have shown abundant evidence of this in our present article.

Answer for yourself: Who is the authority you choose, Yeshua or Paul?

Ephesians 6:2-3, (Paul) "Honor thy father and mother; which is the first commandment with promise; That it may be well with thee, and thou mayest live long on the earth."

Matthew 15:4 (Mark 7:10), "For God commanded (Moses said), saying, Honor thy father and mother: and, He that curseth father or mother, let him die the death."

These verses are Paul's and Yeshua's utterances, condemning anyone who doesn't bestow honor upon his parents, as taken from the Ten Commandments. This means dutifully regarding them and respecting them, and **implicitly honoring your heritage as well.** This commandment is considered important enough to be put forward separately. Therefore, shaming your parents and their teaching by turning from them and the God of their heritage is prohibited and deserving of worldly death as well as loss of life in the hereafter. This is also what we read elsewhere in the New Testament.

Luke 5:37-39, "And no man putteth new wine into old bottles; else the new wine will burst the bottles, and be spilled, and the bottles shall perish. But new wine must be put into new bottles; and both are preserved. No man also having drunk old wine straightway desireth new: for he saith, The old is better."

Yeshua's saying appears to fit Judaism and its offspring, Christianity. To carry this analogy through, the new wine, Christianity, should not be placed into the old, Judaism. This, of course, is just what happened. In order for it to be good, the new should be nurtured separately. Both are then properly maintained, the old as it should be and the new as it should be. This did not occur. Sadly, the new has caused great harm to the old by claiming

to succeed it, while mixing with it. And the new, by so doing, has harmed itself. Isn't that the proper conclusion to be drawn? Taken one step further, Yeshua also said that those who know the old, Judaism, prefer it.

Answer for yourself: Shouldn't you, as a Non-Jew and most likely a follower of Yeshua, prefer it too?

Answer for yourself: Whose teachings will you trust to lead you to eternal life...Paul's [which are filled with contradictions of Yeshua, Moses, the Prophets, the Torah, as well as the other followers and Apostles of Yeshua who knew him personally and walked with him 40 days after his resurrection], or Yeshua's [which agree totally with Moses and the Prophets and which contains not one contradiction among them]?

I would think having read this article it is rather obvious.

NOW FOR THE BIG QUESTION

Since now you have seen for yourself that Yeshua's and Paul's way of salvation differ, then you should be asking yourself "Why"? What you will come to see if you continue your diligent search for truth is that the New Testament documents which you have relied upon since your childhood as "received from God" are no such thing at all. Upon close scrutiny you will come to find that they are a collection of both truth and error; the problem is discerning one from the other. As you have already seen we cannot have two conflicting paths to salvation. There are many other discrepancies contained within these documents; many of which go unnoticed by those who do not devote a considerable amount of time for study into these areas. We at Bet Emet Ministries have and continue to do so in order to present you, our readers, the absolute best of scholarship in these areas in hopes you will be led to the truth before you die. Your rewards and standing in the World to Come hinges upon it. We realize that the reason for so much confusion today in the Christian community stems for the multiple contradictions within the New Testament which blurs "the faith once given to the saints". It is our hope by revealing to you the hundreds of misquotations of the Jewish Scriptures, the numerous Jewish Scriptures taken out of context by the New Testament writes to serve their own anti-Semitic agendas, and the gross mistranslations contained within it as well that you might come to see the truth for yourself.....Yeshua was not a Christian and does not want you to follow such Gentile Christian doctrines that destroy the Sabbath, the Biblical Festivals, Monotheism, true righteous giving of the Tithe, true spiritual warfare, etc. Today we have a collection of writings that billions of people have accepted as "authoritative" for their faith and practice which are anything but that. If you have the courage to continue your study...you will be shocked, saddened, broken, and ashamed before you finish. You will see for yourself the greatest deception foisted upon mankind by the Roman Religious Establishment....a substitute faith that opposes what the real Yeshua believed at almost every turn of his life. You might be saying to yourself now: "those are big charges...can he prove it"? I would only ask that you prayerfully study and use the intellect that God has given you to see if what I say does not add up. You will never be sorry you did, and eternally grateful you continued in this rather difficult study. Shalom and may the LORD'S blessings overtake you.



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AS A CHRISTIAN DO YOU KNOW WHICH COVENANT YOUR UNDER? #1

In my library are numerous books on Biblical Covenants. A common condition inherent with almost all of them is their failure to recognize that God's Covenants are Eternal and that each successive Covenant given by God chronologically builds upon the previous and should be considered a "continuation" of prior Covenants. In other words they are linked together. Almost lost along with this fact is that the Covenant of Jer. 31, called by most the "New Covenant", has not occurred yet! These two facts have monumental consequences for the New Testament Christian today who believes he is in Covenant with God through this "New" Covenant.

If it can be shown that Jeremiah's "New" Covenant has not started yet but is yet future, then the credibility of the New Testament's statement to that event is seriously jeopardized and suspect. Along with that one should then be concerned as to which Covenant does the New Testament Christian find his standing with God today? Is it possible that the New Testament Christian, because of the Gentile Church's current theological positions and teachings which are inherited over the centuries from the Roman Church, is without a Covenant with God because he denies, refuses to accept, or is just ignorant of the Biblical ways God has given for him to be "grafted" into the Israel of God? Has the Gentile Christian Church, because of the anti-Semitic theologies created by the early Church Fathers, been blinded for centuries to the only way whereby God calls them into covenant with Him? What are the implications for a New Testament Believer to be without a Covenant with God? These are serious questions, possibly the most serious one might address in his life. The answers are forthcoming.

Scholars have written volumes developing the history of the covenants, the meaning of the covenants, the relationships between the covenants, the terms of the covenants, the recipients of the covenants, and the limitations of the covenants. Jonathan Edwards said: **"There is perhaps no part of divinity attended with so much intricacy, and wherein orthodox divines do so much differ as stating the precise agreement and difference between the two dispensations of Moses and Christ."** In other words there is little agreement between **Denominational Positions regarding the Covenants with God!** The covenants have been sifted, analyzed, broken down and built up—examined and explicated—but when the question referred to by Jonathan Edwards comes up, no answer seems to come forth, and the world of Christian scholarship falls silent or breaks forth into a confused unintelligible chatter resulting in no constructive progress toward discovery of an answer. The question appears simple enough; but upon closer examination, it reveals aspects of complexity that defy explanation, simply because the **investigator usually limits his investigation of the problem to the boundaries of Gentile Christianity. If he is to uncover an adequate answer to his inquiries into the Biblical covenants, he must delve deeper into the history of the covenants and examine his subject from the Jewish point of view.**

Imagine my amazement over the years of in-depth study into Judaism and the Jewish Yeshua following Seminary when I found contrary to the multiple theologies in Christianity concerning "covenants" that in the history of Judaism, one finds no controversy at all regarding the covenants, no debate whatever, no subject so plainly expressed, nor issue so clearly defined, as that of the covenants. Judaism deals directly with the origins of the covenants and their entire history is entwined with their development and intimately concerned with their determination.

WHAT IS A COVENANT? HOW LONG DO THEY LAST?

Before discussing the development of the covenants, it is necessary to define clearly what a covenant is. All that a covenant means is wrapped up in the Hebrew primal root word "Berit". It means simply a contract, a will, a league, a testament, or a bond. It differs distinctly and significantly from a vow. A vow may involve the participation of one party or more. Unlike a covenant, a vow may be broken by certain conditions of revocation.

Now the Christian needs to listen very carefully to the next statement. **The covenant differs further from the vow in that the covenant always involves more than one person and is perpetually binding by oath. A Covenant cannot be revoked, altered, or annulled, nor can a present covenant displace a former one. A latter covenant can enhance, extend, or complement the former, but it can never abrogate it. If the terms of a latter covenant should abrogate or interfere with a former covenant, the terms of the earlier take precedence over the latter.**

In a covenant relationship, the individuals involved sacrifice the distinctiveness of their own individual identities, much like the members of a modern corporation. This covenant entity, as used in the Jewish scripture, primarily relates to covenants between God and man. In some two hundred thirty occurrences of the word, Berit, in the Jewish Bible, over two hundred refer to the God-man relationship.

In ancient times, everyone took all the covenants very seriously unlike today. A person initiated his covenant with a blood sacrifice, followed by a sworn oath pledging himself fully to his agreement. Such a covenant was so binding that men engraved its terms upon stone or cuneiform tablets. Some have been found which were cast in brass plates. To break a covenant sealed in blood was considered not only a sin but a crime worthy of death.

A covenant had certain definite, distinctive characteristics—its terms always expressed explicitly. **It was either restrictive or nonrestrictive, conditional or unconditional.** In either case, it could not be both; that is, it could not be restrictive in some parts and nonrestrictive in others. **Its terms could not be changed, spiritualized or applied to any conditions other than those plainly stated.**

SEVEN MAJOR COVENANTS MADE BETWEEN GOD AND MAN

In the Bible there were seven major covenants made between God and man. In all of these covenants, the Eternal One was the party of the first part. Four of these covenants were restricted to Israel, except under particular specified instances. The other three major covenants were universal and applicable to mankind as a whole. It is my firm belief that once you, more than likely a non-Jewish Christian, study for yourself these Covenants and how they yet relate to mankind, your understanding of how you are intended to relate to God will be illuminated and any corrections necessary on your part can be made.

#1 THE COVENANT OF THE GARDEN OF EDEN

The first covenant was that of Gan Eden, or the Garden of Eden. Its terms are found in Genesis 1:28-30. This covenant gave Adam, a non-Jew, the scepter of rulership over the entire earth, and restricted both man and animal by dietary laws to a vegetarian diet. Under this covenant, Adam had title to the whole earth, which means that all real estate and chattel belonged to him. The restriction related to a single tree, called the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil, which stood in the middle of the garden. Except for this tree, the earth and all therein were Adam's.

According to the Jewish tradition, the very same day that Adam and Eve were created, Eve committed robbery. She took fruit from the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil and thereby brought death and exile to the human family. The fruit from that tree was the only thing on earth that she could have stolen. Everything else belonged to her and Adam.

In the eschatological hope of Judaism, the religion of Yeshua, that the life in the world to come and the primary

function of the Messiah will be to restore the whole creation to the conditions under the Edenic covenant.

The Kabbalists teach:

Somewhere there is an Adam within each of us, in need of restoration—in exile from the Garden. The aim of the Kabbalah is to restore that divine man in the medium of the mortal man. We are the laboratory, we are the workers in that sphere and space. All this is to say that there is an intimate relationship between mortal man and his spiritual counterpart. The mystery of that relationship is to be found in the ten spheres of the Adam Kadmon [the primal divine man after whose image Adam was created]. If one can learn to connect the thread dangling free from the ten spheres with the fiber of his being—if one can discover the secret opening in the base of the skull—one may begin the work of the restoration.

In Judaism, and therefore, naturally in the Old Testament, there is no concept of heaven as there is in Christian eschatology. Nowhere is there a promise to Adam, to Noah, to Abraham, to Moses, or to any of the prophets of a "piece of pie in the sky in the sweet by and by." Jewish eschatology is totally lacking a heavenly inheritance. The inheritance of the Jew in the world to come is restricted to a real estate plot in the Middle East. It concerns restoration of the land to the people in the world to come as well as restoration of the land to its former state of productive abundance. Although the Jews do not believe that they will be the only people in the world to come, they do believe that every man who responds by faith to God in whatever covenant relationship the Eternal One has revealed to him will have a part in the life in the world to come, or the Messianic Age.

Isaiah the prophet describes this life in the world to come and the return of the world to the condition of the Garden of Eden thusly: "And there shall come forth a rod out of the stem of Jesse, and a Branch shall grow out of his roots...and righteousness shall be the girdle of his loins, and faithfulness the girdle of his reins. The wolf also shall dwell with the lamb, and the leopard shall lie down with the kid; and the calf and the young lion and the fatling together; and a little child shall lead them. And the cow and the bear shall feed; their young ones shall lie down together; and the lion shall eat straw like the ox. And the suckling child shall play on the hole of the asp, and the weaned child shall put his hand on the cockatrice' dent" (Isaiah 11:1, 5-8) As Isaiah states, when the Messiah comes, even the carnivorous animals, such as the lion, the wolf and the bear, shall return to their original states of being vegetarians.

The third chapter of Genesis records not only the robbery of the fruit of the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil but also the drastic consequences of that theft. When Eve jerked the fruit from that tree and Adam partook of it with her, they brought a curse upon the land, upon the serpent, and upon themselves. The ground was to bring forth thorns and thistles, the serpent was to crawl on his belly, and Adam and Eve were to live a life of strenuous toil. Moreover, Adam and Eve discovered that they were naked.

When God challenged their misconduct, Adam, as human nature is even today, passed the buck to Eve. Half blaming God, he said, "That woman you gave me, she...." When the Creator challenged the woman, her reply was, "The devil made me do it." The effects of the violation of this covenant have continued to the present: man continues to pass the buck of responsibility to someone else.

#2 THE COVENANT WITH ADAM

In Genesis 3:14-19, the second covenant was made between God and man: the Adamic Covenant. The first promise contained in the Adamic Covenant was that the seed of the woman would restore the earth to the Edenic conditions. Meanwhile, however, many consequences would be suffered by the human family. The grief of womanhood would be multiplied: "In sorrow thou shalt bring forth children...cursed is the ground for thy sake. . Thorns and thistles shall it bring forth to thee. . . in the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread, till thou return unto the ground; for out of it was thou taken: from dust thou art and to dust thou shalt return."

This is the Adamic Covenant under which the human family has continued to live for 5,759 years as of the Christian year 1999. Under the Adamic Covenant, however, the punishment levied upon man proved to be ineffective as a corrective factor. According to the Jewish tradition, 1,657 years passed from the Adamic

Covenant to the covenant of Noah. Between these two covenants, mankind lived in a very highly advanced civilization. In spite of such advancement, man's moral nature and God-consciousness suffered such a great decadence that civilization was finally obliterated by the judgment of the flood of Noah.

#3 THE COVENANT WITH NOAH

After the Flood, the earth no longer appeared to be the same planet it had been before. Much of the animal life that had existed in those years was destroyed. Much of the plant kingdom also ceased to exist. The earth was unable to produce with the fertility and abundance that it had before. The geophysical features were so totally changed that the family of Noah found an entirely different world when they came out of the Ark.

Genesis 8:20 to 9:17 contains the setting and conditions of the Noahic Covenant. We must remember that Noah was a non-Jew. With this covenant, man's relationship to the earth and the animal world was changed. For the first time, God made provision for man to eat flesh. According to Jewish interpretation, the Noahic Covenant is broken down into what is called the Seven Laws of Noah. As the Adamic Covenant did not replace the Edenic, but rather complemented it with greater provisions, so the Noahic Covenant neither replaced nor annulled the Edenic and the Adamic covenants.

Basically, the Seven Laws of Noah prohibit idolatry, fornication and murder. Under their provisions, human government was ordained of God; and capital punishment, through human government, was so ordained. Dietary changes were also stipulated in the Seven Laws of Noah. While all flesh was now permissible for food, God made a very clear distinction between the clean and the unclean animals. Noah had been instructed to take the unclean animals by pairs into the Ark. The clean animals, however, were taken into the Ark by sevens.

Under the Seven Laws of Noah, cannibalism was forbidden. Even eating flesh from an animal before it was properly slain was also forbidden. This was to prohibit man from cutting off a muscle or limb of an animal and eating it, leaving the animal to live maimed.

The eating of blood was also prohibited. Under the Noahic Covenant, an animal had to be properly killed to be used for food. Any animal that was torn of beast, died of itself, or was found dead, could not be eaten.

The Noahic Covenant, like the Adamic, is universal in scope, and is applicable to all men. It is not specifically to Israel.

More to follow...Shalom.



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AS A CHRISTIAN DO YOU KNOW WHICH COVENANT YOUR UNDER? #2

Let us continue our study in the Covenants of HaShem and which ones have implications today for the non-Jewish believer.

#4 THE COVENANT WITH ABRAHAM

Under the Noahic Covenant of human government, the decadence of humanity in turning to idolatry was much more rapid than it had been in the 1,656 years from Adam to the Flood. Three hundred sixty-one years after the Noahic Covenant, therefore, YHWH appeared to Abraham in the twelfth chapter of Genesis and established the fourth covenant made with mankind, called the Abrahamic Covenant. This covenant was restricted to a particular descendency of Abraham through Isaac and Jacob. Understand that Abraham was a "non-Jew" but his offspring would bring into existence the Jewish people. This Abrahamic covenant separated Israel from the other nations. The specifics of the Abrahamic Covenant, as given to Abraham and confirmed to Isaac and Jacob, can be found in Genesis 12:1-3; 13:14-18; 15:1-21; 17:4-8; 22:15-24; 26:1-5; and 28:10-15. This covenant, too, has seven facets, or sections. It would be from Judah, Jacob's son, that the Jewish people would originate. Because of this fact it is best to understand that the Abrahamic Covenant was in reality a "Jewish" Covenant.

First, it had to do with a real estate arrangement, "a land that I will show thee." Second, "I will make of thee a great nation." Third, "I will bless thee." Fourth, "I will make thy name great." Fifth, "Thou shalt be a blessing;" sixth, "I will bless them that bless thee and curse them that curse thee;" and seventh, "In thee shall all the "Gentile] families of the earth be blessed" (or better understood as "bless themselves" by imitating the actions and faith of the Jewish people). The seventh section, and only this section, contains specific, particular provision for the Gentiles. The first six provisions of the Abrahamic Covenant were exclusively to Israel and the Jewish people.

The Abrahamic Covenant has certain other definite characteristics. It is a covenant of faith. "And Abraham believed God and it was counted to him for righteousness." A Jew's relationship to God is a vital relationship of faith based on the Abrahamic Covenant. When a Jew approaches God in prayer, he makes his petitions premised on that covenant. The Jew never approaches God in the name of Moses because his standing before God is not premised upon the Mosaic Covenant. However, when the Jew prays, he opens his prayer with these words: "God, God of our Fathers, God of Abraham, of Isaac and of Jacob.. "

The Abrahamic Covenant is a restricted covenant. It alienates all other nations from the economy of Israel. It is an unconditional covenant, containing the repetition of the oath of God, who swore by his own name, saying "I will ... I will ... I will ... I will" This unconditional covenant is contingent upon God's faithfulness to Israel, not in Israel's faithfulness to God (thank goodness). Despite Israel's failure, the Holy One reassured the prophets, "Yet for my Holy Name's sake, and the sake of the covenant that I made with thy fathers, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, I will perform."

The Abrahamic Covenant, like all other covenants between the Eternal One and mankind, is an everlasting

covenant; it can never be terminated, can never be altered, or changed or revised. The only demand made upon the Jew by this covenant is his commitment of faith in that covenant relationship established with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob.

5 THE COVENANT WITH MOSES

Four hundred thirty years after the giving of the Abrahamic Covenant, Israel requested that God reveal to them his requirements of them so that they could exercise the faith and express the standing they had through the Abrahamic Covenant. Therefore, in the Jewish year 2448, God gave Israel the Torah on Mount Sinai. This law of God is also called the Law of Moses, because Moses himself was personified and wrapped up in the words of that Torah. The Law, or Torah, given to Moses on Mount Sinai, has never been considered by the Jews as the premise of their relationship with God. Their relationship with God is entirely premised on the Abrahamic Covenant.

The five books of Torah, the Pentateuch, are Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, and Deuteronomy. Moses wrote all five books of the Torah; even the passages that refer to him, he wrote in the third person, for every word of it was dictated to him by God.

The way of the Torah teaches the Jew where he came from, where he is, and where he is going. It instructs him in every minute detail of his daily life and relationship to God. In this Torah are six hundred thirteen commandments. Of these, two hundred forty-eight are positive commandments, instructing Israel what they must do, while three hundred sixty-five are negative commandments, telling Israel what they should not do.

The Mosaic Covenant strongly emphasizes the distinction of the Jew as separate from all the other nations. While the Gentiles could eat all flesh, the Mosaic Covenant restricted the dietary practice of the Jew to only certain forms of flesh. What was clean to the Gentile was unclean to the Jew. He was instructed not to worship as or with the pagans, and was commanded not to dress or conform to the Gentile standards of conduct.

Time and space took on a special dimension of holiness for the Jew. The observance of the Sabbath day was uniquely designated to Israel alone. According to rabbinic interpretation, a Gentile who observes the Sabbath is worthy of death, because he is stealing a commandment that was given exclusively to Israel. All six hundred thirteen commandments of the Jewish law were explicitly given to Israel alone. The Jew did not obtain salvation or a standing with God as a result of keeping the commandments of Torah, for his standing with God was already established by faith on the basis of the Abrahamic Covenant. The observance of the six hundred thirteen commandments was the exercise of that faith and standing he already had with God. He did not keep the law in order to be a Jew; he kept the law because he was a Jew.

The giving of the Abrahamic Covenant separated Israel from the Gentile nations. The giving of the Mosaic Covenant intensified this separation between Israel and the Gentile nations. Every section of the commandments given to Moses began with the restrictive phrase: "And the Eternal One spake unto Moses, saying, 'Speak unto the children of Israel and command them....'"

The Edenic, Adamic, and Noahic covenants were universal and applied to all mankind. The Abrahamic Covenant and the Mosaic are exclusively to Israel.

Under the Abrahamic and Mosaic covenants, Israel was never commanded to convert the Gentiles to their faith or religious practices. On the contrary, they were commanded explicitly not to convert the Gentiles to Judaism. If a Gentile sincerely sought to follow this faith and practice, it was the responsibility of the rabbis to discourage such a decision unless it was proved totally sincere, intelligently made, and clearly understood on the part of the convert.

The covenant of Moses given at Mount Sinai included both the Written Law and the Oral Law. They are inseparable, and the Oral is as binding as is the Written.

This Mosaic Covenant was totally a conditional covenant. The people of Israel, in requesting this covenant, said, "We will do it and we will hear it." They did not say, "We will hear it then we will do it." In this request, Israel committed themselves to obey unconditionally the words of Torah. By acknowledging obedience to the law before they heard its terms, they implied that they did not sit in judgment as to whether or not they thought a law was good or bad, whether it was reasonable or unreasonable, whether it was logical or illogical. "We will do and we will hear."

This covenant of Moses at Mount Sinai was the total embodiment of a conditional covenant. "This do and thou shalt live...." "Honor thy father and thy mother—that thy days may be long in the land."

Such statements as these appear connected with almost all the commandments. In Moses' closing address in Deuteronomy 28:58-62, we find the epitome of the essence in the Mosaic Covenant as a conditional covenant:

If thou wilt not observe to do all the words of this law that are written in this book that thou mayest fear this glorious and fearful name, THE LORD THY GOD; Then the Lord will make thy plagues wonderful, and the plagues of thy seed, even great plagues, and of long continuance, and sore sicknesses, and of long continuance. Moreover he will bring upon thee all the diseases of Egypt, which thou west afraid of; and they shall cleave unto thee. Also every sickness, and every plague, which is not written in the book of this law, them will the Lord bring upon thee, until thou be destroyed. And ye shall be left few in number, whereas ye were as the stars of heaven for multitude; because thou wouldest not obey the voice of the Lord thy God.

A failure on the part of Israel to fulfill the words of Torah did not affect or threaten their standing before God in the Abrahamic Covenant, for the former took precedence over the latter, and the latter could not jeopardize or abrogate the former. In otherwords if Israel failed to keep the Mosaic Covenant (keep the sacrifices in lieu of the absence of the Temple, they are not without a valid prior Covenant with God!

The Torah was given to Israel in the wilderness as a premise for their conduct when they would come into the land of Israel. All those commandments related in the acknowledgment by the people were not initiated in the wilderness, and indeed could not be obeyed until they had come into the land. Therefore, throughout the Torah appears the phrase: "When thou comest into the land which the Lord thy God divest thee' then shalt thou observe...."

Actually, in the wilderness Israel was under such a special economy that they did not so much as practice circumcision. In Joshua 5:2-9 is the account of Joshua circumcising at Gilgal the male children who were born in the wilderness.

The covenant of Moses was the testament of Moses. Like any other will or testament, it could not be effective until the death of the testator. "For your sakes," said Moses, "I cannot enter into this land." The necessity of the death of Moses was imperative before Israel could inaugurate the fulfilling of the Torah, "when thou comest into the land, which the Lord thy God divest thee."

The terms of that conditional covenant focused on obedience, while the penalties for Israel in failing to obey the words of Torah were an expulsion from the land and a scattering among the Gentile nations. By so doing, Israel's relationship to the Abrahamic Covenant was not affected. Their privilege under the conditional covenant of Moses demanded such a diaspora in penalty for failure to keep the covenant. The Diaspora, however, did not terminate the Mosaic Covenant either. The Jew in the Diaspora was still obligated to fulfill ninety commandments. In fact, the Jew today is obligated to fulfill all the words of the Torah except those whose fulfillment are contingent upon the function of Temple worship in the land.

#6 THE NEW COVENANT FOR ISRAEL...NO IT IS NOT WHAT YOU THINK...THE COVENANT OF MOUNT MOAB

The Abrahamic Covenant had made provision for a blessing in the land. Now the next statement is crucial for our understanding of the Covenants. The Mosaic Covenant at Mount Sinai made no condition or promise for a

regathering of Israel from the dispersion to which it had been sentenced by the Divine judge. But God would, after having regathered His scattered peoples who had become assimilated by intermarriage with the heathen, have to reveal His Torah to them all over again. What we are speaking of here is not so much a "new" Covenant as a "RENEWED" Covenant. It just so happens if you look up the word for "new" as used by Jeremiah in your Hebrew lexicons and dictionaries that is exactly what you find. The word chosen by "holy men of old" such as Jeremiah in this instance is "renewed" and NOT "new as in replaced and discarded". Now you should have a better understanding when reading Jeremiah 31 that God is doing nothing "new" at all; rather, He is continuing to do what He has done since the beginning.... "I will put My law in their inwards parts, and write it in their hearts" (Jer. 31:33). God is putting the Torah "again" into the hearts of these people; that part of Israel which was to be regathered as referred to in the Covenant of Moab. Therefore, if the Torah were to have such a provision for a regathering of dispersed Israel so as not to abrogate the Abrahamic Covenant, a "new" covenant, better understood as "re-newed" would be required in the Torah.

There is such a "new" covenant mentioned in the Torah. That new testament, or new covenant, was made with Israel at Mount Moab immediately before the death of Moses. Moses recorded the words of that covenant in the twenty ninth and thirtieth chapters of Deuteronomy. This new covenant is restricted to Israel and concerns the regathering of Israel from the nations in the last days. This is not a Covenant to be made with the non-Jew or the Gentile Christian Church not matter what they say, believe, or what some of the corrupted documents of the New Testament assert. "These are the words of the covenant, which the Eternal One commanded Moses to make with the children of Israel in the land of Moab, **beside the covenant which he made with them in Horeb [Sinai].**" (Dent. 29:1)

With the giving of this covenant at Mount Moab, providing for the regathering of Israel in the last days, the clause of the Abrahamic Covenant stating, "I will give thee a land," is reaffirmed. At the same time, the new "renewed" covenant at Mount Moab in no way infringes upon the lengthy penalty of Israel scattered among the nations as demanded by the Sinaitic Covenant for their disobedience.

Jeremiah the prophet gave a great deal of attention to the regathering of Israel in the last days. In Jeremiah 31:8-11 are these words:

Behold, I will bring them from the north country, and gather them from the coasts of the earth, and with them the blind and the lame, the woman with child and her that travaileth with child together: a great company shall return thither. They shall come with weeping, and with supplication will I lead them: I will cause them to walk by the rivers of waters in a straight way, wherein they shall not stumble: for I am a father to Israel, and Ephraim is my firstborn. Hear the Word of the Eternal One. O ye "Gentile" nations, and declare it in the isles afar off, and say, He that scattered Israel will gather him, and keep him, as a shepherd cloth his flock. For the Eternal One bath redeemed Jacob, and ransomed him from the hand of him that was stronger than he. Therefore shall they come and sing in the height of Zion....

Not only did Jeremiah predict the return of Israel from the Diaspora in fulfillment of the new or "re-newed" covenant, or new testament, that God made with Israel on Mount Moab, but he also predicted the revival of Hebrew as the spoken language of modern Israel: "This saith the Eternal One of hosts, the God of Israel; As yet they shall use this speech in the land of Judah and in the cities thereof, when I shall bring again their captivity...." (Jeremiah 31:23).

In the context of the New-Renewed Covenant of Mount Moab, Jeremiah's commentary in chapter thirty-one very specifically identifies the Moabite Covenant: "Behold the days come, saith the Eternal One, that I will make a New Covenant with the house of Israel and the house of Judah. Not according to the covenant [at Mount Sinai] that I made with their fathers in the day that I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt. Which covenant they break...."

This New/Re-Newed Covenant of Jeremiah 31:31 is the "New" Covenant of Moab, found in Deuteronomy 29-30. **It is an unconditional covenant. This "New/Re-Newed" Covenant is a restricted one. It applies only to Israel (the northern kingdom) and Judah (the southern kingdom) and not to the Christian Church.** This New

Covenant which promises to restore dispersed Israel to their land is one covenant for both Israel and Judah. As in the vision of the "two sticks" in Ezekiel 37, Israel and Judah would return united and be called Israel.

This New Covenant with the house of Israel and the house of Judah does not include the Gentiles. It is not the "New Testament in my blood shed for the sins of many [the Gentiles]," spoken of by Yeshua at the Passover. The New/Re-Newed Covenant, or New Testament, of Mount Moab and Jeremiah 31:31, is exclusively for Israel. It has no relationship directly or indirectly to the collection of the twenty-seven books of the Christian scriptures called the New Testament. The Christian scripture, called the New Testament, was so named by the church fathers, not by the Apostles. Neither the Christian scripture, called the New Testament, nor the death of Yeshua, has any prophetic significance in the New Testament of Israel at Moab or Jeremiah 31:31! They are entirely different. The New Testament to Israel has no dimension to the Gentile Christian, and the New Testament to the Gentile Christian has no dimension to Israel.

BUT WHAT OF THE NEW TESTAMENT AND ITS REFERENCES TO THE "NEW" COVENANT?

There are, however, two direct references in the Christian's New Testament to Israel's New Testament of Moab and Jeremiah 31:31. One occurs in Romans 11 and the other in Hebrews 8. Both of these are in the context of the future restoration of National Israel as stated above. There is no instance in the Christian scripture where these or any other covenants are "spiritualized" and applied to the Gentile or the Christian Church. Such application of these "Jewish 'New' Covenants to the Gentile Church is the work of monks and replacement theology which occurred over 1700 years ago and sadly continues today.

The promise of the New Covenant of Moab and Jeremiah 31 is not only unconditional but it is eternal and nonretractable. In verses 35-40, that dimension of infinity or eternality is stated: "Thus saith the Eternal One, which giveth the sun for a light by day, and the ordinances of the moon and of the stars for a light by night, which divideth the sea when the waves thereof roar; The Eternal One of Hosts is his name: If these ordinances depart from before me, saith the Eternal One, then the seed of Israel also shall cease from being a nation before me forever. Thus saith the Eternal One; if heaven above can be measured and the foundations of the earth searched out beneath, [then] will also I cast off all the seed of Israel for all that they have done, saith the Eternal One."

Before we proceed with the other Covenants I think it best we devote more time to this "New/Renewed" Covenant since mainline Gentile Christianity look here for their standing and foundation for Covenant with God. It can be proved, and I will continue to do such, that this covenant has no bearing on the Gentile Church then the only inescapable conclusion available is that the Christian Church exists without a Covenant with God!

Shalom.



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AS A CHRISTIAN DO YOU KNOW WHICH COVENANT YOUR UNDER? #3

HAS JEREMIAH'S NEW COVENANT STARTED YET OR IS CHRISTIANITY MISTAKEN?

I choose to start this article with the listing of the many references in the New Testament that refer to Jeremiah's "new covenant". Without a doubt such wording in the New Testament leads an unthinking reader to conclude that the "new covenant" has already started.

Answer for yourself: Has it really?

Don't underestimate the importance of such an issue...for if you are wrong in this belief, then your life, which is filled with conducts and behaviors based upon a erroneous religious belief system, will cause you to sin in many areas where you might think otherwise. It is with this knowledge that I am constrained to reach out to my fellow Gentile believers with the facts of my study and research into these areas as a warning to them.

It is our contention at Bet Emet Ministries that nothing could be further from the truth. **Study of the Hebrew language alone concerning the Jeremiah 31 passage will confirm that there is no such thing as a "new" Covenant; only the same Covenant of Laws and Commandments which is to be "reiterated"...not replaced as Gentile Christianity has done for 1700 years.** If you have been reading our articles in the past, then you are becoming well aware and familiar with the misquotations, mistranslations, and the abundant use of the Jewish Scriptures which are taken completely out of context by the writers of the New Testament. Hundreds of examples are for your inspection on our second web site. You hopefully are becoming critical readers of the New Testament whereby you are now more equipped to read the New Testament and spot the abundant errors within it which has contributed to you believing many lies over truth during your church life.

SO HAS THE "NEW" COVENANT STARTED YET?

My friends...either it has or it has not. Now let us examine the evidence used by most Christians for believing that the "new covenant" of Jeremiah has already started as presented in the New Testament. After reading this you can see for yourself how you have been misled and deceived in believing lies.

Matt 26:28

28 For this is my blood of the **new** testament, which is shed for many for the remission of sins. (KJV)

Mark 14:24

24 And he said unto them, This is my blood of the **new** testament, which is shed for many. (KJV)

Luke 22:20

20 Likewise also the cup after supper, saying, This cup is the **new testament (covenant) in my blood, which is shed for you. (KJV)**

1 Cor 11:25

25 After the same manner also he took the cup, when he had supped, saying, This cup is the **new testament in my blood: this do ye, as oft as ye drink it, in remembrance of me. (KJV)**

2 Cor 3:6

6 Who also hath made us able ministers of the **new testament; not of the letter, but of the spirit: for the letter killeth, but the spirit giveth life. (KJV)**

Heb 7:22

22 By so much was Yeshua made a surety of a **better testament. (KJV)**

Heb 8:6

6 But now hath he obtained a more excellent ministry, by how much also he is the mediator of a **better covenant, which was established upon better promises. (KJV)**

Heb 8:7

7 For if that **first covenant had been faultless, then should no place have been sought for the second. (KJV)**

Heb 8:8

8 For finding fault with them, he saith, Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, when I will make a **new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah: (KJV)**

Heb 8:9

9 Not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day when I took them by the hand to lead them out of the land of Egypt; because they continued not in my covenant, and I regarded them not, saith the Lord. (KJV)

Heb 8:10

10 For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, saith the Lord; I will put my laws into their mind, and write them in their hearts: and I will be to them a God, and they shall be to me a people: (KJV)

Heb 8:13

13 In that he saith, A **new covenant, he hath made the first old. Now that which decayeth and waxeth old is ready to vanish away. (KJV)**

Heb 9:1

1 Then verily the **first covenant had also ordinances of divine service, and a worldly sanctuary. (KJV)**

Heb 9:15

15 And for this cause he is the mediator of the **new testament, that by means of death, for the redemption of the transgressions that were under the first testament, they which are called might receive the promise of eternal inheritance. (KJV)**

Heb 9:16

16 For where a testament is, there must also of necessity be the death of the testator. (KJV)

Heb 9:17

17 For a testament is of force after men are dead: otherwise it is of no strength at all while the testator liveth. (KJV)

Heb 9:18

18 Whereupon neither the **first testament was dedicated without blood. (KJV)**

Heb 9:20

20 Saying, This is the blood of the testament which God hath enjoined unto you. (KJV)

Heb 10:16

16 This is the covenant that I will make with them after those days, saith the Lord, I will put my laws into their hearts, and in their minds will I write them; (KJV)

Heb 10:29

29 Of how much sorer punishment, suppose ye, shall he be thought worthy, who hath trodden under foot the Son of God, and hath counted the blood of the covenant, wherewith he was sanctified, an unholy thing, and hath done despite unto the Spirit of grace? (KJV)

Heb 12:24

24 And to Yeshua the mediator of the **new covenant, and to the blood of sprinkling, that speaketh better things than that of Abel. (KJV)**

Heb 13:20

20 Now the God of peace, that brought again from the dead our Lord Yeshua, that great shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting covenant, (KJV)

As if that was not proof enough, we have Paul explaining why the Jewish people do not accept this "new" theology:

2 Cor 3:14

14 But their minds were blinded: for until this day remaineth the same veil untaken away in the reading of the old testament; which vail is done away in Christ. (KJV)

****Answer for yourself:** Now what did we just see that the New Testament affirms?**

So you can see that without a doubt the New Testament believes and testifies that the New Covenant had already begun.

THE ESSENE LINK WITH THE NEW TESTAMENT

Now for a real shake up. As many of you know we at Bet Emet have for years now tried to exposed the New Testament for what it really is; a Roman propagandist document filled with both truth and error. To the uninitiated reader one cannot pick the “meat from the bones”. But with study you can.

According to Martin A. Larson, a recognized Essene scholar, on page 173 of The Essene Heritage, the “epistles now attributed to James, Peter, John, and Jude, stem directly from the Essene tradition.” Also, he states, that “Jude quotes directly from Enoch; and that all express a bitter opposition to Pauline teachings, and emphasize the priority of works over faith as well as proclaim the imminent Parousia.” Notice also that they **all “declare that the New Covenant is a continuation of the Old.”**

Dear ones it is this same Essene “theology” we read in the New Testament. The New Testament is highly apocalyptic in itself and is highly “Essenic” in many places. The writes of the New Testament expressed a belief in the imminent apocalyptic eschaton in their life times; and along with that expected Divine intervention would be the establishment not of a “New” Covenant to replace the Old whereby the Laws of Moses and Noah would be replaced, but “Re-Newed” as Jeremiah had prophesied they would be. This must be your understanding which you read the New Testament and the passages quoted above. Failure to do so will guarantee you will misinterpret every passage your read. We simply cannot read the 21st century into these documents as if they were referring to our day and time. To complicate matter worse the redactors of the New Testament has added repeatedly “words” to the passages of the Greek manuscripts such as “testament” and “covenant” to brainwash you into thinking that the “Old” Covenant with its Laws and Commandments from Noah and Moses were obsolete. This is tampering with the Word of God as spoken by Jeremiah the prophet and this should outrage you...if you only knew. Lastly, Lawrence Schiffman, another recognized scholar in Dead Sea Scroll studies, states on page 81 of Reclaiming The Dead Sea Scrolls, that “the Essenes and the Dead Sea sect were physically decimated,” referring to the Roman siege of 70 C.E., as well as stating that the “extreme apocalypticism of the **Essenes and their theology has been discredited”.**

Let me also inject into this study a very important fact of Biblical history. The Essenes, an apocalyptic monastic movement in the first century, often connected with the Dead Sea and the Dead Sea Scrolls, were know to be called “the new covenanters”. **These people considered themselves the fulfillment of the “New Covenant” and they were WRONG! But unlike the Gentile Church of today, they never entertained the idea that the Laws of the Covenant were obsolete and would be replaced with “grace”.** When reading the ideas in the New Testament, referring to a time period prior to 70 C.E., and the hopes of Divine intervention when God would write His Laws on the hearts of both Jew and non-Jew, we must recall that it was these who wrote not of a replacement Covenant as Christians mistakenly believe they have today, but a continuation of the “Old” Covenant as shown above. Gentile Christianity is simply wrong in this issue. The hopes of the Jewish people were that in the eschaton that they believed was imminent, that the Torah would go from the Temple into all the world and that their Gentile captors would become the righteous of the nations as God’s Laws would be written upon the hearts of these people as well. The world would be at peace and Eden would be endemic. **So when reading the New Testament with the hope of apocalyptic Divine intervention in the hearts and minds of these “new covenanters” we must realize that the events transpiring after 70 C.E. render their whole ideas about the “New Covenant” as expressed in their writings as being, as L. Schiffman states, “totally discredited”!**

If one would just look outside his window it is evident that the Laws of God are not written in the hearts of the majority of people in the world. Just look at the headlines of you newspaper in the morning for confirmation.

Now let us continue to investigate for ourselves if the testimony of the New Testament can be trusted in light of other facts which state otherwise.

EXAMINING JEREMIAH FOR TRUTH...YOU WANT THE TRUTH DON'T YOU?

1. Jeremiah 31:31-34—Here are the relevant quotes: *"Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, that I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah: Not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day that I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt, which my covenant they broke. . .But this shall be the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel; after those days, saith the Lord, I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts, and will be their God, and they shall be my people. And they shall no more teach every man his neighbor, saying, Know the Lord, for they shall all know me. . .for I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more. "*

From this, Christians deduce that God told Jeremiah that He would make a new set of laws, a new contract with man. They even call the New Testament the "Bris Chadosha," which is the Hebrew for "a new covenant." It never ceases to amaze me that many Messianic Christians use the Hebrew for the New Testament "Bris Chadosha" in their terminology never understanding what the Covenant stipulations for such a Covenant as stated by Jeremiah truly are; especially in light of their contradiction of these Covenant stipulations in their life-style. Such irony is literally blasphemy of the Name of the Lord and constitutes profanation of His Name. This verse, as taken from Jeremiah, is what ostensibly legitimized the text and the concepts of the New Testament, and therefore we will begin our discussion with this passage. Understand this, if you look to Jeremiah for your authority for the "New Covenant" then you must be willing to accept and submit to all that Jeremiah states about such a Covenant. To do otherwise is a lie to the truth of Jeremiah and a deception to your own integrity as a child of God who professes to love HaShem.

IN SPITE OF WHAT THE NEW TESTAMENT SAYS.....DID YOU KNOW THAT THERE ARE PROBLEMS WITH THE CHRISTIAN INTERPRETATION THAT A NEW COVENANT HAS BEGUN?

The failure of the typical Christian to recognize the multiple forgeries within the New Testament is primarily due to their failure to know their own Old Testament Jewish Scriptures. If the typical Christian was not a "New Testament" Christian so much but was an "Old Testament" Christian, then when reading the New Testament they would be better equipped to spot the misquotations or the verses removed out of their original context by skillful Gentiles who were writing this document to fulfill their own religious agenda over 1800 years ago. **And make no mistake about it, when I say the Jewish Scriptures I mean the Jewish Tanakh or the JPS Tanakh, and not the equally forged and corrupted Christian mistranslations of the Tanakh as contained in the Christian Bibles.** I really dislike saying "Old" in referencing the Jewish Scriptures, but for the sake of recognition I will call the Holy Jewish Scriptures by this name since most recognize the title.

If we begin with the Jeremiah quote we find in chapter 31 verse 34 the first problem for the Christian to deal with if he wants to believe this "New Covenant" has already begun. Verse 34 states: **And they shall teach no more every man his neighbor, and every man his brother, saying, Know the LORD: for they shall all know Me, from the least of them unto the greatest of them, saith the LORD...**

Answer for yourself: Did you catch that?

If the birth of the Christian religion really did introduce the new covenant, then there should no longer be any need for anyone to teach the word of God, *"for they shall all know Me."* Since, as everyone with eyes can see, the whole world does not yet recognize God, and the Christians are still trying to teach religion to the world, as are others, it is quite clear that the verse, *"they shall teach no more every man, saying, Know the Lord"* **does not yet apply. In other words, the new covenant has not yet taken place.** No matter what another document might say, even the New Testament or its supposed apostolic writers, such testimony contradicts the prophet Jeremiah and is totally invalid. **The New Testament is supposed to be the climax of Biblical Judaism not the repudiation of it. If the New Testament contradicts the Old Testament then there is no truth in it.** For the life of me I cannot understand how a document so full of theological holes is held to be a higher truth than the Bible Yeshua used (Tanakh) or the Prophets he quoted. Yeshua did not have a problem with Jeremiah, but the clever writers and redactors of the New Testament before the canonization of the New Testament so altered the words of Yeshua

and literally put into his mouth "sayings" which were totally foreign to what the real Yeshua both believed and professed. You need to be aware of this! Comparison of New Testament manuscripts reveal such things if you would only look. But you don't know of such because of your lack of study in these areas. I bring you the news that it happened and challenge your study in these areas to see these things for yourself.

If you take the context of Jeremiah 31 where the "first" mention of this "New Covenant" is mentioned, and compare it to the experience of those who are professing that the "New Covenant" has already started, and started with the death of Yeshua, **then it is quite contradictory for the Christians to spend millions of dollars in their attempt to convert the world to Christianity, and to then claim that we already live under the terms of the new covenant. The evangelism of the Christian Church absolute invalidates their stance that a New Covenant has already begun.** This is something few have ever considered. No, I am not against the world-wide witness to truth by the church, but such witness to Jeremiah's truth only testifies that Jeremiah is right and that the New Covenant promised by God has not begun yet. To say otherwise is again to wrestle the Jewish Scriptures to the destruction of truth. Christianity has got the cart before the horse again, and is totally wrong in this regard.

BUT CHRISTIANITY HAS AN ANSWER TO SUCH A PROBLEM

However, the Christians claim that they have an answer to this problem. They say that verse 34 (*"And they shall teach no more. . ."*) refers to the **second coming of Yeshua**. Verse 34, they say, will be fulfilled when Yeshua returns once again to visit mankind.

Since we will have to do it eventually, this is an opportune place to thoroughly analyze the doctrine of the second coming. Since space is at a premium, let me encourage all readers to e-mail for the articles on the "second coming" and the creation of such a doctrine by the early church to try to explain away the lack of Yeshua coming again after 70 C.E. as well as 135 C.E. as he said he would and as the majority of the people hoped for and expected. Necessity is the mother of invention. You will discover that whenever any really strong question, such as the one above, is asked, the standard answer is that it refers to the second coming. It therefore becomes extremely important to ascertain the validity of this claim. The success of the Christian claim or its failure rests to a very large extent on the theory of the second coming.

First of all, the Christian explanation above that verses from Jeremiah, verses 31, 32, and 33 refer to the time of around 29 A. D., and verse 34 applies 2,000 or more years later seems very forced, if not absurd. There is no indication whatsoever that this interpretation was intended. It is clearly an answer born of desperation by those having to explain the failure of fulfillment of Messianic predictions by Yeshua and others as written in the New Testament.

In addition, there is a major historical dilemma which seems to explain why the doctrine of the second coming was invented. H.M. Waddams, who was the Residentiary Canon of Canterbury Cathedral in 1968, wrote a book explaining why it took so many years for the Church to get organized into a formal, organized group. His answer is that even though verses such as Matthew 24:34 may mean that Yeshua is referring to a future generation (i.e., substitute "that" for "this," which of course is very forced) nonetheless most of the early Christians thought that the simple interpretation was correct. It corroborated the impressions that they had of the message of Yeshua, and so they thought that Yeshua would return within their own lifetime. After all, Yeshua did say, in Matthew 16:28, *"Verily I say unto you, there be some standing here which shall not taste of death, till they see the son of man coming in his kingdom."* However, after many years went by, and the generation that lived in Yeshua's generation had all died, it became rather apparent that Yeshua would not reappear in the near future. In the absence of Yeshua's return, the doctrine of the "immanent return in that generation" was therefore changed so that his reappearance was not necessarily going to be in the near future. It is sad to say but my experience in my study testifies that much of the Christian religion is merely a reaction to beliefs, customs, and unexpected developments that were accepted by or occurred to the people that lived near the early Christians. For example, many Christian holidays are revisions of early pagan holidays.

Thus, the doctrine of the second coming most likely arose out of a historical dilemma, and not because of the Christian claim that there is a theological dilemma which justified it.

OTHER PROBLEMS WITH THE CHRISTIAN VIEW THAT THE NEW COVENANT HAS ALREADY STARTED

Matthew 24 discusses the end of the world, and then, in verse 34, after describing all sorts of unusual prophecies, Yeshua says, "Verily I say unto you, **"This" generation shall not pass, till all these things be fulfilled.**" Notice if you will the text says **"THIS"** and not **"THAT"**! The natural reading of that sentence is that the generation to whom Yeshua was talking to would not pass. That is what **"this generation"** seems to mean—this very generation that Yeshua lived among. **However, the events did not occur during that generation.** Look at history. In order to bolster their claims that a New Covenant had already begun Gentile Christians would later therefore claim that Yeshua meant that when the prophecies begin to be fulfilled, then the generation that begins to see those events shall not pass away until they are all fulfilled. Thus, according to Christian theology, the sentence really should read, **"that generation shall not pass away,"** which is why **the Christian interpretation is forced,** and was not really accepted at first. Now a new millennium has begun and no Yeshua on the scene. In Biblical years, a generation has come and gone since Israel became a nation in 1948. I guess it is time for Hal Lindsey to write a new book to explain away what he already has written once again that was in error. Again necessity is the mother of invention. Either Yeshua meant what he is reported to have said (speaking to **"that"** generation) or else he lied. I choose not to believe that Yeshua is a liar. But if you will be honest the only other rational understanding is the creation of such a doctrine; and it was this new doctrine which was put into the mouth of Yeshua by the early church in order to give validity to their replacement doctrines which literally are **"new"**. But this is a far cry from a **"New Covenant"**. **Again understand when confronted with the misapplication of the Jeremiah 31 passage in order to give validity to this new doctrine which opposed Biblical Judaism, it was necessary to create a second coming and postpone it in order to allow validity for this unique Christian interpretation of the beginning of a "New Covenant".** Some of the earlier followers of Yeshua, both the Essenes as well as the Gentile followers who were influenced by Paul, needed to justify their religious stances which conflicted with the Torah, Moses, and the Prophets, and give validity and prophetic authority to their contradicting positions by incorrectly quoting Prophetic Jewish passages completely out of context. This was done by misapplication of Jewish Scriptures which were used completely out of context as I am showing you on the second website as well as adding words in the New Testament to passages such as **"testament"** and **"covenant"**. **If you were not quite well familiar with the Jewish Old Testament (Tanakh) then it would very easy to read a passage in the New Testament and feel it sounded "right" but in reality was completely wrong since it misquoted, mistranslated, and misused Jewish Scripture. As you can see competence in the Jewish Old Testament as taken from the Tanakh is a required necessity for correctly understanding the New Testament for what it really is.**

But we are not through yet. There are other problems.

WHICH MESSIAH ARE WE TO EXPECT?

Let us now turn to the supposed theological dilemma. There are verses which indicate that the Messiah will appear in a weak and inglorious fashion, such as Zechariah 9:9, where the Messiah is described coming into Jerusalem **"lowly, and riding on a donkey."** There are, on the other hand, other verses which indicate that he will appear in a mighty, glorious, and ruling fashion, such as Daniel 7:13 and 14, which describe the Messiah coming in on clouds, and **"there was given him dominion, and glory, and kingdom. . ."** etc. These two verses seem to be the source of the contradiction, and the Christians claim that the Jewish answer is very poor. Let us therefore compare the Jewish with the Christian answer.

The Christians quote two basic Jewish answers, and, in fact, I have not found any more than those two. One answer, mentioned by the Ibn Ezra on Zechariah 9:9, is that Zechariah refers to the Messiah that will be from the house of Joseph (who according to Jewish tradition, will introduce the Messianic Age) and Daniel refers to the Messiah from the house of David. Since the first one will be killed, according to the Talmud, as they explain Zechariah 12:10 (see Talmud Succah 52a), it makes sense to say that both verses of Zechariah refer to the same

person. Since his end will be in death, his beginning will be lowly and meek. The other answer is given by the Talmud in Sanhedrin 98a. If the Jews are worthy (i.e., righteous), then the verses of Daniel will apply; if they are not worthy, then the verse of Zechariah 9:9 will apply.

Let us now look at the Christian answer. As you probably have already guessed, Zechariah 9:9 refers to the first coming of Yeshua, as does Zechariah 12:10; whereas Daniel 7:13 and 14 refer to the second coming of Yeshua. Necessity is the mother of invention once more.

There are, however, some very major difficulties with Christianity's answer concerning the two comings of Messiah. First, if you look at Zechariah 12:10, 11, 12, 13, and 14, it becomes extremely obvious that it does *not* refer to Yeshua, because it says that "I will pour upon the house of David and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the spirit of grace and supplications, and they shall look upon me whom they have pierced (Christians claim that this refers to Yeshua, who was stabbed) and they shall mourn for him, as one mourns for his only son (which Christians again point to Yeshua, the supposed son of God). . . In that day shall there be a great mourning in Jerusalem. . . and the land shall mourn, every family apart. . . all the families that remain. . . " But Zechariah never said this! The Christian Old Testament and the Christian New Testament quote of it is a LIE! God said we are not to take away or add to His Word...remember? Well someone did! Let us see.

First of all the above quote as taken from a Christian Bible is a PURPOSEFUL gross mistranslation of Zech. 12:10-14 from the Hebrew Tanakh. The Christian Bible rends it completely different from what the Prophet Zechariah intended. Space does not permit a full disclosure on such a mistranslation in this article so request it. Let me say in passing the Christian translation concerns only two parties, the Jews looking upon the one pierced.....who else but Yeshua, right? But the Hebrew concerns 3 parties; the Jews looking to God concerning those of their own who were pierced and killed in the end-time battle with the Gentile powers of the world. **Let us not forget that our Christian Bibles need to be accurate translations and not forgeries to make self-fulfilling prophecies.** I challenge anyone to get a copy of the Jewish Scriptures and prove me wrong on this! It simply cannot be done. The Christian New Testament and the Christian Old Testament are not faithful translations. If an accurate translation is not important to you, then there is no hope for you so quit reading our articles. But if you want to know the truth continue on. Understand that is such errors as this, when rehearsed you whole life in the Christian Church, which leads you to false beliefs, sin, and literally idolatry.

Now for the sake of proving my point I will assume that the Christian translation is correct. For after all, you would most likely never had known of this until you read my article. According to the Christian mistranslation, yet a big question comes to mind.

Answer for yourself: If this refers to the first coming of Yeshua, then what was the spirit of grace and supplication?

Answer for yourself: Where in Biblical history do we find such a spirit of grace and supplication being poured out upon the Jewish people in the wake of Yeshua's death?

It never seems to have occurred! In addition, there certainly was no great mourning in Jerusalem and throughout the land by all of the Jewish families after the death of Yeshua. On the contrary, since many Jews, according to the Gospels and the New Testament, encouraged the crucifixion, if anything there was a great rejoicing, rather than mourning. Does not the Gospel of John say that Yeshua came unto his own people and they rejected him? Does not the New Testament imply that the Jewish people wanted Barrabas instead of Yeshua? Thus, without any doubt, Zechariah 12:10 does not refer to Yeshua because instead grace being poured upon the Jewish people after his death, only destruction and Roman anti-Semitism was seen. Look at the subsequent history of the Jewish people and then tell me about their "prosperity" and "grace" in the wake of the Roman war.

WHEN WAS YESHUA RECOGNIZED AND ANOINTED KING OF ISRAEL BY THE PEOPLE?

Another problem is seen in the Zechariah 9:9 passage; it clearly also does not refer to Yeshua: *"Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion. . . behold your King is coming to you, he is just and having salvation; lowly, and riding on a donkey. . .and he shall speak peace unto the heathen, and dominion shall be from sea to sea, and from the river to the ends of the earth. . ."* First of all, Yeshua was not the King of the Jews, even if it is true that such a label was placed over his head by the Romans who crucified Yeshua. According to Matthew 27:1, all of the chief priests and elders of the people wanted to kill Yeshua, and the multitude (27:20) felt the same way about Yeshua, according to the --- New Testament. Thus, if Matthew is correct, the Jews did not feel that Yeshua was their king. **If Matthew is not correct, then the New Testament is false, and the theory of the second coming and the entire Christian religion is also false.** Even Josephus, who wrote his history very shortly after Yeshua was supposed to have been crucified, barely makes mention of Yeshua. Such is not to be expected if Yeshua was a "King." In his Antiquities of the Jews, Book XVIII, III, 3, there is one small, lonely paragraph about Yeshua, and even that does not seem to belong there. That is why many scholars, even Christian, consider this passage in Josephus to be an interpolation (forgery) by some Christian, at a later date. In the Antiquities, Book XX, IX, 1, Josephus does mention that "the brother of Yeshua, who was called Christ, whose name was James" was accused of breaking the law; this is a very meager comment to make regarding a "King" of Israel. If you desire to read more about this I suggest H.M. Waddams, *The Struggle for Christian Unity*, Walker & Co., PLY., 1968 p. 10. Along with Emil Schurer, *A History of the Jewish People in the Time of Yeshua*, New York, 1961, page 211. You might also want to read *The Quest for the Historical Yeshua* by Albert Schweitzer and the foreword by Wm. LaSor to Whiston's translation of Josephus.

Thus, the New Testament's claim regarding the existence and kingship of Yeshua seems to be contradicted by itself as well as by other sources.

WHEN DID YESHUA PREACH TO GENTILES?

In addition, Yeshua did not *"speak peace to the heathens."* If you look at the end of Acts 10 and the beginning of Acts 11, it is clear that the apostles themselves were shocked that Peter preached to the Gentiles. Now, this makes sense only if they were taught this by Yeshua himself. Apparently, **Yeshua made it quite clear that the message was to go to the Jews only.** In fact, Paul said this explicitly in Acts 13:46. (See also Matthew 14:24.) So it is clear that Yeshua himself never preached to the Gentiles, which therefore excludes Yeshua from being the subject of Zechariah 9:10.

WHEN DID CHRISTIANITY BECOME THE WORLD'S MAJORITY RELIGION?

Lastly, the subject of the prophecy of Zechariah would have *"dominion from sea to sea, to the ends of the earth."* This, of course was not true then, nor is it true now. At last census, Christianity boasts only 1/3 of the world's population and this a far cry from "dominion from sea to sea". The only possible answer the Christians could give is to say that Zechariah 9:9 refers to the first coming, and 9:10 refers to the second, but this is so obviously forced that it need not be discussed. In addition, it makes the entire proof of the second coming fall due to circular reasoning.

It is therefore quite clear that the Christian answer to the apparent contradiction between Zechariah and Daniel cannot be true. I stress this because you will find it difficult to believe that they could have accepted it in the first place. **If the Christian answer is clearly untrue, then, consequently, the doctrine of the "second coming" must similarly be considered to be untrue.** It is simply an answer born of desperation due to the inability to answer the strong questions against Christian Biblical interpretations. Understand that I personally believe in the coming of a Messiah but reject the traditional "second" coming teachings of Gentile Christianity.

Thus, the Christian answer to Jeremiah 31, which is what started this entire discussion, must also be rejected. The new covenant has not occurred yet, and verse 34 does not refer to a "second coming."

WHAT NEW LAWS...OR REAFFIRMATION OF OLD LAWS?

In addition, the Christian approach to Jeremiah 31 rests upon one premise, and that premise must be examined. The Christian premise is that a "bris," a covenant, would include a new set of laws. However, if you look throughout the Old Testament, you will find that "bris" does not mean a set of laws, but rather, a creation of a bond, a creation of a closer relationship. Thus, the Christian interpretation, which justifies a new set of laws (Christians do not keep kosher, observe the Sabbath, tithe correctly, or observe Biblical Festivals like Yom Kippur, etc.), is built on a false premise in the first place. One only need look at Genesis 9:12; God is not commanding the animals; He is creating a relationship with them. Again look at Genesis 15: 18; there is no set of laws being commanded to Abraham or changed. Again if one only look at Deut. 7:2 God is telling His Jewish people to not create a close relationship with the pagans who lived near them. If we look to Jeremiah himself, in 22:9 we see how Israel broke their close relationship with God and worshipped other Gods instead. If it meant, because they broke the laws, then why specify that they also worshipped other Gods? It would be as if one would say that not only did you murder, but you also robbed! Look at these verses and you will see that a "brie"—a covenant, never refers to a set of laws, and so most Christians are really misinterpreting this issue.

Before we move on to another "proof," there is another important point to be made. It seems clear from the entire Torah that something essential is missing, because if you carefully examine it, it is not very precise at all. For example, look at the Ten Commandments in Exodus, chapter 20. It says that one should not do any work on the Sabbath—but it does not define work, and nowhere in the Torah does it explicitly define what constitutes "work."

Answer for yourself: How then does one know how to obey this law? It says "*honor your father and mother*"—but how does one do that?

Answer for yourself: Must a person obey his parents' wishes that he marry someone who he hates but his parents like?

Answer for yourself: Must he or she reject a job that his or her parents dislike but he or she desires it?

Answer for yourself: Must a child stand up every time a parent walks into the room?

You see, there is no real guideline here. If you say, use common sense, that does not help. Many people have a different feeling for what is "common" sense, and therefore you cannot really know if your conclusion is, in fact, the will of God. It does not make sense to claim that God commanded such vague and obscure guidelines. Even the next few laws are unclear. "*Thou shall not murder*".

Answer for yourself: How do you define murder?

If the state allows a type of killing, such as ancient Greece allowing defective children to be left to die on a mountain, is that no longer murder?

Answer for yourself: Is it murder to kill an unborn child, or is it murder only if the child is born? Should 10 seconds determine if it is permissible to kill a child within a mother's birth canal or not to kill it once it exits?

This analysis can be done with virtually every law in the Torah, and so one is faced with the following choice: either God commanded obscure guidelines (and that does not seem quite God-like, since even we mortals are sure to give very precise commands to our own children), or else He defined each law, but did not put it down on paper. Jewish tradition says that the second choice is, in fact, what happened. God defined each law, and taught his definition to Noah and Moses, who in turn taught the rest of world and the Jews. This oral definition of the Torah (written law) became known as the Oral Law. In Deuteronomy 17:8-13, the Jews were also commanded that if a doubt were to arise in any area of Jewish Law, they should go to the Sanhedrin, the high court, and what the Sanhedrin interprets the law to be, will become, in fact, the will of God. (That is how the Oral Law understands those verses.

This is actually, historically, how the Jews functioned in classical times. Even the New Testament agrees that that is how the Jewish society was run; i.e., under the Sanhedrin. So now we have a basic question which is extremely basic and crucial.

Answer for yourself: If, as history and the New Testament agree, the vast majority of Jews, and the Sanhedrin, rejected Yeshua as the real Messiah due to failure to fulfill necessary Old Testament prophecies, and the Sanhedrin thought that Yeshua did not fit the qualifications for being a bona-fide Messiah, according to its interpretation of the Bible, then should we follow the opinion of the Sanhedrin?

This is merely a matter of interpreting Jeremiah 31 or Isaiah 53, etc., and when it comes to Biblical interpretation, we are commanded by God to follow the Sanhedrin. Once your study of the New Testament reveals to you “fulfilled” New Testament prophecies are nothing more than purposeful mistranslations, misquotations, and misapplication of Jewish Scriptures wrestled out of context to create “fulfilled contexts” will you then see for yourself why the Jews yet wait for their Messiah. I have seen this for myself and no longer can say definitely that Yeshua “was” the Messiah. He simply did not fulfill the necessary prophecies according to the Jewish Scriptures. Fulfillment of “misquotations” and “mistranslation” does not make for a Messiah! If you continue your study you will see this and our web site details these things for all to see.

Both the Sanhedrin as well as the majority of Jews who lived *at the time of Yeshua* rejected him, according to Paul in Acts 13:46, and they rejected the Christian interpretations of the Bible. Without serious study you will never see these things for yourself because the “flawed” document you carry, the New Testament, only rehearses error over and over.

Answer for yourself: How, then, is any Jew permitted to accept Christian interpretation today? He simply cannot.

Answer for yourself: How, then, is any non-Jew permitted to accept Christian interpretation today? He should not as well but cannot without serious study to prove to himself the deceptions of what I speak.

Answer for yourself: Could a person also accept Christian interpretations of how to honor one's parents? Not if he knew the Hebrew interpretation.

Answer for yourself: Would it also be permitted to accept the Christian interpretation of "do not murder?" Again, not if he knew the Jewish interpretation as well as the Rabbis who consider failure to feed the poor “murder” as well.

Always remember that the Church initiated the Crusades, during which thousands of Jews were killed in the name of Yeshua. In addition, remember that the Church was against the shedding of blood because of the command, "*Thou shalt not murder.*" Therefore, during the Inquisition, the Church killed thousands of Jews who had been forced to convert by *burning* them, sometimes *alive*, so that no blood would be spilled! The Christian interpretation was that it was wrong to spill or shed blood, but strangling or burning was permitted. That is one of the reasons why they burned people at the stake.

Answer for yourself: Thus, that is the choice—who is to interpret the Bible, and that is the question—why did almost all of the Jews reject Yeshua as the Messiah and the Christian interpretations of the Bible as well? For the same reasons you now see concerning the “New Covenant”. Except for a small fringe movement within Judaism who considered themselves the fulfillment of the “New Covenant”, the Jews in mass knew better. The world had not changed. The Essenes and their apocalyptic theology was totally discredited! Their theology lives on in the New Testament.

Answer for yourself: Should this Essene theology in the New Testament be totally discredited as well?

You should be getting the answer to that by now.

One of the reasons for your agreement is that you are coming to see that many of the Christian interpretations

of the Bible are forced, if not ludicrous, but you can decide that for yourself, so continue to read. Over time Bet Emet Ministries will analyze many more interpretations and translations from the New Testament which are not only taken out of context, but distorted on purpose. **The Jews never had the concept of a second coming for their Messiah, and since it was the Jews themselves who first taught the notion of a Messiah, via the Jewish prophets, it seems quite reasonable to respect their opinion more than anyone else's.** It was the Christians who were changing the status quo, and so they ought to have very substantial reasons for doing so as shared in this article. As you will see, their reasons and proofs are not substantial at all, and they therefore have yet to justify their change of the status quo. It is time someone told you the truth. But few have studied deeply enough to find such mistakes. To God be the glory for showing His remnant the truth. **Repentance from a false religious belief system is in order.**

SO IF WE ARE NOT UNDER A NEW COVENANT YET...WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO ME A TYPICAL CHRISTIAN?

The answer to the above question I hope will startle you. If, as I have labored to show you, that there is not yet this "New Covenant," then we are under the "Old Covenant". To believe you are under a "non-existent" New Covenant and reject the Old Covenant (containing the covenants of Noah and Moses which contained the stipulations of maintaining good standing within them), and the Laws of Noah within it which were given to the non-Jews of the world, means you are standing outside the Covenant with God! You as a Christian have no Covenant with God at all since you reject the only one given to you by God. Thanks Paul!

For a Jew they are responsible for 613 Commands or Laws. For the non-Jew he is responsible for 66 of them under the heading of the Laws of Noah. Of course Isaiah 58 teaches the non-Jew to "choose those things pleasing to God and to take hold of His Sabbaths." These are opportunities for the non-Jew to rise above the minimum in his relationship with God. The bottom line is that we get to, don't have to. Such is an expression of our love for God.

Within these commands are laws regulating the worship of God in certain ways which the Christian Church has rejected. Within these commands are laws regulating how you are to give your money and tithes which are also a form of worship of God; by in large Christianity rejects these today. Within these commands are laws regulating sanctifying the Name of the Lord which every Christian breaks without knowing daily. Literally Christianity profanes the Name of the Lord day after day. Breaking this pattern of worship means we worship in vain since you don't follow the commandments of God for worship within the Covenant He gave you. As Christians you do your own thing outside the Covenant God gave you just like Nadab and Abihu did. God killed them in their first "church" service...remember? Under the only covenant there is no license to worship some "new" way. Such is sin. Thanks Constantine!

Within these commands are laws requiring the Tithe to be given a certain way and the money spent only in certain ways on certain things. Today no church follows such laws. That means if you give your Tithe to the church and they don't obey the commands of the only Covenant in existence then you are robbing God and don't know it since you really don't have a license to do it any other "new" way. Such is sin.

Within these commands are laws requiring certain Holy Days be observed and kept by non-Jews and the Christian Church not only has labeled them as "passed-away" but tragically replaced them with pagan holidays to which Yeshua's name has been affixed. To adhere to a Christianized paganism is sin. Thanks Rome.

Within these commands are laws forbidding the worship of anything or anyone other than Yahweh. The Christian Church made Yeshua a God in the 4th century and those who worship him are idolaters. Remember they changed the text of the New Testament documents to agree with their developing theology as charted from Catholic Church Council to Council. This is a fact. Prove it wrong...you cannot if you look. Such is sin.

Answer for yourself: One last question. Have you ever read Jer. 31 closely for yourself and seen that when this "New Covenant" (RENEWED IN HEBREW) occurs that God says in Jer. 31:33: **But this shall be the covenant**

that I will make with the house of Israel; After those days, saith the LORD, I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts; and will be their God, and they shall be My people.

Answer for yourself: As a typical Christian, under "grace and not under the Law according to Paul's gospel" are you perplexed how Paul could say such a thing or feel comfortable being in a "NEW" covenant which rejects wholeheartedly the Laws of God which is the context of the original Jeremiah quote?

Answer for yourself: How comfortable can you be knowing this now and that Christianity follows Paul more than Yeshua?

Answer for yourself: Do you again see how Jeremiah is again misquoted in the New Testament over and over again, from the Gospels to Hebrews by omitting the conditions for such a Renewed Covenant or New Covenant (the adherence to the Laws of God)?

Answer for yourself: Do you realize that acceptance of Christianity's New Covenant and New Testament means in reality that you have removed yourself out from under the ONLY Covenant God made with mankind and literally makes you not one of His people?

Answer for yourself: How comfortable are you now once this information sets in and you understand the gravity of the situation? Want to go to your Gentile Church and hear more lies? I never knew any of this either until I studied my blessed assurance off! And you should know it too!

I could go on but you get the point. It is way past time you recognize that the only thing "new" under the sun is the false religious belief system which supports Christianity today. Shalom.

More to follow!



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AS A CHRISTIAN DO YOU KNOW WHICH COVENANT YOUR UNDER? #4

Answer for yourself: Christians are constantly attesting that they are under a "New Covenant"...are they really?

Answer for yourself: Is it possible that due to their lack of scholarship that they are mistaken and have relied on emotionalism rather than textual facts from the Bible which, when recognized, dispute their claim?

In the previous articles in this series I have demonstrated that there were a series of Covenants made with mankind which God sanctioned as written in the Jewish Scriptures. If you have been an astute reader you have noticed a progression of revelation given to mankind as contained in such succession of Covenants and Covenant stipulations. Of importance to us in this pursuit of truth one should notice that within the Laws of Moses and the Covenant with Moses is contained the Laws of Noah from the Covenant of Noah. In a real way the Covenant of Noah is reiterated almost entirely in the Laws of Moses and the Covenant of Moses; although with some minor changes. Once this is understood it has startling repercussions to Christianity today which denies the validity of the Laws of Moses all the while not understanding that within them were Laws given to "ALL" non-Jews and Gentiles long before there were sons of Jacob or "Jews". And let us not forget that the Covenants of God are "eternal". This means when reading the Old Testament or even the New Testament that if a non-Jewish Christian reads such references to "the Law" and thinks that they have no bearing upon the non-Jew and "ONLY" the Jew then he makes a critical mistake and such failure to understand such dynamics I guarantee leads to erroneous conducts and behaviors in the life of the non-Jewish believer and God considers much of such "behaviors" sin. This is the warning I bring and the information and facts concerning this important topic prove the point. Coupled with this, in the last article I demonstrated beyond any doubt that the "new" Covenant referenced by Jeremiah has absolutely nothing to do with what the Christian of today calls his "new covenant". Literally the Gentile Christian church has attached the word "new" as borrowed from Jeremiah to their lawlessness of today and in reality by rejecting the only Covenant given by God to them they stand apart from God without a Covenant. When these facts of Biblical language and history become apparent to you, as well as when you come to grips with the facts of the credibility of the "New Testament" which gives false assurance to many by rejecting the only valid Covenants given to the non-Jewish believer and then substituting a Roman lie for it, then the horror of your disobedience toward God and shame of the false religious belief system which has entrapped you should bring you to your knees in tearful repentance. Only then can it be said of you that you are not far from the Kingdom of God. But understand being close to the Kingdom of God means a total separation from the Kingdom of Babylon's false religion as well as the Kingdom of Rome's pagan religion; both of which rejected the only true religion given by God to mankind as detailed in the Old Testament which has Covenants first for non-Jews and then for Jews which had a higher revelation. Such is the tragic consequences of anti-Semitism and you have been mired in it your whole life as a Christian whether you knew it or not.

Again, one of the main reasons you have not seen such for yourself is not only because you have failed to study in detail your faith and have taken almost everything by "faith"; never believing for one moment that

you were not being taught "truth". Coupled with this also comes the failure of the Gentle Church to teach the Jewish Scriptures correctly.

JEREMIAH 31:30-33...HAS THE GENTILE CHURCH TAUGHT IT CORRECTLY?

No!!!!!!! Let me show you why. First read the passage.

[30] Behold, days are coming -- the word of *HASHEM* -- when I will seal a new covenant with the House of Israel and with the House of Judah: [31] not like the covenant that I sealed with their forefathers on the day that I took hold of their hand to take them out of the land of Egypt, for they abrogated My covenant, although I became heir Master --the word of *HASHEM*. [32] For this is the covenant that I shall seal with the House of Israel after those days -- the word of *HASHEM* -- I will place My Torah within them and I will write it onto their heart; I will be God for them and they will be a people for Me. [33] They will no longer teach -- each man his fellow, each man his brother -- saying, "Know *HASHEM*!" For all of them will know Me, from their smallest to their greatest -- the word of *HASHEM* -- when I will forgive their iniquity and will no longer recall their sin.

Christians use verses 30 and 31 to 'prove' to us that God promised that the Torah will be replaced by a "New" Torah, the Christian New Testament. But the verse simply does not say that; in fact it says just the opposite! Let me prove it to you!

First of all the Strong's definition for the word used by Jeremiah..."new":

The Strong's # is 2319 chadash (khaw-dawsh');

from 2318; new:

First of all notice that Strong's Lexicon lists a root word as well as a derivative word as used in the verse at hand. First, the translation of " 2319:

KJV-- fresh, new thing.

This is too ambiguous to say the least and we learn nothing from this, but if we look at the "root" word we glean terrific knowledge...let us see.

The Strong's # for the "root" word is 2318 chadash (khaw-dash');

a primitive root; to be new; causatively, to rebuild:

KJV-- renew, repair.

Answer for yourself: Did you notice that the "root" word for "new" as used in Jer. 31 means "renew, repair, rebuild" and not "replaced"?

Well someone needs to tell the author of the Book of Hebrews because when he quotes this verse he uses a word in the Greek which does not carry the concept of "renew, repair, or rebuild" but one which carries the idea of "new" as in replaced. Such a reference in the Book of Hebrews is not the concept Jeremiah conveys and to say differently is to deceive the reader as well as "adding to and taking away" from the Word of God! You end up with the idea that you have a Covenant today of grace only which replaces the prior Covenants which contained laws and commandments...for right standing with God....such is simply not true!

And by the way this is not the end of the deceptions in the New Testament but only the beginning.

Answer for yourself: So is the view held by Gentile and Messianic Christianity correct which sees that they have

a completely "new" Covenant which has replaced the prior Covenants of God which contain Covenant stipulations in the form of laws and Commandments for right standing for God? No way and an educated reading of the New Testament will show you how the early church was still zealous for the Law and the Covenant which continued them long after the cross of Yeshua. Yeshua's death for them did not bring them a "new" replacement Covenant as you have been taught today...see Acts 21:20 just for one example:

Acts 21:20

20 And when they heard it, they glorified the Lord, and said unto him, Thou seest, brother, how many thousands of Jews there are which believe; and they are all zealous of the law:

Let us remember that this is around twenty-five years after Yeshua's death and it is plainly evident that James, the senior pastor of the Yeshua's church as well as others did not believe what we have been fed by Pauline Christianity today. See it for yourself as your study increases.

Also notice in the verses Christianity uses to claim their "new" Covenant that the Covenant Jeremiah speaks of is to be made with the House of Israel and the House of Judah. You should ask yourself when was the last time your church or Pastor preached to you a sermon on how you, as a Gentile Christian, fits into the House of Israel or the House of Judah. Probably never! I dare say if you ask a Southern Baptist, or a Catholic such a question he would not have the slightest idea of what you speak of because they find their identity within their denomination and do not consider themselves as part of "Israel". They fail to realize that not only the Old Testament, New Testament, and Biblical history teaches that non-Jews are "grafted" into the Israel of God, but being so related means that they are responsible to find their identity not in one of the 2000 different Christian denominations today but in the Covenant of God as given to them in the Old Testament...the Covenant of Noah. And besides that, I find it amazing how a Gentile Christian can claim for himself such a "new" Covenant of Jeremiah when it was "ONLY" to be made with both Houses of Israel and not with foreign nations. The non-Jews and foreign nations of the world find their standing with God again in their Covenant with God and we look to the light of the world, the Israel of God, to be the repository of knowledge of God for the world. It is from Israel and their scholars we find how we, as non-Jewish believers, are to be accepted with God. It is time for the Christian Church to realize the light to the nations yet shines and a Hebraic understanding of their faith is necessary and without it we non-Jews stumble in the darkness of anti-Semitism forged long ago by which we have lost our way. Sadly it takes our death to correct us for most find no reason to study while alive or to even question their faith. Too many good Christian people accept "the fruit of anti-Semitism" for Biblical truth today and only find out their errors when they die and receive a cosmic correction.

THE REST OF THE JEREMIAH PROPHECY.....

We have so far examined the first two verses of the Jeremiah 31 prophecy which Christians quote relentlessly for their authority to stand apart from the Covenant God gave them. However, consider the ignored half of this prophecy: verses 32 and 33. **The "new" covenant of which Jeremiah speaks is not a new Torah, but that the Torah, the original Torah, and it is this "re-newed" and "repaired" Torah which will be placed in the hearts of the children of God and everyone in the world will know HASHEM.**

Every Christian should awake and take notice of what comes next as it has earth-shaking implications for the typical Gentile Christian.

Jer 31:33

33 But this shall be the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel; After those days, saith the LORD, I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts; and will be their God, and they shall be my people. (KJV)

Notice this "new" Covenant which Christians claim is their authority for their faith states that God, in this Covenant, will put HIS LAW in the inward parts of His children. Notice also that these LAWS will be written in

their hearts of God's people and the consequence of this action makes one in relationship with God and such a one is called the "people" of God.

Answer for yourself: As a non-Jewish believer, having been given the Covenant of Noah with the Laws of Noah, and as reiterated by James in the Acts 15 Church Council where he states that these were "necessary " and which "seemed good to the Holy Ghost", then I ask you how many of the 66 Laws of Noah do you know by heart?

Answer for yourself: Do you think this has any bearing on your relationship with God and your standing before God, or does your relationship with your denomination or your Pastor hold more weight for you? How anyone can see this in the text for themselves and then deny it in their experience is beyond me, but I see too many people who do so. It is as if what the Jewish Scriptures, the Jewish Bible Yeshua used, means nothing to them. It is as if their experience holds for them more authority for their religious beliefs than the text correctly interpreted. This is foolishness and not the actions of a "thinking" believer.

Let us examine the word used by Jeremiah in v. 33 for "law":

The Hebrew word for "law" as used in verse 33 of Jeremiah 31 is as follows:

8451 towrah (to-law') Strong's Numbers

or torah (to-law'); from 3384; a precept or statute, especially the Decalogue or Pentateuch (1st 5 books of the Old Testament)

KJV-- law.

law, direction, instruction

a) instruction, direction (human or divine)

1) the body of prophetic teaching

2) instruction in the Messianic age

3) the body of priestly direction or instruction

4) the body of legal directives

b) law

1) law of the burnt-offering

2) used of special law, codes of law

c) custom, manner

d) the Deuteronomic or Mosaic Law

What you have to remember in reading the above definitions for the various meanings for "law" in the Hebrew is that contained in this "instruction, prophetic teachings, priestly instruction, legal directives, codes of law, customs, manners, and Mosaic Law" are the Laws of Noah which were the foundation stipulations for the non-Jew in his Covenant with God!

Answer for yourself: Don't you think it rather strange as a typical Christian which has been fed Pauline Christianity his whole life and his "gospel", that you find yourself under grace and not under Law today; that this "New Covenant" which you look to for your authority in reality consists of the Laws God put in one's heart

which you have been told you are not under by your Pastor?

Answer for yourself: If the Christian New Testament was really the fulfillment of this prophecy, why are there so many atheists in the world when Jeremiah tells us that when this New Covenant occurs all in the world will know God?

Answer for yourself: Why do Christians spend millions of dollars to missionize, if according to the New Covenant of Jeremiah which Christians claim as their present Covenant and which they believe has already started, that all in the world will have already come to "know" God when this Covenant of Jer. 31 begins?

Nobody is supposed to say "Know HASHEM," because everyone will know Him, according to verse 33. It seems that the missionization of the Christian Church is one of the greatest witnesses against the beginning of the Covenant of Jeremiah let alone the doctrine of the Christian Church which prides itself not being under the Law.

Answer for yourself: How can you continue to profess you are a "New" Covenant believer when you see such evidence to the contrary?

Answer for yourself: How can this New Covenant be in effect today with such facts witness against it?

NECESSITY IS THE MOTHER OF INVENTION FOR THE CHRISTIAN CHURCH

The Christian may attempt to answer that verses 32 and 33 are talking about the second coming of Yeshua yet future, but it's absurd to say that there is at least a 2,000 year gap between verses 31 and 32. There is no indication of this gap in the text, quite the opposite, in fact. It appears as one prophecy. The Christian answer is illogical, and born of desperation.

Understand that it's okay for the Bible to predict an event to happen 2,000 years later. The issue is **splitting a prophecy**. The prophecy of verse 32 continues in verse 33, and the entire prophecy should happen at once. Christians, when confronted with such conflicts within their religious belief system maintain that verse 32 was fulfilled thousands of years ago, but verse 33 is yet to be fulfilled. There is no reason to assume that God intended these 2 verses to be different prophecies, separated by 2,000+ years.

WHAT ARE WE TOLD TO EXPECT: NEW LAWS OR NEW RELATIONSHIP?

Secondly, verses 31 and 32 of Jeremiah chapter 31 do not speak of a new Torah, but a new 'Briss' (or 'Brit' in other Hebrew dialects).

Let us examine the Hebrew meaning for the word "briss", **but also remember that we have already seen that "new" means "renewed, rebuilt, repaired"**.

The Strong's # is 1285 beriyth (ber-eeth');

from 1262 (in the sense of cutting [like 1254]); a compact (because made by passing between pieces of flesh): - confederacy, [con-] feder [-ate], covenant, league.

1) covenant, alliance, pledge

a) between men

1) a treaty, an alliance, a league (man to man)

2) a constitution, an ordinance (monarch to subjects)

3) an agreement, a pledge (man to man)

4) an alliance (used of friendship)

5) an alliance (used of marriage)

b) between God and man

1) an alliance (used of friendship)

2) a covenant (divine ordinance with signs or pledges)

2) (phrases)

a) covenant making

b) covenant keeping

c) covenant violation

Answer for yourself: What is strangely lacking from this Hebrew definition for "covenant"? Give up?

There is not one mention of the Law or Laws of God.

A Briss is not a set of laws, but a treaty, an agreement, a covenant. If the word was intended to mean 'Torah,' the word 'Torah' would have been used in verse 32. It was not! **We never find the word Briss to refer to Torah/Laws/Commandments. God is not giving anyone "NEW LAWS" OR "CHANGING LAWS" OR "ABOLISHING LAWS"!!!!!!!!!!**

Answer for yourself: So is God telling us through Jeremiah that He is rescinding the previous Law or Laws to give us "new" ones or the "lack" of them? Not at all. To attribute that this is the meaning of the passage goes great injustice to the revelation of God through the prophet Jeremiah. **In fact to do so is to create a new religion other than that given to all mankind by God and this is exactly what Gentile Christianity has done whether you know it or not!**

Dear one, you just read for yourself that God is "renewing" and "reestablishing" and "repairing" the SAME COVENANTS containing the SAME Laws! God is "replacing" NOTHING! Rome did that already and you have fallen victim to such deception.

CHRISTIANITY OF COURSE DISAGREES....BUT IT IS WRONG!

According to the Christian 'proof,' Briss must mean Torah. You need to recognize that if Briss could mean something else, like 'treaty,' there is no longer a proof from here to their New Testament. **Understand that in order to live by a "new" set of laws whereby you live by grace and not by Law, then it becomes necessary to replace the first Law given by God in order to have a "new" Law that replaces it.** Thus the need to define "bris" as law instead of relationship and Gentile Christianity does just that; just read some Christian commentators.

Let's use the Christian's definition of 'Briss' as "law" and see if there were any other Torahs that were given as well (besides the Tanach and the Christian New Testament). After each example ask yourself: Does this make sense? If you find that it does not make sense, then be fully persuaded that the Christian definition is wrong and their theology in such issues as well.

- *God gave a Torah (LAW) to the animals (Gen 9:12)*
- *God gave a Torah (LAW) to Abraham (Genesis 15:18)*
- *God gave one Torah (LAW) to Abraham, one Torah (LAW) Isaac, and yet another one (LAW) to Jacob (Leviticus 26:42)*
- *God gave yet another Torah(LAW) to Phinehas (Numbers 25:12)*

Let me conclude this short article with a summary statement. **If, as Christianity professes, that we are under a New Covenant, understand that nowhere within it, according to Jer. 31, are the Laws of God replaced with new laws whereby the older Laws have ceased to be required by God.** The only thing is this, and this I hope will shock you: this "new" relationship God desires to have with His people is one whereby they observe and keep the laws of God which are written on their hearts (heart in Hebrew is the mind), and I found it rather hard to keep the laws of God in my mind while in a church because they were never taught.

Answer for yourself: How is it possible that God writes His Laws on our hearts and minds yet we don't know them or ever have heard of them before?

Notice the Hebrew word for "heart" in Jeremiah 31:33 is Strong's # 3820:

3820 leb-

the inner man, the mind, the will, the heart, understanding the inner part, the midst

- 1) the midst (of things)
- 2) the heart (of man)
- 3) the soul, the heart (of man)
- 4) the mind, knowledge, the thinking, reflection, the memory
- 5) inclination, resolution, determination (of will)
- 6) the conscience
- 7) the heart (used of moral character)
- 8) as the seat of the appetites
- 9) as seat of the emotions and the passions
- 10) as the seat of the courage

Notice again that God is to write the Laws of His Covenant on the mind of the believer. That means that one who is under this "New" Covenant of Jer. 31 would have the knowledge of the Laws of his respective Covenant. The fact that few don't even know that they are under the Covenant of Noah and not the "New" Covenant of Jer. 31 testifies to the failure of the implementation of Jeremiah's New Covenant for the non-Jew. Right now you should stop and ask yourself before God how many of the 66 Laws of Noah do you know and observe. If you are embarrassed by your answer then it is time for you to begin a serious study of your faith to make sure you don't die and stand before God ashamed, which you will do unless you discover the truth about your relationship with God and cast off the lies.

Not only that but I found myself brainwashed repeatedly by being continually taught that we were no longer under the law, but under grace. Yet all the while we as Pastors reassured the people that they are under a "New" Covenant with God, when the stark reality of it to me today, is that ignorantly we repudiated the ONLY COVENANT which Gentile mankind ever had by nullifying the Laws of God as contained in the Covenant of

Noah both in belief and conduct. And this primarily can be blamed on a New Testament which continually misquotes, mistranslates, and takes the Jewish Scriptures out of context in order to pervert the truth whereby they appeal to Jewish Prophetic authority incorrectly for credibility for their false doctrines. May God forgive us for not loving Him more whereby we study sufficiently to see these tragic mistakes which capture good people who love God, but in the sad and final result, make them law-breakers as well as covenant-breakers and literally render them without a valid Covenant with God. You may be in Covenant with your church or Pastor but not in Covenant with God and you need to know this before you die and meet your Covenant Creator. Don't you want to know the truth before you die?

It sure looks to me like God never intended to replace His Covenant with His people but only to renew it by writing the Laws of God on the hearts of believers. This "re-newed" covenant has not been written on the hearts of all men yet, mainly because of the vast numbers of Christians world-wide numbering in the billions who teach contrary to the Word of God and don't espouse the Law at all, but rather operate counter productively to God by denying the Law and advocating instead that "they are no longer under the Law (Covenant renewed ...remember?) but under grace. May God forgive us for hindering the Kingdom of God coming to all mankind.

Answer for yourself: Now do you think that the New Covenant has really began yet? Better reconsider.

Answer for yourself: Then to what covenant should the Christian look for his relationship with God?

I have already told you if you have been listening. Shalom.



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AS A CHRISTIAN DO YOU KNOW WHICH COVENANT YOUR UNDER? #5

HAS THE "NEW" COVENANT OF CHRISTIANITY REPLACED THE "OLD" COVENANT YET? WILL IT EVER?

Interesting question if I might say so. We have thus far seen that the Covenants of God are "eternal" and that even the word Jeremiah used for "new" meant repaired, renewed, restores, rebuilt and not "replaced". Over and over again we have witness to the fact that the Words of God are eternal and must agree with Yeshua when he said:

Matt 5:18

18 For verily I say unto you, Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled. (KJV)

Let us say again that it is this "Law" which is composed of Covenant stipulations from both the Covenant of Noah and the Covenant of Moses which are themselves comprised of individual laws and Commandments for both non-Jew and Jew. This is a fact I have demonstrated to you beyond any doubt so we must deal with it even if it opposes our current Christian belief system.

Now let us look at a recurrent truths throughout the Bible that attests to the fact that God's Word and His Covenants are eternal. Here are some verse which show that the covenant of God will never end no matter who interprets the New Testament in English thereby misunderstanding the Greek under the English or regardless of Catholic Church Councils and their perverted doctrines which have been handed down to us today as "Protestant" doctrines. I challenge you to read the following verses and then answer them with "no that is not true!"

(Ecc 13:14)"Whatever God decrees shall be forever; nothing shall be added to it nothing shall be taken away."

(Is 40:18)" The word of the L-rd shall stand firm forever"

(Num 19:21) "and it shall be law for all time"

(Num 15:14)". . .There shall be one law for you and for the Ger (Convert), it shall be a law for all time throughout the ages."

(Num 15:21) "You shall make a gift to the L-rd from the first yield of your baking, throughout the ages"

(Ex 31:16) "The Israelites people shall keep the Shabbat, observing the Shabbat throughout the ages as a covenant fro all time."

(Dt 4:2) "Every word which the I command you. You shall observe and do Thou shalt not add unto it nor diminish it"

(Ps 119)..."The whole psalm"

(Dt 4:40) "Observe His laws and commandments, which I enjoin upon you this day, that it may go well with you and your children after you and you may live in the land that the L-rd your God is assigning to you for all time."

(Num 15:23) "All that the L-rd commanded you by the hand of Moses from the day that the L-rd gave commandments and onward throughout your generations."

(Ex 12:17) "And you shall observe the (commandment of) Unleavened bread . . .you shall observe this day throughout your generations as an ordinance forever."

(Is 49:14) " But Zion says, The L-rd has forsaken me, and my L-rd has forgotten me. Can a woman forget her sucking child, that she should not have compassion on the son of her womb? Yes, even they may forget, but I will not forget you".

(Mal 3:6) "For I am the LORD, I change not; therefore ye sons of Jacob are not consumed."

Answer for yourself: Were you able to answer "no that is not true" to any of the above passages?

Answer for yourself: Did you notice what all the above passages had in common? Well if you did not let me tell you that each one stressed the "eternalness" of God's Word which changes not. When God makes a Covenant He makes a Covenant forever. This is seen in Acts 15 when the followers of Yeshua made reference to the Laws of Noah for the non-Jews where were becoming to faith in God through the ministry of Paul who was preaching "Christ crucified". Twenty-five years after the death of Yeshua his followers were still appealing to the Laws of Noah for non-Jewish believers. Evidently the Pastor of Yeshua's church and his other followers they did not believe Yeshua's death or resurrection changed anything let alone the Covenants of God. These believers in Acts 21:21 were yet zealous for the Law and the Covenant stipulations long after Yeshua's death. Notice they did not have a belief in Pauline theology that they were no longer under the law but under grace. Let us face it; these first Jewish follower of Yeshua knew him and his teaching much better than Paul who never met him and only referred to just 2 of Yeshua's teachings in all of his epistles.

Answer for yourself: Now, in light of these passages don't you think, as a "New" Testament Christian you better begin a diligent study of your Covenant or lack of one and finally be able to know the truth from error... especially before you die and meet your Covenant maker?

More to come....Shalom.



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AS A CHRISTIAN DO YOU KNOW WHICH COVENANT YOUR UNDER? #6

We finished the prior article proving beyond a shadow of doubt that the Word of the Lord is eternal and lasts forever. Let me refresh our memory by quoting only two verses on this subject:

(Ecc 13:14) "Whatever God decrees shall be forever; nothing shall be added to it nothing shall be taken away."

(Is 40:18)" The word of the L-rd shall stand firm forever"

If you remember we have stated previously:

- That **one's place in God's plan is established on the basis of Covenant and that the Covenant requires as the proper response of man his obedience to its commandments.**
- We have repeatedly shown you the fallacies of the Christian's belief that he is under any "New" Covenant and shown you that the Covenant of Jeremiah 31 refers to a "Re-Newed" and "Re-Established" Covenant which requires the writing of the Laws and Torah of God on the minds and hearts of its adherents.
- In reality the Christian is under the Covenant of Noah and does not know it because of the erroneous and shallow teachings of the Gentile Christian Church. Not knowing the non-Jew's Covenant before God is responsible for Christianity's false teachings which causes its devotees to live a life of continued disobedience to his Covenant stipulations; thereby without knowing causing him to live in sin because his Christian religious beliefs system and life-style violates and breaks many of his Covenant stipulations without even knowing.

The failure to study in detail has robbed the Christian of his ability to read the Bible with understanding whereby he could recognize certain "signposts"; like Acts 15 for example, where the church of Yeshua endorses as "necessary" and as being "good to the Holy Ghost" that non-Jewish believers in God through Yeshua's ministry observe these Laws of Noah. There are 66 of them; many of which are broken continually by a Christian's religious belief system. Notice that the death of Yeshua had no bearing on the Covenant of Noah and its Covenant requirements for Gentiles which had existed for thousands of years previously as James, the head pastor of the Jerusalem Church, reiterates these Laws and does not abolish or change them.

The Christian Church of today for the most part is totally in the dark about what I have just shown you. Yet if we paid attention to the Covenant of Noah and were familiar with its 66 subsets of Laws in detail then when we read the Old Testament and concern ourselves with references to the non-Jew then we would more easily see "bridges" between these Old Testament references and Covenant stipulations from the Covenant of Noah. Added with this is the ability of the non-Jew to go beyond the "minimum" requirements of his Covenant and "choose" those things pleasing to God contained outside the Covenant of Noah. This has major implications today since the Jew and the non-Jew are to be united as the peoples of God. Later we will see how this principle works in detail as I will present to you the problem at Antioch as we see how Paul was failing to teach the Laws of Noah correctly to his Gentile followers and was severely rebuked by the men from James as recorded by himself in Galatians 2. Understand that this incident of Paul's deviation from Covenant stipulations to the Gentiles precipitated the Acts 15 Council where James made his ruling that the non-Jews were to be taught the

Covenant of Noah along with its laws for inclusion into the Israel of God and all this was done long after Yeshua's death.

Answer for yourself: Do you believe Ecc 13:14 when it states "Whatever God decrees shall be forever; nothing shall be added to it nothing shall be taken away"?

Answer for yourself: Do you believe Is 40:18 when its says "The word of the L-rd shall stand firm forever"?

Then if you do let us look in-depth before going on in our study of Covenants at some of the **examples of non-Jews in the Old Testament and how God expected they relate to the Israel of God an ultimately to Him**. What is important for you to discern as you read the following is if these example were changed by the death of Yeshua and if not then you should ask yourself if your faith causes you to practice the same today. Remember as well that James attests in Acts 15 that the Laws of Noah and the Covenant of Noah had not changed twenty-five years after Yeshua's death, and this being so, has important implications as you read the following examples of non-Jewish believers in the Old Testament.

A LITTLE BACKGROUND BEFORE WE START

A "Gentile" is a term signifying a non-Jew, who is not a "son of the covenant" and is only subject to the seven Noachide Laws.

Once a Gentile came to the understanding of the one true God, he would turn from idols and worship the God of Israel. These were the "God fearers", who accepted certain basic Jewish obligations along with the Noachide precepts. According to this, idolatry, shedding of blood, and grave sexual sins were forbidden to Gentile believers. These were originally the Noachide precepts accepted also by the Synagogue on which the Gentiles were obliged. Let me remind you that we see in Acts 15 (at least 25 years after the death of Jesus) the admonition for the Gentiles to adhere to Noachide Laws to be accepted in the believing community of Israel. It is logical that the Apostolic Church of Jerusalem should accept the view of the Synagogue on the conditions which Gentiles needed to fulfill in order to be saved. It can be easily shown that the fulfillment of other commandments of Judaism were not prohibited to Gentiles. On the contrary, **the Noachide precepts were only seen as the minimal condition for Gentiles to be recognized as God-fearers. These were so understood by the God-fearers themselves, who were attracted to the Jewish way of life and accepted many Jewish commandments without becoming full proselytes (Sabbath, festivals, etc).** This was also the attitude of Christian God-fearers, as may be seen from the Epistle to the Galatians; many of them wished to observe as many Jewish precepts as they could. This did not please Paul but that is too bad. It is evident that, while the leadership of the Mother Church decided to lay no burden upon the Gentile believers beyond the Noachide precepts, it did not object to their voluntarily observing more (Col. 2:16-17). Among the figures of the early Church who instructed Gentile Christians to observe more precepts than these essential ones was Peter, as we know from Paul's criticism of him for demanding that Gentiles live like Jews (Gal. 2:14). Rather than interpreting the apostolic decree as a minimum, Paul saw in the Noachide precepts the maximal obligations of Gentile Christians. **Rather than Peter being incorrect, a more comprehensive understanding of the Bible reveals Paul to be incorrect. But the view presented in the Roman New Testament is slanted by Rome's anti-Semitism to say the least and is historically inaccurate as we will see in our Antioch studies which are soon to follow.**

The liberation of Gentile Christianity from the yoke of Jewish commandments was a necessary step in order for Christianity to become a Gentile religion, separate from Judaism. It is impossible to know whether Paul was aware that by his "Gospel" he helped to achieve this aim in that he does not speak explicitly about the necessity of separating Christianity from its Jewish roots and he never says that this was his intention, but it is clear that in fact such was his historical role. Paul taught that the Jewish way of life had no validity for Christians, but the Mother Church in Acts felt differently. For Christian God-fearers it was not easy to accept Paul's demand; the complete rejection of Jewish precepts was for many Gentile Christians a painful operation. But if Christianity was to become a world religion it had to become "free from the Law". Only a Christian free from the law could separate himself from Judaism.

With the rise of Christianity the teachers of Israel sought to distinguish between the heathens of the past and those Gentiles who were subject to religious values and morality. The very term "ger tzedek" (righteous gentile) stands for the gentile who turned from idols and made a sincere conversion to the faith of Jesus in the first century. Such a person was respected and welcomed by the Jewish community. The "ger tzedek" submitted to circumcision, immersion, and brought a sacrifice to the temple. Upon completion of such, he was considered as "one born in the land."

There are two other terms for righteous Gentiles: Ger Hashar, and Ger ToShav. In the Bible the Ger Hashar is seen as "the stranger in the gate", and the Ger ToShav was known as "the stranger in the land." These also accepted the faith of Israel (ethical monotheism) and were immersed, but withheld themselves from circumcision. Such "Righteous Gentiles" had a place in the world to come, and it was believed that in the age of the Messiah all Gentiles would come to recognize the one true God according to Zech 14:9.

Once the Ger Tzedek was accepted as a Jew, he was entitled to all the privileges that Jews born into the faith enjoyed. Such converts to Judaism were numerous before the rise of Christianity. Within Palestine and outside, wherever Jews came into contact with pagans, Judaism held a strong attraction. It was expected of the Gentile that given enough time, he would develop from the Ger Hashar to the Ger Tzedek. The later development of Christianity offered the attraction of monotheism and at the same time imposed fewer restrictions on its new adherents that did Judaism. Commencing with the fourth century, when Christianity became the official religion of the Roman Empire, Jews were restricted in their own worship and were no longer permitted to continue their missionary activity and we find the conversion of the Ger Hashar and Tzedek dwindling. In spite of the peril to Jews and proselytes alike, we read throughout history of various instances where Christians joined the ranks of the oppressed Jews.

Now let us look at examples of how non-Jews were expected to relate to Israel and God as delineated in the Old Testament, the "ONLY" Bible Yeshua knew and used.

ALIENS-THE GENTILE IN SCRIPTURE:

Let us gain a better understanding how Gentile believers "fit" with God's plan for Israel.

1616 ger, gare; or (fully) geyr, gare; from 1481; prop. a guest; by impl. a foreigner:-**alien**, sojourner, stranger. ^ gur. See 1482. It is important for comparison to understand that the alien was a Gentile who lived in and among Israel.

THE ALIEN-GENTILE IS LOVED BY GOD (The implication is that he is chosen).

Deuteronomy 10:14-22 To the LORD your God belong the heavens, even the highest heavens, the earth and everything in it. Yet the LORD set his affection on your forefathers and loved them, and he chose you, their descendants, above all the nations, as it is today. Circumcise your hearts, therefore, and do not be stiff-necked any longer. For the LORD your God is God of gods and Lord of lords, the great God, mighty and awesome, who shows no partiality and accepts no bribes. He defends the cause of the fatherless and the widow, and loves the **alien**, giving him food and clothing. And you are to love those who are **aliens**, for you yourselves were aliens in Egypt. Fear the LORD your God and serve him. Hold fast to him and take your oaths in his name. He is your praise; he is your God, who performed for you those great and awesome wonders you saw with your own eyes. Your forefathers who went down into Egypt were seventy in all, and now the LORD your God has made you as numerous as the stars in the sky.

Psalms 146:1-10 Praise the LORD. Praise the LORD, O my soul. I will praise the LORD all my life; I will sing praise to my God as long as I live. Do not put your trust in princes, in mortal men, who cannot save. When their spirit departs, they return to the ground; on that very day their plans come to nothing. Blessed is he whose help is the God of Jacob, whose hope is in the LORD his God, The Maker of heaven and earth, the sea, and everything in them--the LORD, who remains faithful forever. He upholds the cause of the oppressed and gives

food to the hungry. The LORD sets prisoners free, The LORD gives sight to the blind, the LORD lifts up those who are bowed down, the LORD loves the righteous. **The LORD watches over the alien** and sustains the fatherless and the widow, but he frustrates the ways of the wicked. The LORD reigns forever, your God, O Zion, for all generations. Praise the LORD.

THE ALIEN OBSERVED THE FESTIVAL OF PASSOVER...DOES YOUR CHURCH?

Exodus 12:48-49 "An **alien** living among you who wants to celebrate the LORD'S Passover must have all the males in his household circumcised; then he may take part like one born in the land. No uncircumcised male may eat of it. The same law applies to the native-born and to the alien living among you."

Numbers 9:14 "'An **alien** living among you who wants to celebrate the LORD'S Passover must do so in accordance with its rules and regulations. **You must have the same regulations for the alien and the native-born.**"

The alien (Gentile) was allowed to celebrate Passover if all males in his household were circumcised. He Had all the same rules that the Israelites had! We see from this the overlapping Laws were often the same for the non-Jew and the Jew although they had different Covenants!

THE ALIEN-GENTILE OBSERVED THE FESTIVAL OF UNLEAVENED BREAD:

Exodus 12:14-20 "This is a day you are to commemorate; for the generations to come you shall celebrate it as a festival to the LORD--a lasting ordinance. For seven days you are to eat bread made without yeast. On the first day remove the yeast from your houses, for whoever eats anything with yeast in it from the first day through the seventh must be cut off from Israel. On the first day hold a sacred assembly, and another one on the seventh day. Do no work at all on these days, except to prepare food for everyone to eat--that is all you may do.

"Celebrate the Feast of Unleavened Bread, because it was on this very day that I brought your divisions out of Egypt. Celebrate this day as a lasting ordinance for the generations to come. In the first month you are to eat bread made without yeast, from the evening of the fourteenth day until the evening of the twenty-first day. For seven days no yeast is to be found in your houses. And whoever eats anything with yeast in it must be cut off from the community of Israel, whether he is **an alien** or native-born. Eat nothing made with yeast. Wherever you live, you must eat unleavened bread."

You can see that eating yeast during Hag HaMatzah (Festival of Unleavened Bread) was not permitted by God for the Gentile believer or not.

Answer for yourself: Do you eat leaven bread during the Passover week? If you do then someone has failed to teach you properly.

THE ALIEN-GENTILE WAS REQUIRED BY GOD TO OBSERVE THE DAY OF ATONEMENT:

Leviticus 16:29-31 "This is to be a **lasting ordinance for you:** On the tenth day of the seventh month (Yom Kippur-Day of Atonement) you must deny yourselves and not do any work--whether native-born **or an alien** living among you-- Because on this day atonement will be made for you, to cleanse you. Then, before the LORD, you will be clean from all your sins. It is a Sabbath of rest, and you must deny yourselves; it is a lasting ordinance.

Answer for yourself: Did you fast, not work, or observe the Day of Atonement last year, and if not, why not as it is a "lasting ordinance" for the non-Jew; believer or not? Is God's Word forever and are his Covenant stipulations forever?

THE ALIEN-GENTILE WAS REQUIRED BY GOD TO OBSERVE THE SABBATH:

Exodus 20:8-11 "Remember the Sabbath day by keeping it holy. Six days you shall labor and do all your work, But the seventh day is a Sabbath to the LORD your God. On it you shall not do any work, neither you, nor your son or daughter, nor your manservant or maidservant, nor your animals, nor the **alien** within your gates. For in six days the LORD made the heavens and the earth, the sea, and all that is in them, but he rested on the seventh day. Therefore the LORD blessed the Sabbath day and made it holy.

Exodus 23:12 "Six days do your work, but on the seventh day do not work, so that your ox and your donkey may rest and the slave born in your household, and the **alien** as well, may be refreshed.

Deuteronomy 5:12-15 "Observe the Sabbath day by keeping it holy, as the LORD your God has commanded you. Six days you shall labor and do all your work, But the seventh day is a Sabbath to the LORD your God. On it you shall not do any work, neither you, nor your son or daughter, nor your manservant or maidservant, nor your ox, your donkey or any of your animals, **nor the alien** within your gates, so that your manservant and maidservant may rest, as you do. Remember that you were slaves in Egypt and that the LORD your God brought you out of there with a mighty hand and an outstretched arm. Therefore the LORD your God has commanded you to observe the Sabbath day.

Thus the Gentile, although not officially given the Sabbath in the Laws of Noah, was expected and required to rest on Shabbat.

Answer for yourself: Has your Church taught you to keep the Sabbath or have they substituted the say of the Sun for it...ie. Sunday?

THE ALIEN-GENTILE HAD TO BRING HIS SACRIFICE TO THE SAME PLACE AN ISRAELITE DID:

Leviticus 17:8-9 "Say to them: 'Any Israelite or any alien living among them who offers a burnt offering or sacrifice And does not bring it to the entrance to the Tent of Meeting to sacrifice it to the LORD--that man must be cut off from his people.

Answer for yourself: Understand that sacrifices were a form of worship and are you aware that non-Jews followed the same pattern of worship as did the Jews up until the early fourth century until prevented by Rome on penalty of death?

Answer for yourself: Could it be possible that certain ways of worship were mandated by God for both the Jew and the non-Jew as they both were expected by God to observe the same pattern of worship in this world which was a pattern of worship in Heaven above? Do you know what this pattern entailed and do you care if you observe it or not, or are you perfectly satisfied in worship according to your "new" replacement Covenant? Is God since he never gave it to you but in reality such a "replacement" worship can be found to have its roots in Gentile pagan religions? Ooohh that is bad and you better know before you die.

THE ALIEN-GENTILE WAS FORBIDDEN TO EAT BLOOD-NOAHIDE LAWS:

Leviticus 17:10-14 "'Any Israelite or any **alien** living among them who eats any blood--I will set my face against that person who eats blood and will cut him off from his people. For the life of a creature is in the blood, and I have given it to you to make atonement for yourselves on the altar; it is the blood that makes atonement for one's life. Therefore I say to the Israelites, "None of you may eat blood, nor may an **alien** living among you eat blood." "'Any Israelite or any **alien** living among you who hunts any animal or bird that may be eaten must drain out the blood and cover it with earth, Because the life of every creature is its blood. That is why I have said to the Israelites, "You must not eat the blood of any creature, because the life of every creature is its blood; anyone who eats it must be cut off."

Answer for yourself: When was the last time you had communion in your church whereby you partook of the body and blood of Yeshua?

Maybe you are not a Catholic, and only take such in a symbolic manner, but again are you aware that such an event like Christian Protestant communion again finds its roots in pagan mystery religions where the devotees of pagan gods eat their body and drank their blood in order to take into them the strength and attributes of their false gods? I never cease to wonder how a Jew like Yeshua, who distanced himself from blood which makes one unclean, would ever use such references for himself when he knew perfectly well that such were customs of the heathen and his Bible commanded in Jer 10:2 "Thus saith the LORD, Learn not the way of the heathen..." And this does not explain how Yeshua would expect other pious Jews to follow him in such an abomination.

THE ALIEN-GENTILE WAS REQUIRED TO BE "CLEAN" BEFORE GOD:

Leviticus 17:15-16 "Anyone, whether native-born or **alien**, who eats anything found dead or torn by wild animals must wash his clothes and bathe with water, and he will be ceremonially unclean till evening; then he will be clean. But if he does not wash his clothes and bathe himself, he will be held responsible."

Answer for yourself: Does it not amaze you that what you thought only applied to the Jews such as "uncleanness" also applied to non-Jews as well and did you ever expect that such requirements came from overlapping laws contained in the Laws of Noah for all non-Jews which were later restated in the Laws of Moses for the Jews?

THE ALIEN-GENTILE WAS NOT TO MURDER..ESPECIALLY CHILDREN:

Leviticus 20:1-8 The LORD said to Moses, "Say to the Israelites: 'Any Israelite or any **alien** living in Israel who gives any of his children to Molech (INFANT SACRIFICE) must be put to death. The people of the community are to stone him. I will set my face against that man and I will cut him off from his people; for by giving his children to Molech, he has defiled my sanctuary and profaned my holy name. If the people of the community close their eyes when that man gives one of his children to Molech and they fail to put him to death, I will set my face against that man and his family and will cut off from their people both him and all who follow him in prostituting themselves to Molech (WHAT DOES THAT SAY FOR NON-INVOLVEMENT BY THE CHURCH IN THE "HOT" ABORTION ISSUE LET ALONE FOR MANY CHURCHES WHO ADVOCATE A PRO-CHOICE STANCE?). Too many Pastors are afraid to touch such a topic because it might offend someone who gives them money...and I speak from experience on this issue believe me! "I will set my face against the person who turns to mediums and spiritists to prostitute himself by following them, and I will cut him off from his people. "Consecrate yourselves and be holy, because I am the LORD your God. Keep my decrees and follow them. I am the LORD, who makes you holy.

THE ALIEN-GENTILE WAS TO BRING THE SAME BURNT OFFERING AS THE ISRAELITE:

Leviticus 22:17-20 The LORD said to Moses, "Speak to Aaron and his sons and to all the Israelites and say to them: 'If any of you--either an Israelite or an **alien** living in Israel--presents a gift for a burnt offering to the LORD, either to fulfill a vow or as a freewill offering, You must present a male without defect from the cattle, sheep or goats in order that it may be accepted on your behalf. Do not bring anything with a defect, because it will not be accepted on your behalf.

Answer for yourself: Again did you notice the "same" laws for both Jew and Gentile again although they have different Covenants yet these Covenants often contain the same Covenant stipulations?

THE ALIEN-GENTILE WAS NOT TO BLASPHEME GOD'S NAME OR TAKE THE

LORD' NAME IN VAIN:

Leviticus 24:10-23 Now the son of an Israelite mother and an Egyptian father went out among the Israelites, and a fight broke out in the camp between him and an Israelite. The son of the Israelite woman blasphemed the Name with a curse; so they brought him to Moses. (His mother's name was Shelomith, the daughter of Dibri the Danite.) They put him in custody until the will of the LORD should be made clear to them. Then the LORD said to Moses: "Take the blasphemer outside the camp. All those who heard him are to lay their hands on his head, and the entire assembly is to stone him. Say to the Israelites: 'If anyone curses his God, he will be held responsible; Anyone who blasphemes the name of the LORD must be put to death. The entire assembly must stone him. Whether an **alien** or native-born, when he blasphemes the Name, he must be put to death.' "If anyone takes the life of a human being, he must be put to death. Anyone who takes the life of someone's animal must make restitution--life for life. If anyone injures his neighbor, whatever he has done must be done to him: Fracture for fracture, eye for eye, tooth for tooth. As he has injured the other, so he is to be injured. Whoever kills an animal must make restitution, but whoever kills a man must be put to death. You are to have the same law for the **alien** and the native-born. (FOCUS ON THAT VERSE FOR A MOMENT) I am the LORD your God.'" Then Moses spoke to the Israelites, and they took the blasphemer outside the camp and stoned him. The Israelites did as the LORD commanded Moses.

Numbers 15:14-16 For the generations to come, whenever an **alien** or anyone else living among you presents an offering made by fire as an aroma pleasing to the LORD, he must do exactly as you do. **The community is to have the same rules for you and for the alien living among you; this is a lasting ordinance for the generations to come. You and the alien shall be the same before the LORD: The same laws and regulations will apply both to you and to the alien living among you.**"

The same law (TORAH) applied to Israelites and aliens.

Answer for yourself: Again did you notice the "same" laws for both Jew and Gentile again although they have different Covenants yet these Covenants often contain the same Covenant stipulations?

What will be horrifying to you to see is that as a Christian you blaspheme God's name regularly because of the failure to be taught correctly the Laws of Noah and how to observe them; both in observance of the positive commandments and the refraining from the breaking of the negative commandments within the Covenant of Noah. We will deal with each law in detail in the future so hold on as I prepare this year to present you fully with each of your Covenant stipulations whereby you can be certain of your relationship with God.

THE ALIEN-GENTILE IS TREATED EXACTLY LIKE THE ISRAELITE CONCERNING UNINTENTIONAL OR INTENTIONAL SIN:

Numbers 15:22-31 "'Now if you **unintentionally (ACCIDENTALLY FAIL TO OBEY .. POSSIBLY BY IGNORANCE)** fail to keep any of these commands the LORD gave Moses-- Any of the LORD'S commands to you through him, from the day the LORD gave them and continuing through the generations to come-- And if this is done **unintentionally** without the community being aware of it, then the whole community is to offer a young bull for a burnt offering as an aroma pleasing to the LORD, along with its prescribed grain offering and drink offering, and a male goat for a sin offering. The priest is to make atonement for the whole Israelite community, and they will be forgiven, for it was **not intentional** and they have brought to the LORD for their wrong an offering made by fire and a sin offering. The whole Israelite community and the **aliens living among them** will be forgiven, because all the people were involved in the **unintentional wrong**. "'But if just one person **sins unintentionally**, he must bring a year-old female goat for a sin offering. The priest is to make atonement before the LORD for the one who erred by sinning **unintentionally**, and when atonement has been made for him, he will be forgiven. One and the same law applies to everyone who sins unintentionally, whether he is a native-born Israelite or an alien. "'But anyone who sins defiantly, **whether native-born or alien**, blasphemes the LORD, and that person must be cut off from his people. Because he has despised the LORD'S word and broken his commands, that person must surely be cut off; his guilt remains on him."

Answer for yourself: Since sacrifices are a form of worship, again did you notice the "same" laws for both Jew and Gentile concerning how to worship God although each have different Covenants yet these Covenants often contain the same Covenant stipulations concerning worship?

THE FOREIGNER-THE GENTILE IN SCRIPTURE:

I Kings 8:37-43 "When famine or plague comes to the land, or blight or mildew, locusts or grasshoppers, or when an enemy besieges them in any of their cities, whatever disaster or disease may come, And when a prayer or plea is made by any of your people Israel--each one aware of the afflictions of his own heart, and spreading out his hands toward this temple-- Then hear from heaven, your dwelling place. Forgive and act; deal with each man according to all he does, since you know his heart (for you alone know the hearts of all men), So that they will fear you all the time they live in the land you gave our fathers. 'As for **the foreigner** who does not belong to your people Israel but has come from a distant land because of your name-- For men will hear of your great name and your mighty hand and your outstretched arm--when he comes and prays toward this temple, Then hear from heaven, your dwelling place, and do whatever the **foreigner asks of you**, so that all the peoples of the earth may know your name and fear you, as do your own people Israel, and may know that this house I have built bears your Name.

5237 nokriy, nok-ree'; from 5235 (second form); **strange**, in a variety of degrees and applications (foreign, non-relative, adulterous, different, wonderful):-alien, **foreigner**, outlandish, strange (woman).

Deuteronomy 14:21 Do not eat anything you find already dead. You may give it to an alien living in any of your towns, and he may eat it, or you may sell it to a **foreigner** (ger). But you are a people holy to the LORD your God. Do not cook a young goat in its mother's milk.

Notice here the Covenant stipulations differ between the Jew and the non-Jew. They are not always the same, but overall the vast majority of Laws contained in the Covenant of Noah are reiterated at Sinai in the Laws of Moses.

Exodus 12:45

45 A **foreigner** and an hired servant shall not eat of it [unless circumcised] (concerning the Passover).

Deuteronomy 15:3

3 Of a **foreigner** thou mayest exact [hold him to the repayment of a loan after 7 years]: but [that] which is thine with thy brother thy hand shall release [not allowed to collect repayment of a loan to a Jew after 7 years];

Isaiah 56:3

3. Neither let the son of the **foreigner, that hath joined himself to the LORD**, speak, saying, The LORD hath utterly separated me from his people: neither let the eunuch say, Behold, I [am] a dry tree.

Isaiah 56:6

6 Also the **sons of the foreigner, that join themselves to the LORD**, to serve him, and to love the name of the LORD, to be his servants, every one that keepeth the Sabbath from profaning it, and taketh hold of my covenant;

Notice that the non-Jew could "join himself to the LORD" and notice in this instance he goes beyond the Laws of Noah which does not require observance of the Sabbath and acquires a higher mitzvot of observing the Sabbath. As stated before we as non-Jews are not limited to observe the minimum requirement of our Covenant, but can demonstrate our love for God by taking into our life as many commandments as possible; for each Covenant stipulation or commandments observed is how we show our love for God and strengthen our

relationship with Him.

Ezekiel 14:7

7 For every one of the house of Israel, or of the **foreigner** that sojourneth in Israel, who separateth himself from me, and setteth up his idols in his heart, and putteth the stumblingblock of his iniquity before his face, and cometh to a prophet to inquire of him concerning me; I the LORD will answer him by myself:

Answer for yourself: Again did you notice the "same" laws for both Jew and Gentile again although they have different Covenants yet these Covenants often contain the same Covenant stipulations?

Deuteronomy 17:14-15 When you enter the land the LORD your God is giving you and have taken possession of it and settled in it, and you say, "Let us set a king over us like all the nations around us," Be sure to appoint over you the king the LORD your God chooses. He must be from among your own brothers. Do not place **aforeigner** (ish) over you, one who is not a brother Israelite (**NOTICE WHO IS TO HAVE RELIGIOUS AUTHORITY IN GOD'S EYES!**)

THE STRANGER-THE GENTILE IN SCRIPTURE:

This stranger is different too (this is our nokree).

Deuteronomy 15:1-5 At the end of every seven years you must cancel debts. This is how it is to be done: Every creditor shall cancel the loan he has made to his fellow Israelite. He shall not require payment from his fellow Israelite or brother, because the LORD'S time for canceling debts has been proclaimed. You may require payment from a **foreigner**, but you must cancel any debt your brother owes you. However, there should be no poor among you, for in the land the LORD your God is giving you to possess as your inheritance, he will richly bless you, If only you fully obey the LORD your God and are careful to follow all these commands I am giving you today.

Deuteronomy 23:19-20 Do not charge your brother interest, whether on money or food or anything else that may earn interest. You may charge a **foreigner** interest, but not a brother Israelite, so that the LORD your God may bless you in everything you put your hand to in the land you are entering to possess.

THE GOD-FEARER-GENTILE & MONOTHEISM IN SCRIPTURE:

The Strong's # for "godfearer" is 4576: sebomai, seb'-om-ahee; mid. of an appar. prim. verb; to revere, i.e. adore:-devout, religious, worship.

Let me preface that it was these "strangers," "foreigners", and "aliens" who would later be called **God-Fearers** in the New Testament. By examining these in depth, we can see more correctly what is required for us today as a Christians.

Ecclesiastes 8:12 Although a wicked man commits a hundred crimes and still lives a long time, I know that it will go better with **God-fearing men**, who are reverent before God.

Acts 2:1-13 When the day of Pentecost came, they were all together in one place. Suddenly a sound like the blowing of a violent wind came from heaven and filled the whole house where they were sitting. They saw what seemed to be tongues of fire that separated and came to rest on each of them. All of them were filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other tongues as the Spirit enabled them. Now there were staying in Jerusalem **God-fearing Jews from every nation (GENTILE CONVERTS FROM EVERY NATION)** under heaven....

Acts 10:1-8 At Caesarea there was a man named Cornelius, a centurion in what was known as the Italian

Regiment. He and all his family were devout and **God-fearing**; he gave generously to those in need and prayed to God regularly. One day at about three in the afternoon he had a vision. He distinctly saw an angel of God, who came to him and said, "Cornelius!" Cornelius stared at him in fear. "What is it, Lord?" he asked. The angel answered, "**Your prayers and gifts to the poor have come up as a memorial offering before God...**"

Acts 13:26-31 "Brothers, children of Abraham, and you **God-fearing Gentiles**, it is to us that this message of salvation has been sent...

Acts 13:46-51 Then Paul and Barnabas answered them boldly: "We had to speak the word of God to you first. Since you reject it and do not consider yourselves worthy of eternal life, we now turn to the Gentiles. For this is what the Lord has commanded us: "I have made you a light for the Gentiles, that you may bring salvation to the ends of the earth." When the Gentiles heard this, they were glad and honored the word of the Lord; and all who were appointed for eternal life believed. The word of the Lord spread through the whole region. But the Jews incited the **God-fearing** women of high standing and the leading men of the city. They stirred up persecution against Paul and Barnabas, and expelled them from their region. So they shook the dust from their feet in protest against them and went to Iconium.

Acts 17:1-4 When they had passed through Amphipolis and Apollonia, they came to Thessalonica, where there was a Jewish synagogue. As his custom was, Paul went into the synagogue, and on three Sabbath days he reasoned with them from the Scriptures, explaining and proving that the Christ had to suffer and rise from the dead. "This Jesus I am proclaiming to you is the Christ," he said. Some of the Jews were persuaded and joined Paul and Silas, as did a large number of **God-fearing Greeks** and not a few prominent women.

Acts 17:16-17 While Paul was waiting for them in Athens, he was greatly distressed to see that the city was full of idols. So he reasoned in the synagogue with the Jews and the **God-fearing Greeks**, as well as in the marketplace day by day with those who happened to be there.

WHAT HAVE WE TRIED TO SHOW YOU WITH THE PREVIOUS SCRIPTURAL ANALYSIS?

TODAY'S NON-JEWISH BELIEVER; THE CHRISTIAN IS GRAFTED INTO THE ISRAEL OF GOD AND HAS NO STANDING BEFORE GOD APART FROM HIS COVENANT WITH GOD...WHICH HAPPENS TO BE THE COVENANT OF NOAH CONTAINING THE LAWS OF NOAH

The Gentile, after turning from idols and repentance (as a sign of his faith in the One God of Israel), and after following immersion in the Mikvah (baptism), was grafted into Israel as Paul would later tell us. But this did not begin with Paul as it had always been this way! The repentant Gentile believer chose God and His Torah. He chose to become "chosen". Since he is now within the "Israel of God", then these commandments given to "Israel" called the Laws of Moses contain within them the Laws of Noah and yet today applies to the Gentile Christian who accepts Yeshua, his teachings, and His God.

Answer for yourself: Is that your understanding and has your church taught this or are you hearing of this for the first time in your life today?

It was Jesus' understanding and still is his today! The tragedy of the matter is that the Contemporary Christian Church has not studied to know who they are. **They are included in the House of Ephraim; they are Israel and they don't recognize it.** They think there are Baptists, Methodists, Catholics, etc.; but God shows us that there is one plan for all non-Jews and that this plan did not alter at all following Yeshua's death as the New Testament reveals. **Many of the Commandments of God as seen in the Torah, the Law, as mentioned in both the Old Testament and New Testament are for the non-Jew, not just the Jew born in the land!** And this means it is for the Christian as his obedience or disobedience to these Covenant stipulations relate to his standing before God!

We will continue in the next article in this series. Shalom.



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AS A CHRISTIAN DO YOU KNOW WHICH COVENANT YOUR UNDER? #7

LET'S MAKE SURE WE UNDERSTAND ARE NOT CONFUSED ANY LONGER:

We have covered a great deal of material up to now about Covenants. I believe at this time a quick review is in order before we go on.

A "Gentile" is a term signifying a non-Jew, who is only subject to the seven Noahide Laws. Once a Gentile came to the understanding of the one true God, he would turn from idols and worship the God of Israel. These were the **"God fearers", who accepted certain basic Jewish obligations along with the Noahide precepts.** This picture is verified over and over again by the New Testament if you know what you are looking for. According to this, idolatry, shedding of blood, and grave sexual sins were forbidden to Gentile believers. These were originally the Noahide precepts accepted also by the Synagogue on which the Gentiles were obliged. Let me remind you that we see in Acts 15 (at least 25 years after the death of Jesus) the admonition for the Gentiles to adhere to Noahide Laws to be accepted in the believing community of Israel (it was James as leader of the Jerusalem church who referred back to the Noahide Laws in addressing the question of Gentile salvation). It is logical that the Apostolic Church of Jerusalem should accept the view of the Synagogue on the conditions which Gentiles needed to fulfill in order to be saved and accepted in the "family of Israel". **It can be easily shown that the fulfillment of other commandments of Judaism were not prohibited to Gentiles. On the contrary, the Noahide precepts were only seen as the minimal condition for Gentiles to be recognized as "God-fearers".** These were so understood by the uncircumcised "God-fearers" themselves, who were attracted to the Jewish way of life and accepted many Jewish commandments without becoming full proselytes (Sabbath, festivals, Tallith, etc). **This was also the attitude of Gentile Christian "God-fearers", as may be seen from the Epistle to the Galatians; many of them wished to observe as many Jewish precepts as they could.** We need to understand right now that Paul was not opposed to non-Jews voluntarily observing "Jewish" commandments over and above the Noahide minimum like the Sabbath for instance; he was opposed to only one "Law" being put upon the non-Jews and that was that the commandment of circumcision which was imposed on non-Jews for inclusion into the Israel of God by bigoted Jews who hoped that such a procedure would cause the non-Jew to rethink his decision and they would not have to have social or religious contact with them. Paul knew such a commandment was never a part of the Covenant of Noah given to all Gentiles and was purposely used by bigoted Jews and it was this bigotry which enraged Paul and kept many non-Jews from drawing close to the Creator. **His Galatians epistle is against the law of circumcision only and we need to realize that Paul was not against the non-Jews acquiring other mitzvot as the pattern of the New Testament shows. It is evident that, while the leadership of the mother Church in Jerusalem decided to lay no burden upon the Gentile believers beyond the Noahide precepts, it did not object to their voluntarily observing more** (Col. 2:16-17). Among the figures of the early Church who instructed Gentile Christians to observe more precepts than these essential "Noahide" ones was Peter, as we know from Paul's criticism of him for demanding that Gentiles live like Jews (Gal. 2:14). **Rather than interpreting the apostolic decree of Gentiles adhering to the Laws of Noah as a minimum, Paul would later change in his views after the Antioch incident and would see in the Noahide precepts the maximum obligations**

of Gentile Christians. Rather than Peter being incorrect, a more comprehensive understanding of the Bible reveals Paul to be incorrect. You will see this when we study the Antioch incident next in this series.

THE CONFUSION THAT SURROUNDS PAUL'S TEACHINGS:

Paul remarks in a letter to the Corinthians (1 Cor. 7) that the circumcised (Jews or **converted Gentiles**) should not remove the **marks of circumcision**, nor should the uncircumcised (Gentiles become Jews) circumcise themselves. Wait a minute. **Paul contradicts himself** (like a lot of preachers today). In Galatians 5 he says "if you Gentiles get circumcised" and then he says "don't do it", can't he make up his mind? Dear one when you begin to draw a line down the middle of a sheet of paper and write out the sayings of Paul you will be amazed at how a great number of Paul's sayings are directly in opposition to each other. If you have not seen this for yourself then I suggest you begin to look for them for your inability to see them so far does not invalidate the FACT that they exist and they exist in abundance in the New Testament. This is just one of the problems I have with the New Testament for if a document is truly inspired and inerrant and given by God as the New Testament is touted, then God is not schizophrenic and has the ability to carry a clear and concise thought. Paul cannot!

In Acts 16 Paul circumcised his disciple Timothy.

Answer for yourself: Timothy was not a Jew was he? If he was a Gentile why bother, right?

This contradiction of Paul is very puzzling.

Answer for yourself: Sadly many have incorrectly interpreted Paul as teaching that circumcision was abandoned with the coming of Yeshua the Messiah, but was it?

Acts 16 is over 20 years after Yeshua's death and Paul is still circumcising!

Answer for yourself: Evidently we have failed to understand properly, so what is the clear truth of the matter?

Yeshua and his Apostles did not wish to destroy the Torah (Law) from Israel, God forbid; for it is written so in Matthew 5:17, Jesus having said, **"Do not suppose that I have come to abolish the Torah. I did not come to abolish, but to fulfill. I tell you this: So long as heaven and earth endure (do they yet exist today?), not a letter, not a stroke, will disappear from the Torah (the Law) until it is achieved. If any man therefore sets aside even the least of the Torah's demands, and teaches others to do the same (the majority of Pastors who preach the contemporary Christian message as well as Paul later in his ministry), he will have the lowest place in the Kingdom of Heaven, whereas anyone who keeps the Torah, and teaches others so, will stand high in the Kingdom of Heaven."**

It never ceases to amaze me that the vast majority of Christianity today follows Paul instead of Yeshua; they follow the "least" more than the "greatest". The witness for Paul being "least in the Kingdom of God" comes not only from his doctrines as taught in the New Testament but also from James, the head of the Jerusalem Church, who informs us in Acts 21:21: "And they are informed of thee [Paul], that thou teachest all the Jews which are among the Gentiles to forsake Moses, saying that they ought not to circumcise their children, neither to walk after the customs]. Dear ones this is historically accurate as will be proven to you beyond any shadow of a doubt when we look at the Antioch problem for it is here that Paul, having previously needed the Jerusalem's Church authority for "his" gospel, completely severs himself off from the Jerusalem Church and literally become a renegade among the non-Jews in an attempt to build a ministry to prove the validity of his apostleship to those in Jerusalem who yet considered him dangerous and not "apostolic" material at all.

Bet Emet Ministries teaches Gentile and Jewish commitment and observance to the Torah, not because we desire to be "high" in the Kingdom of God, but because we love God and His Word, and would never think of destroying it by misinterpreting it or failing to study to arrive at the correct meaning of these truths for the people of God today.

It is therefore exceedingly clear that Jesus never dreamed of destroying the Torah as have **the majority of**

churches today that carry his name but substitute "another Gospel" for the true Gospel of Yeshua.

WHAT TO DO WITH TIMOTHY?

In reality Paul does not contradict himself because of his circumcision of Timothy, for the latter was the son of a Jewish mother, and a Gentile father (Acts 16), and Paul knew that the child of a Jewish mother is considered a "full Jew", even if the father should be a Gentile. Paul thus acted entirely in accordance with the Halakhah (interpretation of Jewish Law) by circumcising Timothy. **This would be in line with his position, following the Jerusalem Council of Acts 15 in 50 A.D., that no longer will Gentile believers be required to "become fully converted Jews through circumcision" in order to be accepted into Israel;** that the Gentile believers could now remain as "uncircumcised God-Fearers" and be accepted fully by the Jews (1 Cor 7, Acts 15). Gentiles no longer had to "convert and be circumcised" to be a part of Judaism and become "fully Jewish by circumcision" for inclusion with equal standing within the Israel of God. The Gentiles as "God-Fearers" were to also be accepted as grafted into Israel (as demonstrated by Cornelius in Acts 10 who was a "God-Fearer" and who had not yet been circumcised). **It is important to note that as a "God-Fearer", Cornelius in Acts 10 yet observed the Noahide Laws, honored the Sabbath (over and above the minimum requirement of his Covenant), and ate kosher (proper killing, dressing and preparation of animals intended for food as well as the removal of all blood...again over and above his Covenant stipulations).** The baptism of Cornelius into the Holy Spirit as had been the Jews earlier in Acts 2 during the Festival of Pentecost was the evidence needed to convince the Jerusalem church that the middle-wall of partition was being removed between Jews and "unclean Gentiles". **From this we learn that obedience to the Noahide Laws, without circumcision (to remain only as a "God-Fearer" and not fully convert to Judaism), was no longer to be a barrier between the "unclean Gentiles" and the Jews. For example, table fellowship at the Shabbat (Sabbath observance) and the Festivals could now be shared together!** This was understood from Peter's vision in Acts 10 concerning "unclean foods" which the Lord cleansed (symbolic of cleansing of men, and not the animals designated as unclean in Leviticus). We will later see Peter eating with uncircumcised Gentiles in Antioch; he learned the lesson. **Shammai's "Eighteen Measures"** (one of which commanded Jews not to eat or enter into the homes of Gentiles-remember Shammai hated Gentiles) was overturned by God with the revelation at Cornelius' home. **God corrects Shammai and those that followed his teaching. Peter's vision of the unclean foods represented the "unclean Gentiles" which God had cleansed; the vision was not meant to tell Peter that God had cleansed the "unclean foods". Let us not confuse this issue as have millions.**

HOW DOES GOD VIEW YOU TODAY IN SPITE OF WHAT YOU KNOW OR DON'T KNOW?

Timothy had to be circumcised since he was Jewish (because his mother was Jewish) and, therefore, was required to observe all the commandments of the Torah (613). **Gentiles who observe the Noahide Laws are forbidden to observe "ALL" the Torah like a Jew is required, unless they desire to be circumcised and identify totally with the Jew and his Torah (full-conversion); if so then they are no longer "God-Fearers" but have become full-fledged Jews and undertake all the 613 Commandments. Following Immersion into Israel (after circumcision & mikveh called baptism) the Gentile is no longer considered a "Gentile", he is now Jewish (either partly or completely depending upon circumcision). Today such a sacred rite has been perverted by almost all of Gentile Christianity and made to do more with church membership than grafting into the Israel of God! All non-Jews who become circumcised following immersion were bound by all the commandments (613) as "full-coverts" to Judaism. Understanding the immersion process is crucial for the Christian; once you are immersed into the Israel of God, you emerged from that watery womb and tomb as a Born-Again "God-Fearer" who is grafted into Israel. You became "Israel" and are a Spiritual Jew (regardless if you were aware of it or not). You are not considered a "partial-Jew" unless you are uncircumcised. If you are circumcised you are then considered a "Full-Jew"!**

Answer for yourself: Did you hear that? Of course that was back then and today just because one is circumcised at birth as a matter of routine has no bearing on such a "decision" to convert. That is why today when a non-

Jew wants to "convert" to Judaism the Rabbi pricks the end of the male's penis to draw blood as a symbolic "circumcision" as a notation of one's conscious decision and pseudo-circumcision.

The majority of you set in your churches thinking you are "Christians" or "Baptists, Methodists, Catholics, etc.) and God's Word says you are "Jewish" (children of Abraham) and are the Israel of God. **You have not replaced Israel, your denomination is not in competition with Israel; when you first believed in God you became a part of believing "Israel". You are not a Baptist or a Methodist or a Catholic;...you are part of Israel! Now is the time that you begin to go by the Bible more than your denominational doctrine.** Either way as part of Israel you are obligated to observe the Torah (that part of the Laws of your Covenant that refers to you) and, because of your lack of study, you have let your unlearned pastors and teachers tell you repeatedly that you are "**under grace**" and "**not under Law.**" **You are under both!** I just showed you that a proper understanding of immersion and a proper understanding of the teachings of Yeshua from the Jewish perspective of Jewish rites tell you otherwise. These were Jews who gave us these truths and they better than any can explain their meaning. You can either accept them or reject them; but to rely upon your experience as a correction for Biblical truth is not advised!

Now, let me ask you as a Christian an important question.

Answer for yourself: Who are you going to believe; your pastor, your Gentile Church, your experience or the message of Jesus?

Answer for yourself: With such an obligation to the "Christian" who now **becomes aware** that he is either "part-Jewish" (Judaism is not a race but a religion; the religion of Jesus) **what are you to do concerning the Commandments which are addressed to you in your Covenant...the Covenant of Noah?**

Answer for yourself: What will you now do since you have seen for yourselves the pattern in the Old Testament as well as the many examples in the New Testament where Jew and non-Jew had the same law regarding observance of the Festival of the Passover, Hag HaMatzah (Festival of Unleavened Bread), HaBikkurim (First Fruits), Shavuot (Festival of Pentecost), Rosh HaShannah (Jewish New Year), Yom Teruah (Festival of Trumpets), Yom Kippur (Day of Atonement), and Sukkot (Festival of Tabernacles)?

Surely you should want to begin to observe and keep them according to Scripture. **Failure to do so goes completely against the pattern of worship of God given to both Jew and non-Jew!**

ARE YOU BEGINNING TO SEE THE LIGHT?

Christian scholars have assumed from certain passages in the Gospels that Jesus wished to give a new Torah to take the place of the Torah of Moses. I want you to understand that Yeshua could not unless he sinned for such an action would be considered the breaking of many Commandments.

Answer for yourself: How could Jesus have then said explicitly that he came only to fulfill the laws of the Covenant?

The truth of the matter is that Yeshua never came to abolish Judaism, but only that he came to **re-establish the religion for "lost sheep of Israel" which at that time included many assimilated Jews from the captivities who had literally become "Gentiles" from pagan influence and who at that time were spread throughout the nations.** His message was one of repentance and return to the roots of their ancestor's faith; not to follow a new one as sadly what has happened with Gentile Christianity. He came to reestablish from that time onward the faith that God had given from the beginning-Noahidism and the Laws of Moses which built upon them! Let us not forget that this religion new, but actually ancient; it being the observance of the **Seven Commandments of Noah**, which were forgotten purposefully by Shammai and his students as they wanted to keep the non-Jews at arms length through enforced circumcision upon non-Jewish males. Such men like Shammai were influencing the people of Israel in Jesus' day; **thus Jesus came not for those who are well but those who need a physician and who are sick; sick with hatred for the Gentiles whom God loved and to whom He had called Israel to be a light unto to**

show them the Torah (the Noahide Laws). God had intended for the Gentiles to be redeemed all along. Jesus came for the "lost sheep of the house of Israel"; who had lost their way. These truths were not only for them, but the Gentiles as well. **It is important to understand that as there were "people who were lost" in Israel, there were others like the Essene Menahem and the Hillel Pharisees who had not "lost their way" and needed little if any correction by Yeshua!**

DO YOU REALLY UNDERSTAND THE GREAT COMMISSION?

Jesus's Apostles, in fulfillment of the Great Commission of their master, established these Seven Commandments anew (Acts 15, Acts 21). However, those born as Jews (with Jewish mothers), or those Gentiles where were immersed and circumcised as "full-converts" to Judaism (Ex. 12:49; one law shall be to him that is home-born, and unto the stranger) are obligated to observe all 613 of the commandments of the Torah without exception.

For the uncircumcised Gentile God reserved the Seven Commandments which they have always been obligated to fulfill. It is for that reason that they were forbidden pollution of idols, fornication, blood, and things strangled (Acts 15). Yeshua's Apostles also forbade them circumcision (to do so would mean full conversion) and the Sabbath observance (exactly like the Jews observed it). The mandatory observance by "God-Fearers" was similar, but not exactly alike the Jewish observance.

This may sound so different from what your traditional Christian message has been, but your Christian message is incorrect if it does not agree or line up with the Apostle's Doctrine. Maybe this does not matter to you at all, and if not, then you should check your heart! All of what I have shared with you is in accord with the law and custom of the Torah, as expounded by the Jewish sages, the true transmitters from Moses at Sinai, and understood by Jesus of Nazareth in the first century (they sit in Moses' seat...listen to what they say). Our understanding today is incorrect if it violates the truths as Jesus understood them. We do not know more about salvation than Jesus or the Jews. It was to the Hillel Pharisees Jesus referred to in Matt. 23 who set in Moses' seat and to whom we are to listen for correct doctrine. We are not to follow the examples of any leaders if they do not line up with the Apostle's Doctrine of Acts 2:42. This teaching on immersion and conversion is Apostolic Doctrine as Yeshua taught his disciples, and any other interpretation other than his is NOT correct. We are not to follow any Pharisee's examples unless they live what they preach (that means the Pharisee Preachers of today who fail to teach and live the truth of Apostolic Doctrine)! Jesus tells us not to follow them unless they agree with him! Good advice.

This same admonition is given in Deut. 17:8 ff., where the authority to teach and lead the people were given to the religious leaders God put over the people of "Israel". These occupy Moses' seat.

Answer for yourself: Do the Baptists, Methodist, Catholics, Assemblies of God, or any other denomination or non-denomination occupy Moses' seat? No.

The Catholic and Protestant denominations are far from being Jewish and in fact the majority of their doctrines are anti-Jewish or should I say anti-Biblical. Salvation is of the Jews according to Yeshua. Do you dare tell him he made a mistake?

It was these Sages and Pharisees who said that it is forbidden to circumcise a Gentile who does not accept upon himself the yoke of "ALL" the Commandments. In America male babies are circumcised apart from the truths of God's Word (we are commanded to circumcise on the 8th day and no within the first 2-3 days of a newborn's life) and thus their circumcision would not apply. That means circumcision that does violate Scripture does not automatically make you a "full-fledged" Jew. You are still a "God-Fearer". Identification with Israel is by faith and free will. You must choose to stand at your personal Sinai and say to God "I will do all that you say".

Answer for yourself: Do you want to obey God? Do you want to honor His Name with your life? Going to churches that teach error does not accomplish anything. It is bondage just like Egypt!

Answer for yourself: Have you ever been to Sinai? Will you ever go? Have you chosen to return to your Egypt of ignorance and false traditions and false religion that amount to idolatry?

The Sages likewise said that the **Gentile is commanded NOT to "fully" observe the Sabbath as does the Jew (yet he is to remember and keep it)**. Acts 20:6 recounts for us the Gentile believers and how they were taught by Paul to remember and keep the Sabbath. **It is here we find under Paul's instruction the Gentile Church keeping Jewish ordinances well over thirty years after Yeshua's death.**

Answer for yourself: What would later change this pattern?

As far as the Gentiles ("God-Fearers") were concerned, they were not commanded to observe all the Torah (the 613 mitzvot). The Gentile "God-Fearers" did not have to accept all the 613 mitzvot and are not enjoined to observe all of the 613 commandments. However, it is completely different as far as Jews are concerned, for they became obligated to fulfill the Torah because God delivered them from the bondage of Egypt to be the people of His possession. Therefore they and their children became **subject to it forever and so are those Gentiles who make full-conversions to Judaism.**

WHAT IS THE BOTTOM LINE ON THE MATTER?

It should be easy to see that Jesus and his Apostles never meant to abolish the Torah of Moses from one who is born a Jew. Likewise, did Paul write in his letter to the Corinthians (1 Cor 7) that each should adhere to the faith in which each was called. They therefore acted in accordance with the Torah by **forbidding circumcision to Gentiles, according to Halakhah, as it is forbidden to one who does not accept the yoke of the commandments (all 613 would mean conversion to Judaism whereby then one would be obligated to all 613)**. They knew that it would be too difficult for the Gentiles to observe all the Torah of Moses especially living in non-Jewish settlements and lacking background in Biblical faith. Let us not forget that the Gentiles never had the Revelation of the Torah at Sinai, the Ark of the Covenant, the Tabernacle, the Two Tablets, the prophets, or the Temple & Tabernacle services as were given to Israel. The Gentile's only experience was that they were strangers from the Covenant promises of Israel, aliens for the commonwealth of God's people, without hope and without God in the world.

The rabbis thus took the Gentiles the revelation of God and instructed them not to be circumcised unless they wished to be fully converted to Judaism (this had no bearing upon immersion since it was required for "partial" as well as "full" conversion). **It would suffice that the Gentiles observe the Seven Noahide Commandments, as commanded upon them through the Halakhah from Moses at Sinai. This was the minimum requirements for inclusion into Israel and the minimum requirements of the non-Jew's Covenant with God.**

Rabbi Emden was correct; Jesus brought a double kindness into the world. One the one hand, he strengthened the Torah of Moses majestically (Acts 24:20 states that many thousands of Jews were believers in Yeshua as Messiah and zealous for the Torah (Law); this was over 30 years after Yeshua's death and resurrection). The ministry of Jesus helped return the "children of Israel back to their Fathers; the Patriarchs and their faith" and thus fulfill Malachi's prophecy.

On the other hand, Yeshua did much good for the Gentiles. **Yeshua obligated his Apostles to fulfill the Great Commission by taking the Gentiles (as a minimum) the Seven Commandments of Noah** so that they should not be as the beasts of the field and continue to live their lives as pagans and animals. **He also bestowed upon them ethical ways, and in this respect he was much less stringent with them (66 laws) than the Torah of Moses was for the Jews (613).** It is not necessary to impose upon Jews many such ethical practices, since they have been obligated to the yoke of Torah since Sinai. Israel took the oath at Sinai and are already trained in proper practice and nature of the Second Tablet of the Law (ethical monotheism and the horizontal relationships man-to-man). It would be for Paul to constantly correct, reprove, teach Apostolic Doctrine, and instruct the Gentiles in his travels since it was to his audience he would write "you are strangers from the Covenant promises, aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, without hope and without God in the world".

If Christians would study they would understand what I have detailed in this teaching. No longer would the Church be allowed to erroneously teach the abolishment of the Torah of Moses along with the Laws of Noah if the people in the pew would elevate their Biblical knowledge. Such would be impetus for the Pastors to study more and get off the golf courses. Such sin and false doctrines and foolishness would cease.

Because of these errant scholars, hatred has increased toward the Jews who are blameless of any guilt concerning Yeshua's death and proceed innocently to observe their Torah with all their heart (intellect), soul (dedication and commitment to action) and might (resources and property). The leaders of the Churches of Jesus Christ should study to learn correctly for themselves before they lead their people into sin and astray from the will of God for their lives. The Jew is the brother of the Christian. Ephraim (the grafted-in Gentile) and Judah make up Israel. As members of the Christian faith, how good and pleasant it might be if you would observe what was commanded to you by your first teachers, sent directly to you by Yeshua, with his message, and not the message that anti-Semitic Christianity has created these last 2000 years.

Now for the next article in this series.



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AS A CHRISTIAN DO YOU KNOW WHICH COVENANT YOUR UNDER? #8

After devoting considerable time and space to the discussion of Jeremiah's "New/Re-Newed" Covenant it is time once again to continue with our study into the Seven Covenants of YHWH in hopes of determining which Covenant the Christian finds his standing. The purpose of this study is not only to ascertain the above to help the non-Jewish Christian Believer better understand how he is to relate to the God of the Universe and take upon himself such Covenant stipulations in order to be more pleasing to Him. Now let us turn to the last Covenant given in the Bible.

#7 THE COVENANT WITH DAVID

The Davidic Covenant was the seventh covenant of the Jewish scriptures and the final covenant made with ancient Israel. Messianic expectation in the Abrahamic the Mosaic and the Moabic covenants was vaguely suggested but was not a dominant issue. The Davidic Covenant, however, is the stimulus of the Messianic hope of Israel.

Israel had no king from the Jewish year 2488, the year of their entrance into Eretz Israel, until the anointing of Saul, three hundred twenty-six years later. Saul reigned forty years. David reigned at Hebron for seven years before his kingdom was fully established in the Jewish year 2854. This was about nine hundred years before the Common Era. David, too, reigned for forty years. Only after his kingdom was established and the Davidic Covenant was ratified did Messianic speculation become a prominent theme in Israel's eschatological expectation.

Nathan, the prophet, in II Samuel 7:4-17, spoke the words of the Davidic Covenant. Developing their messages from that covenant, many of the prophets spoke in detail of the kingdom of the Messiah, the days of the Messiah and the Messianic Age.

According to the Messianic expectation of Israel, the Messiah will come from the line of David's descendants. The tribe of Judah had been designated as the regal tribe by the patriarch Jacob in the prophetic blessings of his sons in Genesis 49:8-12: Judah, thou art he whom thy brethren shall praise: thy hand shall be on the neck of shine enemies; thy father's children shall bow down before thee. Judah is a lion's whelp: from the prey, my son, thou art gone up: he stooped down, he crouched as a lion, and as an old lion; who shall rouse him up?

The scepter [regal staff] shall not depart from Judah, nor a law-giver from between his feet, until Shiloh [the peace giver] come; and unto him shall the gathering of the [Gentile] people be. Binding his foal unto the vine, and his ass's colt unto the choice vine; he washed his garments in wine and his clothes in the blood of grapes. His eyes shall be red with wine, and his teeth white with milk.

This prophecy by Jacob that Judah would be the regal house of Israel was made in the Jewish year 2255. It lay dormant without any particular fulfillment until Nathan expressed the Davidic Covenant at the beginning of the reign of David six hundred years later. Thereafter, Messianic speculation and expectation grew rapidly. The

division of Israel into two kingdoms, the moral decadence of those kingdoms, the Babylonian captivity, and the struggle in the reestablishment of Judah made the hope of the Promised One of David even more urgent. The coming of the Romans and the oppression of the Edomite dynasty of the Herods sharpened the Messianic consciousness to a keen edge.

Answer for yourself: What did the Jews of Yeshua's day expect the Messiah, the regal son of David, to be and to do?

Answer for yourself: How, if at all, did their Messianic expectation differ from the traditional view of Judaism today concerning the person and work of the Messiah?

First, the Messiah would be human. He would be a descendant of David, and he would be from the City of David, Bethlehem of Judaea. He would make his appearance in a regal form. He would be a triumphant king! He would arise as did David out of the ranks of the common people. The Messiah would appear at a particular time and in a particular situation. His appearance would come at a time of great distress and trouble. He would reveal himself at a dark time when the nation of Israel would be on the brink of destruction. The Messiah, the Son of David, would appear and redeem the nation from gross oppression forced upon them by alien powers. He would destroy all those oppressors. He would purge the land of Israel from apostate rule and religious hypocrisy. He would bring again the Shekinah Glory to the Temple. The law of Torah would once more rule the land. He would avenge the people of Israel and destroy the Gentile nations which had sought the destruction of the people and nation of Israel. He would establish an unprecedented era of peace on earth. The nations would learn war no more. Peace and justice and righteousness would reign upon the earth. In the days of the Messiah, the dead would be raised. Israel would receive its full inheritance from the Nile River in Egypt in the south to the Euphrates River in the north. The earth would be filled with the knowledge of the Eternal One as the waters cover the seas. The Messiah would restore the whole earth and all mankind to its perfect state under the Edenic Covenant. That Messiah would never die, but he would live forever and ever, ages without end. Of his kingdom, there would be no end. He would reign forever and ever.

These are the expectations of the Davidic Covenant with all its developments through the prophets. This is what the Jews of Yeshua's time expected the Messiah to do and to be. This is what traditional Judaism today expects in the person and work of the Messiah. The Jews have never, they can never, they will never accept anyone as Messiah who does not meet these expectations and performances.

NOW YOU HAVE SEEN THE EVIDENCE

These seven covenants are the covenants of the Jewish scripture. They express the promises of God to Israel and the expectations Israel has of his God. **The Edenic, the Adamic and the Noahic covenants are universal and are to the Gentiles. Outside of Conversion to Judaism, the Christian has to find his "identity" with God in these and only these covenants.** It does not take a rocket scientist to understand that the Edenic and Adamic Covenants today were specific and not applicable to the non-Jewish believer. **This means that the non-Jewish believer today, the Christian and the Muslim for example and all other non-Jews find their relationship and standing with God ONLY through the Covenant of Noah. For the Christian to maintain that he has a relationship with God apart from the Covenant of Noah along with its 66 laws and commandments is ludicrous if not downright dangerous. To do so means you stand outside the Covenants of God! It means you reject the only Covenant you have and find your standing before God based on man-made theology which contradicts the Jewish Scriptures! This is the legacy of anti-Semitic Rome who recorded such ideas within the New Testament which is a document they "finalized" and altered almost beyond recognition.** Israel is involved in these covenants only in a restricted sense. The Abrahamic, the Sinatic, the Moabic, and the Davidic are primarily to the separate people of Israel. The Gentile nations or individuals are involved only in a restricted measure to these covenants of Israel.

Answer for yourself: At this point, a vital question arises demanding an answer: What did Yeshua mean when he said, "This cup is the **New** Testament [or New Covenant] in my blood shed for the sins of many"?

Answer for yourself: To which of the seven covenants was he making reference? Or, was he making reference to any of the former covenants?

Answer for yourself: Was the **New** Testament spoken of by Yeshua an entirely separate economy from any of the former?

Answer for yourself: If it was a separate economy from the seven covenants of Israel's scripture, what is its relationship to them?

Answer for yourself: Or did Yeshua even say "new" although the Bibles you buy today has such a wording?

Answer for yourself: Can it be shown from archeology and examination of the Greek New Testament manuscripts that "new" was added to these passages by the Monks as they continually created new "theologies" not taught in the Jewish Scriptures nor accepted by the Jerusalem Church? It sure can!

Answer for yourself: Have you ever looked in a good study Bible to the footnotes that tell you that the word "new" is not in the best and oldest manuscripts?

The above example of adding "new" to the corners and margins of existing Greek manuscripts whereby later it was included in the "text" as if God breathed is just another in a long series of examples of Gentile theologians creating a "replacement religion" which was given to unsuspecting Gentiles who knew no better having not been equipped with the knowledge of the Jewish Scriptures. In other words we follow in Christianity today a false religion that is diametrically opposed to the faith and religion of Yeshua.

REPLACEMENT THEOLOGY AND THE VALIDITY OF THE GENTILE CHRISTIAN CHURCH

Replacement theologians paint one big sign on the Jewish Bible and call it the "Old Testament." This implies, naturally, that it is antiquated, abrogated, obsolete, done away with, and destroyed. For all practical purposes for the Christian non-Jewish believer the "Old Testament" is replaced by the "New Testament." The Gentile theologians have treated the "Old Testament" with great disrespect like a piece of old clothing fit for throwing away. These Gentile theologians use the Jewish scripture only to rip off a part here and there, modify it to their own designs, and use it to make functional their theology of the "New Testament" which can be shown easily to be diametrically opposed to what Yeshua both believed and practiced as a Jew. In other words lies are mixed in with truths in the New Testament and without training and education on your part you most likely cannot tell the difference when reading it. Thus you come away from the New Testament with a mixture of truth and lies which leads you to incorrect beliefs which influence your actions. The bottom line is that this becomes sin in many cases because such conduct violates the commandments of God which are the founding blocks of your Covenant and which assure your right-standing before God.

In ripping off or stealing parts from the Jewish canon, these Gentile Christian Replacement Theologians took the words "Israel" and "Jews," reinterpreted them with new spiritual interpretations, and attempted to pass them off as "True Israel" and "True Jews" as designations of the Church and the Christians.

The theologians took pleasure in calling the ancient people of Jacob "old," "fleshly," "earthly," or "natural Israel." They considered the Jews of the Old Testament heritage as no more purposeful than other discarded clothes lining the street outside a goodwill container.

Replacement theologians not only discarded the people of the covenants of Israel, they also reduced the holy, immutable, eternal covenants of oath to mere vows which could be revoked by official Church dogmas and "bulls". Any benefits found in those covenants were ripped off and applied to the Church. Christianity and Christian theology became the new vehicle of divine revelation, a vehicle made from selected parts from the Jewish Old Testament.

The tools used in making this modification were the terms of Greek logic and mythology as well as the content of Greek philosophy. Pagan words and pagan definitions totally alien to Jewish thoughts were substituted for rabbinic concepts. Foreign terms such as incarnation, theophany and trinity were introduced into the new system. These pagan mythological clichés became the dogmatic expression and credo of the new religion.

Every field of systematic theology was affected by this replacement concept. The concept of the Jewish God of the Old Testament was treated as a legalistic God of wrath and judgment. He was contrasted to the new God of the Christian New Testament, who is a God of love in Yeshua. The Law of Torah became a bitter, vulgar and obsolete thing, while the sweet Christian love could create holy wars, crusades, the Inquisition, and pogroms. That sort of "Christian love" is ludicrous and sickens the minds of men not filled with hatred for the Jewish people.

The anthropology of replacement theology wiped out all suggestion of the Jews as a chosen or separate people. In this new order, Yeshua did away with Israel as separate from the Gentile nations. The Jews became not only like all other peoples, they were relegated to a subhuman class. Much of the Gentile Church's propaganda against the Jews consisted of direct quotes from Christian literature and liturgy. The Chosen People are the Christians, not the Jews.

To illustrate how perverted the logic of Christian anthropology became, the Jew who converted to Christianity had to deny his Jewishness. At his baptism, he vowed to renounce Judaism and all its "heresies." After his baptism he was told that he was no longer a Jew, but was now a Christian. In many cases he was forced to change his name from a Jewish to a Christian one. He had to give up the observance and sanctification of the Sabbath for the day of the Sun. His Biblical Festivals were replaced with pagan holidays only "re-worked" to which Yeshua's name was attached.

After these renunciations of his Jewishness, these Jewish converts to Christianity began to study the catechism which taught that the pagan Gentiles who become Christians became true spiritual Jews. The logic of Christian anthropology is more a double inversion rather than a simple conversion. The Jew who became a Christian became a Gentile, while the Gentile who became a Christian became a Jew. Such metamorphosis is nowhere to be found in nature (or in the scriptures).

THE TRUE MESSAGE OF SALVATION OF THE BIBLE CHANGES IN THE NEW TESTAMENT....HOW CAN THAT BE SINCE GOD CHANGES NOT?

The soteriology of replacement theology deals with replacement doctrines of salvation. In this concept Yeshua came to be the Savior of Israel. Israel, accordingly, rejected the Savior and crucified him. In this crisis, the "God" of Christian love quickly put the pieces of this tragedy into a new plan, producing the crisis theory of the Gospel of salvation made available to everyone.

The church, instead of Israel being a light unto the nations for salvation, soon became the object of this salvation through dogmas, sacraments, or other institutional demands. As time passed, multiple varieties of doctrines developed in the various denominations, many of which conflicted and contradicted the doctrines of others. Unity in the doctrines of Christ was impossible with over 2000 different Christian denominations which have over 2000 different ideas about Yeshua. Most of the Good News propagated by the missionaries today is to convert other Christians to their own denomination's "salvation," while they admittedly declare "millions have never heard the Gospel."

In all the various Christian salvation messages, there are only two classes of people in this world and in the world to come. There are the saved and the lost. The definition of who the "lost" are is determined by to whom you speak. The saved are those who accept a given particular message of a "particular" denomination over that of another. The Catholics have a different salvation message from the Baptists, they both differ from the

Church of Christ, etc. Those who do not obey the various particular interpretations of the Gospel are the lost. More than anyone else, the Jew is treated as lost, blind, stubborn and damned. The "God" of Christian love has put all of his eggs in one basket now—the Christian church.

In 1973, over one hundred forty denominations decided to drop all doctrinal differences and join hands in the "Key '73" project. One single objective was in focus. "Let us reach the whole world with the Gospel message in the next decade." The Key '73 program spelled out its own failure. The problem was that the one hundred forty denominations could not agree on what the Gospel really is. If Christianity cannot define and agree on the "Gospel of Yeshua Christ which is the power of God unto salvation," how could they ever agree on anything?

Soteriology, the doctrine of salvation, is the most emphatic and important section of Christian theology. This is especially true in evangelical Christianity. Yet, in this very field, that same Christian theology finds its greatest weakness. If you have not noticed that New Testament is full of two competing and conflicting "Gospel" dealing with inheriting Eternal Life...one as taught by Paul and one as taught by Yeshua and neither agree with each other. One is true and one is false.

Answer for yourself: Have you ever noticed this? If not, e-mail us for the articles and we will show it to you beyond any doubt.

Ecclesiology is the study of community or church. Since salvation is only in the Gospel of Jesus Christ, according to replacement theologians, the only true community of God would be the Church. Denominational plurality finds its strongest expression in ecclesiology. It erased the distinction between soteriology, or salvation, and ecclesiology, or the church. The church and salvation became synonymous. Cyprian, in the fourth century was first to say that "there is no salvation outside the Bishop (the Catholic Church)". His ideas continue today. "Our church is the one and only true religion"; "Our church is the pillar and ground of the truth"; "Our church is the body and bride of Christ; other Christians may be in heaven, but they will only be friends of the bridegroom—we are the true church"; "God raised up our church to call all the true believers out of the apostate churches in our city." These quotations and other statements, such as "the plain truth," "facts you need to know about God's will for your life," "our denominational distinctives," are common to the vast majority of Christian organizations throughout the world. **At the same time, they all deny the community of Israel, the Jewish people, the light to the nations given by God. Israel has no place in the economy of God, according to strict replacement theology.**

If the Christian believes that the Church is the only true community of God, and that his particular denomination enjoys a special favor in that economy, he finds himself experiencing a great difficulty in recognizing the legitimacy of other Christians being on equal standing without a compromise of his own denominational distinctives. It would be totally foreign for him to accept the idea that Israel had a community relationship with God completely separate and apart from his own.

When, however, the Christian makes the discovery that not only Israel has a place in the economy of God, but his standing before God is dependent on him being grafted into and part of the Israel of God whereby he accepts and attempts to live by his Covenant stipulations, the Covenant of Noah, then it will revolutionize his attitude toward, and his relationship with, Jewish people, with his neighbor Christians, with the study of the Bible, with himself, and with God. Ecclesiology made no allocation for a plural community either in this world or in the world to come. Such a shame. Shalom.



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THE COVENANT OF EVERLASTING LIFE

The Meaning of the Covenant of the Rainbow

The idea of everlasting life is rather appealing to most folks. A somewhat primal yearning seemingly tugs at us to somehow reclaim that certain something which Adam and Eve lost when they sunk their teeth into that fruit from the Garden of Eden.

On a more serious note, we find in Genesis that God created and gave Adam a prohibition not to eat from the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil. As we know from studying the Torah, Adam and Eve transgressed the Prohibition, and as a result of their transgression, they suffered a physical loss - or, in other words, because of their physical transgression of eating the forbidden fruit, they suffered a physical punishment. And what did Adam and Eve lose “physically” by transgressing the Prohibition? The answer is very clear - Adam and Eve lost immortality. The punishment meted out by Hashem was the forfeiture of everlasting life - the ability to live forever without aging or dying.

Now, at this point, the reader must realize that the concept of everlasting life is nothing new to most world religions. If you are a Christian you cannot help but remember the teachings of Christianity concerning everlasting life; according to Christianity, everlasting life is a fundamental element of the “good news” or “gospel” of Jesus Christ. The only way, according to Christianity, for a human being to attain everlasting life is to accept Jesus Christ as his or her personal savior. And we were also taught, of course, that those who do not accept him are doomed to everlasting damnation. Weeping, wailing and gnashing of teeth... remember? Soul-winning became a primary focus of the Church - and during the Dark Ages, for example, those individuals who would not accept Jesus as the savior and proclaim him as lord were consigned to a fiery death at the stake in order to save their immortal souls (out of Christian love for the lost, of course)!

Let us take a minute and focus upon the significance of the punishment Adam and Eve received. Their punishment, the death sentence, was physical, not spiritual! Their souls were not punished in the sense that their souls were not condemned to death; their souls were never lost. In fact, the soul is Godly, as it is taught in Mishlei 20:27,

The soul of a man is the lamp of Hashem.

It should be noted that, according to Jewish teaching, the soul has three garments: **thought, speech, and action**. In our world, the World of Action, the soul, which is spiritual in nature, does not have the means to give expression to thought, speech, or action unless it has a physical body in which it is united. Therefore, as a result of their transgression, the very thing which Adam’s and Eve’s souls lost was the ability to remain permanently in a physical world within a physical body.

Mankind’s dilemma of not having the God-given ability to live forever is remedied by the Torah. The antidote for the poison of transgressing God’s prohibition to not eat from the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil is the Torah and its mitzvot. The Torah teaches there will be a Resurrection of the Dead, and everlasting life for those who keep the mitzvot (commandments), both Jews and non-

Jews. Understand there that the Commandments required by God of the Jew and the non-Jew are both the same...yet different. As taught in prior articles on this website the Covenant of Noah and the Laws of Noah required of the non-Jew are reiterated fully in the Laws and Covenant of Moses for the Jew and also it is here with the Jew that God enlarges the Commandments required of the Jew over the non-Jew. For the Jews, the Torah's teachings concerning everlasting life are quite clear, but for B'nei Noach-the Gentile believer the Torah's teachings concerning everlasting life for the non-Jew (and the Seven Laws of Noah) have been impossible to find without the help of the Jews.

For centuries, a great number of non-Jews have persecuted and murdered the Jews, either by being active participants or by being silent witnesses. Jews were, for the most part, unable to teach their non-Jewish neighbors about the Seven Laws of Noah for fear of losing their lives. Therefore, the important teachings concerning the Seven Laws of Noah and the Covenant of the Rainbow were forced into hibernation as a result of gentile oppression and Jewish assimilation. However, with the reemergence of the Noachide movement in the twentieth century, several Jewish books concerning the Seven Laws of Noah and B'nei Noach have appeared in print - but something has been missing in these books - especially in those books which talk about the origins of the Noachide Laws.

During your studies, search the corpus of Jewish books which deal specifically with the Seven Laws of Noah, and see if any of them reflect upon the deeper meaning of the Covenant of the Rainbow. Oddly, this concept is lacking in all but one book currently on the market. It appears only one author has recognized such an important concept - Rabbi Yirmeyahu Bindman, author of **The Seven Colors of the Rainbow**. All the other books i.e., **The Path of the Righteous Gentile** and **The Image of the Non-Jew in Judaism**, etc., miss the mark in this area - and they miss something of grave importance for B'nei Noach. Of course, I am referring to the concept of everlasting life for B'nei Noach!

THE REVELATION OF GOD FOR THE NON-JEW

And Hashem God commanded the man, saying, 'Of every tree of the garden you shall surely eat.

Here, we are taught that this is the first mention of the Seven Laws. Indeed, we find that by expanding this condensed information, the Seven Universal Laws are made clearer yet, and the Torah's basic ethics for living are unveiled for mankind's observance. **Judaism teaches that Moshe Rabbenu again received these seven laws and gave them to Gentiles at Har Sinai.**

As Christians who understand that they are not really "Christians" but rather B'nei Noach who get to obey Isa. 56 and "choose those things pleasing" to God, we should look to Jewish scholarship to give additional depth and meaning to the Covenant of the Rainbow.

Answer for yourself: For dear Christian, can you not see the relationship between the 7 colors of the rainbow and the 7 mitzvot of Noah? **Such information comes only through Jewish scholarship and not through the anti-semitism of the early Catholic Greek Church Fathers.**

When the waters of the flood retreated, the ark settled on the ground in the Caucasus mountains, and Noah and his sons emerged with their families. Noah built an altar at the Temple site in Jerusalem and offered sacrifice in thanksgiving for the deliverance and for the opportunity to start again. The Torah states that God smelled the sweet odor of the sacrifice (Gen. 8:21), meaning that He was gratified that His will had indeed been carried out. **At this point, God made a covenant with the whole creation that in the merit of Noah He would never again destroy it because of the sins of humanity.**

All non-Jews in the world (including Christians), of every land and color, are heirs to Noah's achievement. All of humanity, diverse as it is, descends from the three sons of this one man, whose great scope made the foundation for them all. This covenant of everlasting life was given through the sign of the rainbow, which God told Noah would be the reminder in the heavens of His eternal decision. Now everyone need only to look up after a rain, and they can see the beautiful display that assures them that evil will never be allowed to overcome them. And God gave the rainbow seven distinct colors - to remind men and women of the Seven Commandment that lay behind the covenant, the laws that will bring all of humanity to merit their ultimate redemption.

God is speaking though nature itself and tells all of His Children the path to the World to Come with every rainbow we see!

It is evident from the promise by Hashem to Noach that his descendents, through the merit of Noach and as a result of their observance of the Seven Laws of Noah, would have Everlasting Life.

Contrary to the latter teachings of Christianity concerning everlasting life, the Torah teaches us that we can regain what Adam and Eve lost through their failure to keep the Prohibition (not to eat from the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil), and that our souls will be able to give physical expression of praise to Hashem in the world to come (Olam Haba). All that is required is that we observe the Seven Laws of Noah.

THERE SHOULD HAVE NEVER BEEN ANY CHRISTIANITY WHATSOEVER

Answer for yourself: Are you aware that if the righteous Jews of the Second Temple period had taught the Seven Laws of Noah to the non-Jews, there would never have risen a religion such as Christianity?

It is time for the Christian to learn something. The information necessary to understand the above statement is very involved and lengthy yet I will try to summarize. The Great Commission of Yeshua/Jesus was not the first...in fact it was the Second. Rabbi Hillel in 20 B.C.E. understood that God had judged Israel guilty of violating the Second Tablet of the Law. The Second Tablet of the Law involved man's relationship with mankind; in particular Israel's relationship with the non-Jewish world. Instead of Israel being a light unto the Nations the nation had turned within and had failed to reach out to the heathen with the truth about the Creator. In particular the light that Israel was supposed to shine upon the heathen was their Covenant with God called the Covenant of Noah. Israel's lack of love (since the Second Tablet of the Law are manifestations of love between man and man) for the Gentile due to years of persecutions, murder, captivity, occupation, etc., were the obvious reasons why the Jews without Eternal Life from the non-Jew. Only through circumcision and full conversion of the non-Jew would the Jews be receptive of non-Jews and that was tedious to say the least. But God held them accountable as His Holy Nation and Royal Priesthood....for a Priest brings mankind to God. Such was God's displeasure and the book of Daniel forewarns Israel of the forthcoming destruction of the Temple and the nation of Israel. Some Rabbis heeded the warning; many did not. Rabbi Hillel who influence Yeshua began the First Great Commission to take the Covenant and Laws of Noah to the Gentile nations in a repentant attempt to forestall or set aside the forthcoming prophesied judgment of God. Yeshua would fifty years later attempt the same in the Second Great Commission to the nations where the Commandments of God were taken to them in the form of the Covenant of Noah. Again a Third

attempt was made by James and the Apostolic community to take the Laws of Noah to the nations to not only fulfill Israel's calling as a Holy Priesthood but to repent of Israel's failure to obey the Second Tablet of the Law where they withheld God's love to the Gentile nations by refusing to teach them the Covenant and Laws of Noah for Eternal Life; instead they had enforced circumcision upon the nature-worshipping heathen who were into fertility rites and paganism. Israel's failure to teach the Nations how to come to God was a terrible sin; one which would cost them their Temple and their land for 2000 years. Efforts were made to turn Israel in repentance and avoid the judgment of God. Sadly the efforts of Hillel, Yeshua, and James would not be enough because after Hillel's death Gentile hating Rabbis like R. Shammai took control and direction of Israel as a nation and continued repressive treatment of the Gentiles. The Roman occupation of Israel and their harsh treatment of the Jews under P. Pilate did not help the matter but yet God called Israel to rise above their situation and not strike the rock twice but reveal Him accurately to the Nations. Failure to do that would by the year 70 A.D. mean the ultimate destruction of Israel and her Temple. Now understand that if Israel had lived up to her Covenant under God in relationship to her brothers the non-Jews and the Lost Tribes of Israel who had been assimilated into the Gentile nations then there would have never been any Essene radical apocalyptic theology and crucified sun-godmen theology that would have become the very basis for a mutated Judaism/Gentile religion that we have today for it was these Essenes who later became followers of the "Christ" and who departed from Biblical Judaism as we knew it. Understand as well that it was the Shammai Pharisees and NOT the Hillel Pharisees that brought the destruction upon Israel. Understand as well it was not the Shammai Pharisees alone but the Gentile hating Essenes as well along with the Sadducees that departed from true Biblical faith and caused Israel's demise. If Israel had repented and given the Gentile world the Laws of Noah and the Covenant of Noah as Hillel, Yeshua, and James had tried then today we would not be buried in the apostasy, idolatry, and blasphemy that we are as Gentile Christians. That says more than you know; trust me on that!

Answer for yourself: Having read the above paragraph now are you aware that Jesus' Great Commission was intended to take the Laws of Moses [613] (containing the Laws of Noah [66]) to all the Gentiles of the world ("lost sheep of the House of Israel") who had previously been Hebrews the over 8 centuries earlier before their Assyrian captivity and assimilation into the Gentile nations of the world?

With the knowledge that (through the observance of the Sheva Mitzvot B'nei Noach) everlasting life could be attained as promised by Hashem to Noach, the resulting fabrication that everlasting life could come only through belief and worship of a human being cast in the image of sun-god men that were nothing more than personified astro-theology would never have happened. Instead, as we have noted, the teaching concerning the Covenant of the Rainbow - The Covenant of Everlasting Life, had been forced into hiding by the vicious persecution of the Jews, and the "New Covenant" [in reality it is the "Renewed Covenant"] of Christianity was but a pagan attempt to replace the eternal Covenant made by Hashem to Noach. Thankfully, the truth and light of Torah concerning the Covenant of the Rainbow now emerges and illuminates the Path of Life for B'nei Noach and beckons majestically to a needy world.

We should gratefully thank God for restoring the Covenant of Everlasting Life to its proper place in the Torah. It has always been there but attainable only through Israel as it was meant to be. Certainly, we should pray for Hashem's blessings upon those who teach such truths for the sacrifices they made in studying Torah and for fulfilling the mitzvah of teaching us such an important truth. Bet Emet appreciates and covets your prayers in this regard. And happy we should be - even non-Jews want to live forever, don't we?

THE COVENANT OF EVERLASTING LIFE

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LEVITICUS 23

1 ¶ And the LORD spoke unto Moses, saying: 2 Speak unto the children of Israel, and say unto them: The appointed seasons of the LORD, which ye shall proclaim to be holy convocations, even these are My appointed seasons. 3 Six days shall work be done; but on the seventh day is a sabbath of solemn rest, a holy convocation; ye shall do no manner of work; it is a sabbath unto the LORD in all your dwellings. 4 ¶ These are the appointed seasons of the LORD, even holy convocations, which ye shall proclaim in their appointed season. 5 In the first month, on the fourteenth day of the month at dusk, is the LORD'S passover. 6 And on the fifteenth day of the same month is the feast of unleavened bread unto the LORD; seven days ye shall eat unleavened bread. 7 In the first day ye shall have a holy convocation; ye shall do no manner of servile work. 8 And ye shall bring an offering made by fire unto the LORD seven days; in the seventh day is a holy convocation; ye shall do no manner of servile work. 9 And the LORD spoke unto Moses saying: 10 Speak unto the children of Israel, and say unto them: When ye are come into the land which I give unto you, and shall reap the harvest thereof, then ye shall bring the sheaf of the first-fruits of your harvest unto the priest. 11 And he shall wave the sheaf before the LORD, to be accepted for you; on the morrow after the sabbath the priest shall wave it. 12 And in the day when ye wave the sheaf, ye shall offer a he-lamb without blemish of the first year for a burnt-offering unto the LORD. 13 And the meal-offering thereof shall be two tenth parts of an ephah of fine flour mingled with oil, an offering made by fire unto the LORD for a sweet savour; and the drink-offering thereof shall be of wine, the fourth part of a hin. 14 And ye shall eat neither bread, nor parched corn, nor fresh ears, until this selfsame day, until ye have brought the offering of your God; it is a statute for ever throughout your generations in all your dwellings. 15 ¶ And ye shall count unto you from the morrow after the day of rest, from the day that ye brought the sheaf of the waving; seven weeks shall there be complete; 16 even unto the morrow after the seventh week shall ye number fifty days; and ye shall present a new meal-offering unto the LORD. 17 Ye shall bring out of your dwellings two wave-loaves of two tenth parts of an ephah; they shall be of fine flour, they shall be baked with leaven, for first-fruits unto the LORD. 18 And ye shall present with the bread seven lambs without blemish of the first year, and one young bullock, and two rams; they shall be a burnt-offering unto the LORD, with their meal-offering, and their drink-offerings, even an offering made by fire, of a sweet savour unto the LORD. 19 And ye shall offer one he-goat for a sin-offering, and two he-lambs of the first year for a sacrifice of peace-offerings. 20 And the priest shall wave them with the bread of the first-fruits for a wave-offering before the LORD, with the two lambs; they shall be holy to the LORD for the priest. 21 And ye shall make proclamation on the selfsame day; there shall be a holy convocation unto you; ye shall do no manner of servile work; it is a statute for ever in all your dwellings throughout your generations. 22 And when ye reap the harvest of your land, thou shalt not wholly reap the corner of thy field, neither shalt thou gather the gleanings of thy harvest; thou shalt leave them for the poor, and for the stranger: I am the LORD your God. 23 ¶ And the LORD spoke unto Moses, saying: 24 Speak unto the children of Israel, saying: In the seventh month, in the first day of the month, shall be a solemn rest unto you, a memorial proclaimed with the blast of horns, a holy convocation. 25 Ye shall do no manner of servile work; and ye shall bring an offering made by fire unto the LORD. 26 And the LORD spoke unto Moses, saying: 27 Howbeit on the tenth day of this seventh month is the day of atonement; there shall be a holy convocation unto you, and ye shall afflict your souls; and ye shall bring an offering made by fire unto the LORD. 28 And ye shall do no manner of work in that same day; for it is a day of atonement, to make atonement for you before the

LORD your God. 29 For whatsoever soul it be that shall not be afflicted in that same day, he shall be cut off from his people. 30 And whatsoever soul it be that doeth any manner of work in that same day, that soul will I destroy from among his people. 31 Ye shall do no manner of work; it is a statute for ever throughout your generations in all your dwellings. 32 It shall be unto you a sabbath of solemn rest, and ye shall afflict your souls; in the ninth day of the month at even, from even unto even, shall ye keep your sabbath. 33 ¶ And the LORD spoke unto Moses, saying: 34 Speak unto the children of Israel, saying: On the fifteenth day of this seventh month is the feast of tabernacles for seven days unto the LORD. 35 On the first day shall be a holy convocation; ye shall do no manner of servile work. 36 Seven days ye shall bring an offering made by fire unto the LORD; on the eighth day shall be a holy convocation unto you; and ye shall bring an offering made by fire unto the LORD; it is a day of solemn assembly; ye shall do no manner of servile work. 37 These are the appointed seasons of the LORD, which ye shall proclaim to be holy convocations, to bring an offering made by fire unto the LORD, a burnt-offering, and a meal-offering, a sacrifice, and drink-offerings, each on its own day; 38 beside the sabbaths of the LORD, and beside your gifts, and beside all your vows, and beside all your freewill-offerings, which ye give unto the LORD. 39 Howbeit on the fifteenth day of the seventh month, when ye have gathered in the fruits of the land, ye shall keep the feast of the LORD seven days; on the first day shall be a solemn rest, and on the eighth day shall be a solemn rest. 40 And ye shall take you on the first day the fruit of goodly trees, branches of palm-trees, and boughs of thick trees, and willows of the brook, and ye shall rejoice before the LORD your God seven days. 41 And ye shall keep it a feast unto the LORD seven days in the year; it is a statute for ever in your generations; ye shall keep it in the seventh month. 42 Ye shall dwell in booths seven days; all that are home-born in Israel shall dwell in booths; 43 that your generations may know that I made the children of Israel to dwell in booths, when I brought them out of the land of Egypt: I am the LORD your God. 44 And Moses declared unto the children of Israel the appointed seasons of the LORD.



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GOD'S APPOINTED TIMES IN THE HEBREW SCRIPTURES WITH APPLIATION & RELATIONSHIP TO THE NON-JEWISH BELIEVERS AND GOD-FEARERS

WHAT IS A MOED?

The order of **Moed ("appointed time")** provides specific instructions for the rituals, observances and laws related to holidays and festivals. **"Moed" is the biblical word used to describe special days that are set apart from non-sacred days. The Torah prescribes six such sacred occasions:**

- The weekly Sabbath,
- The Pilgrimage Festivals of Pesah (Passover),
- Shavuot (Pentecost)
- Sukkot (Tabernacles),

and what have become known as the High Holidays--

- Rosh Hashanah and
- Yom Kippur.

Additionally, the Mishnah in Seder Moed depicts the special days of Purim and as well as the 4 fast days. The absence of Hanukkah from this list has engendered considerable discussion, and may indicate the displeasure of the early Mishnah-era sages with the Maccabean dynasty. Thus you can see that the Hebrew term "moed" is a very important term in the Hebrew Scriptures and often goes unnoticed in our Scripture reading in the English. For our purposes it is important that we see just what the term means in its original language.

In the Hebrew the word for "festival" is translated:

Strong's number #4150 mowed, mo-ade'; or mo`ed, mo-ade'; or (fem.) mow`adah (2 Chron. 8:13), mo-aw-daw'; from 3259; prop. **an appointment**, i.e. a **fixed time or season; especially a festival**; conventionally a year; by implication, **an assembly (as convened for a definite purpose)**; technically the **congregation**; by extension, **the place of meeting** also a signal (as appointed beforehand):-appointed (sign, time), **(place of, solemn) assembly, congregation, (set, solemn) feast, (appointed, due) season, solemn (-ity), synagogue, (set) time (appointed).**

LAW OF FIRST USE IN THE TaNaKh (BIBLE):

Genesis 1:14 And God said, *"Let there be lights in the expanse of the sky to separate the day from the night, and let them serve as signs to mark seasons and days and years, And let them be lights in the expanse of the sky to give light on the earth."* And it was so.

This idea is repeated in the Psalm to indicate this relationship of an appointed time marked off by the moon:

Psalms 104:19 The moon marks off the seasons, and the sun knows when to go down.

Mo'ed in this next passage alludes to a festival. The rabbinic sages believe that this event occurred on Passover:

Genesis 17:19-21 Then God said, *"Yes, but your wife Sarah will bear you a son, and you will call him Isaac. I will establish my covenant with him as an everlasting covenant for his descendants after him.*

And as for Ishmael, I have heard you: I will surely bless him; I will make him fruitful and will greatly increase his numbers. He will be the father of twelve rulers, and I will make him into a great nation. But my covenant I will establish with Isaac, whom Sarah will bear to you by this time next year."

Genesis 18:10-14 Then the LORD said, *"I will surely return to you about this time next year, and Sarah your wife will have a son."* Now Sarah was listening at the entrance to the tent, which was behind him. Abraham and Sarah were already old and well advanced in years, and Sarah was past the age of childbearing. So Sarah laughed to herself as she thought, *"After I am worn out and my master is old, will I now have this pleasure?"* Then the LORD said to Abraham, *"Why did Sarah laugh and say, 'Will I really have a child, now that I am old?' Is anything too hard for the LORD? I will return to you at the appointed time next year and Sarah will have a son."*

Genesis 21:1-3 Now the LORD was gracious to Sarah as he had said, and the LORD did for Sarah what he had promised. Sarah became pregnant and bore a son to Abraham in his old age, at the very time God had promised him. Abraham gave the name Isaac to the son Sarah bore him.

MO'ED IS TRANSLATED AS FEAST:

This word "mo'ed" is often translated "feast". God's "feasts" are appointments God made with mankind as we can see in:

Lev 23:4-7 4 These are the feasts of the LORD, even holy convocations, which ye shall proclaim in their seasons. 5 In the fourteenth day of the first month at even is the LORD's passover. 6 And on the fifteenth day of the same month is the feast of unleavened bread unto the LORD: seven days ye must eat unleavened bread. 7 In the first day ye shall have an holy convocation: ye shall do no servile work therein. (KJV)

The Strong's Concordance #4150:

4150 mowed` (mo-ade'); or moed` (mo-ade'); or (feminine) mow`adah (2 Chronicles 8:13) (mo-aw-daw'); from 3259; properly, an appointment, i.e. a fixed time or season; specifically, a festival; conventionally a year; by implication, an assembly (as convened for a definite purpose); technically the congregation; by extension, the place of meeting; also a signal (as appointed beforehand): KJV-- appointed (sign, time), (place of, solemn) assembly, congregation, (set, solemn) feast, (appointed, due) season, solemn (-ity), synagogue, (set) time (appointed).

Brown-Driver-Briggs

4150 mowed` or moed` or (feminine) mow`adah (2 Chr. 8:13)- **an appointed place, an appointed time, a meeting a) an appointed time 1) an appointed time (in general) 2) a sacred season, a set feast, an appointed season b) an appointed meeting c) an appointed place d) an appointed sign or signal e) the Tent of Meeting.**

Notice with me how God is so specific about these "appointed times and appointed places" with His children:

*Leviticus 23:4-7 "These are the LORD'S **appointed feasts, the sacred assemblies you are to proclaim at their appointed times:** The LORD'S Passover begins at twilight on the fourteenth day of the first month. On the fifteenth day of that month the LORD'S Feast of Unleavened Bread begins; for seven days you must eat bread made without yeast...*

*Leviticus 23:15-16 "**From the day after the Sabbath, the day you brought the sheaf of the wave offering, count off seven full weeks. Count off fifty days up to the day after the seventh Sabbath, and then present an offering of new grain to the LORD.***

*Leviticus 23:24 "Say to the Israelites: '**On the first day of the seventh month you are to have a day of rest, a sacred assembly commemorated with trumpet blasts.***

*Leviticus 23:27 "**The tenth day of this seventh month is the Day of Atonement. Hold a sacred assembly and deny yourselves, and present an offering made to the LORD by fire.***

*Leviticus 23:34 "Say to the Israelites: '**On the fifteenth day of the seventh month the LORD'S Feast of Tabernacles begins, and it lasts for seven days.***

*Leviticus 23:37 ("**These are the LORD'S appointed feasts, which you are to proclaim as sacred assemblies** for bringing offerings made to the LORD by fire--the burnt offerings and grain offerings, sacrifices and drink offerings required for each day.*

*Deuteronomy 31:10-11 Then Moses commanded them: "**At the end of every seven years, in the appointed time of the year** for canceling debts, during the Feast of Tabernacles, When all Israel comes to appear before the LORD your God at the place he will choose, you shall read this law before them in their hearing.*

*Isaiah 33:20 Look upon Zion, **the city of our festivals;** your eyes will see Jerusalem, a peaceful abode, a tent that will not be moved; its stakes will never be pulled up, nor any of its ropes broken.*

I could go on but you get the point hopefully; namely, God has set aside special times and places for meeting with mankind. **These are the Festivals of God that reveal the times and the seasons with attendant Divine messages that are connected with God's equinoxes and solstices and can be shown, as we do on this website as well as the [Egypt website](http://egyptwebsite.com), to have been observed by both Jews and non-Jews in the Hebrew Scriptures as well as shown in extrabiblical sources as well.**

MAN'S PAGANIZED COPIES OF GOD'S MO'EDS ARE HATED BY GOD:

Isaiah 1:13-14 Stop bringing meaningless offerings! Your incense is detestable to me. New Moons, Sabbaths and convocations--I cannot bear your evil assemblies. Your New Moon festivals and your appointed feasts my soul hates. They have become a burden to me; I am weary of bearing them.

Without knowing the history of Judaism as well as how the sacrificial system worked then there is absolutely no way a Christian can read the above verse and come away with an accurate understanding of what is going on in that verse. This passage has always bothered me because God had commanded that Israel keep these "appointed times" and yet here He states that He hates them.

Answer for yourself: Is it possible that Israel had changed the meanings and elements of them and returned back to a paganized form of them (a lesson to Christianity if I have ever heard it; like substituting Easter for Passover) as well as observing them out of tradition and not out of repentance? This is what is the problem here and it would do the reader well to study the [true dynamics and meaning of the sacrificial system](#) if he ever hopes of coming to terms with this passage. [Bet Emet has extensive websites detailing the loss of the "pattern of worship" as we find in Christianity today.](#) These two issues are at the heart of the above verse and rebuke in Isaiah.

Two things are at the center of Isaiah's consternation with Israel.

Galatians 4:8-11: Formerly, when you did not know God, you were slaves to those who by nature are not gods. 9 But now that you know God--or rather are known by God--how is it that you are turning back to those weak and miserable principles? Do you wish to be enslaved by them all over again? 10 You are observing special days and months and seasons and years! **(Remember- they are turning back to special days and months in their worship that they practiced as pagans before they came to know God!)** 11 I fear for you, that somehow I have wasted my efforts on you.

WHAT DOES THAT SAY ABOUT THE CHRISTIAN CHURCH SINCE SHE HAS LIKEWISE TURNED BACK TO PAGAN HOLIDAYS AND PUT JESUS' NAME ON IT TO CHRISTIANIZE PAGANISM?

"CONCERNING THE 'END TIMES' WHICH OCCUR AT THE MO'ED-FESTIVALS:

Daniel 8:19 He said: "I am going to tell you what will happen later in the time of wrath, because the vision concerns the appointed time (Strong's # 4150) of the end.

Daniel 11:25-27 "With a large army he will stir up his strength and courage against the king of the South. The king of the South will wage war with a large and very powerful army, but he will not be able to stand because of the plots devised against him. Those who eat from the king's provisions will try to destroy him; his army will be swept away, and many will fall in battle. The two kings, with their hearts bent on evil, will sit at the same table and lie to each other, but to no avail, because an end will still come at the appointed time (Strong's # 4150).

Daniel 12:6-7 One of them said to the man clothed in linen, who was above the waters of the river, "How long will it be before these astonishing things are fulfilled?" The man clothed in linen, who was above the waters of the river, lifted his right hand and his left hand toward heaven, and I heard him swear by him who lives forever, saying, "It will be for a time, times and half a time. When the power of the holy people has been finally broken, all these things will be completed."

Habakkuk 2:3 For the revelation awaits an appointed time (Strong's # 4150); it speaks of the end and

will not prove false. Though it linger, wait for it; it will certainly come and will not delay.

Psalms 75:1-8 {For the director of music. [To the tune of] "Do Not Destroy." A psalm of Asaph. A song.} We give thanks to you, O God, we give thanks, for your Name is near; men tell of your wonderful deeds. You say, "I choose the appointed time; it is I who judge (Rosh HaShanah) uprightly. When the earth and all its people quake, it is I who hold its pillars firm. <Selah> To the arrogant I say, 'Boast no more,' and to the wicked, 'Do not lift up your horns. Do not lift your horns against heaven; do not speak with outstretched neck.'" No one from the east or the west or from the desert can exalt a man. But it is God who judges: He brings one down, he exalts another. In the hand of the LORD is a cup full of foaming wine mixed with spices; he pours it out, and all the wicked of the earth drink it down to its very dregs.

LOOKING AT THE FUTURE:

We have feasts being celebrated in a Temple which has not yet been built because it is too big for Mount Zion:

Ezekiel 45:17 It will be the duty of the prince to provide the burnt offerings, grain offerings and drink offerings at the festivals, the New Moons and the Sabbaths--at all the appointed feasts of the house of Israel. He will provide the sin offerings, grain offerings, burnt offerings and fellowship offerings to make atonement for the house of Israel.

Zechariah 8:19 This is what the LORD Almighty says: "The fasts of the fourth (17th of Tammuz), fifth (Tisha B'Av), seventh (fast of gedaliah) and tenth (10th of Tevet) months will become joyful and glad occasions and happy festivals for Judah. Therefore love truth and peace."

CONCERNING THE TABERNACLE, WE HAVE A VERY UNUSUAL USE OF 'MO'ED.' IT IS USED 140 TIMES!

Exodus 27:21 In the Tent of Meeting (mo'ed) [again Strong's # 4150], outside the curtain that is in front of the Testimony, Aaron and his sons are to keep the lamps burning before the LORD from evening till morning. This is to be a lasting ordinance among the Israelites for the generations to come.

21 In the tent of meeting (congregation Strong's # 4150) without the veil which is before the testimony, Aaron and his sons shall keep it in order from evening to morning before Jehovah: it shall be a statue for ever throughout their generations on the behalf of the children of Israel. (ASV)

21 In the tent of meeting (congregation Strong's # 4150) outside the veil, which is before the testimony, Aaron and his sons shall dress them from evening to morning before Jehovah: [it is] an everlasting statute, for their generations, on the part of the children of Israel. (DBY)

Answer for yourself: Could it be possible that this meaning for "mo'ed" could be applied to church meetings and congregations today? And if so, then what about the meaning that the word carries....celebration of festivals?

CONCERNING WHERE GOD DWELLS:

Isaiah 14:12-14 How you have fallen from heaven, O morning star, son of the dawn! You have been cast down to the earth, you who once laid low the nations! You said in your heart, 'I will ascend to heaven; I will raise my throne above the stars of God; I will sit enthroned on the mount of assembly [again Strong's # 4150], on the utmost heights of the sacred mountain. I will ascend above the tops of the clouds; I will make myself like the Most High.'

Psalms 74:1-4 {A <maskil> of Asaph.} Why have you rejected us forever, O God? Why does your anger smolder against the sheep of your pasture? Remember the people you purchased of old, the tribe of your inheritance, whom you redeemed--Mount Zion, where you dwelt. Turn your steps toward these everlasting ruins, all this destruction the enemy has brought on the sanctuary. Your foes roared in the place [again Strong's # 4150] where you met with us; they set up their standards as signs.

Lamentations 2:5-7 The Lord is like an enemy; he has swallowed up Israel. He has swallowed up all her palaces and destroyed her strongholds. He has multiplied mourning and lamentation for the Daughter of Judah. He has laid waste his dwelling like a garden; he has destroyed his place of meeting. The LORD has made Zion forget her appointed feasts and her Sabbaths; in his fierce anger he has spurned both king and priest. The Lord has rejected his altar and abandoned his sanctuary. He has handed over to the enemy the walls of her palaces; they have raised a shout in the house of the LORD as on the day of an appointed feast [again Strong's # 4150].

PASSOVER USAGE:

Exodus 13:6-10 For seven days eat bread made without yeast and on the seventh day hold a festival to the LORD. Eat unleavened bread during those seven days; nothing with yeast in it is to be seen among you, nor shall any yeast be seen anywhere within your borders. On that day tell your son, 'I do this because of what the LORD did for me when I came out of Egypt.' This observance will be for you like a sign on your hand and a reminder on your forehead that the law of the LORD is to be on your lips. For the LORD brought you out of Egypt with his mighty hand. You must keep this ordinance at the appointed time year after year.

Exodus 23:15 "Celebrate the Feast of Unleavened Bread; for seven days eat bread made without yeast, as I commanded you. Do this at the appointed time in the month of Abib, for in that month you came out of Egypt. "No one is to appear before me empty-handed.

Exodus 34:18 "Celebrate the Feast of Unleavened Bread. For seven days eat bread made without yeast, as I commanded you. Do this at the appointed time in the month of Abib, for in that month you came out of Egypt.

Numbers 9:2-3 "Have the Israelites celebrate the Passover at the appointed time. Celebrate it at the appointed time, at twilight on the fourteenth day of this month, in accordance with all its rules and regulations."

Numbers 9:7 And said to Moses, "We have become unclean because of a dead body, but why should we be kept from presenting the LORD'S offering with the other Israelites at the appointed time?"

Numbers 9:13 But if a man who is ceremonially clean and not on a journey fails to celebrate the Passover, that person must be cut off from his people because he did not present the LORD'S offering

at the appointed time. That man will bear the consequences of his sin.

Deuteronomy 16:5-6 You must not sacrifice the Passover in any town the LORD your God gives you Except in the place he will choose as a dwelling for his Name. There you must sacrifice the Passover in the evening (the appointed time), when the sun goes down, on the anniversary of your departure from Egypt.

II Chronicles 8:12-13 On the altar of the LORD that he had built in front of the portico, Solomon sacrificed burnt offerings to the LORD, According to the daily requirement for offerings commanded by Moses for Sabbaths, New Moons and the three annual feasts--the Feast of Unleavened Bread, the Feast of Weeks and the Feast of Tabernacles.

II Chronicles 30:21-22 The Israelites who were present in Jerusalem celebrated the Feast of Unleavened Bread for seven days with great rejoicing, while the Levites and priests sang to the LORD every day, accompanied by the LORD'S instruments of praise. Hezekiah spoke encouragingly to all the Levites, who showed good understanding of the service of the LORD. For the seven days, of the feast, they ate their assigned portion and offered fellowship offerings and praised the LORD, the God of their fathers.

So, mo'ed is used, in reference to the Lord's Passover, seven (7) times in the Torah and nine times in the TaNaK. With the exception of a reference to Succoth, below, there is no other feast which is called by name and referenced "mo'ed". None!

Also, in the Apostolic writings we have the following "appointed times" in reference to Passover:

Matthew 11:25 At that time Jesus said, "I praise you, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because you have hidden these things from the wise and learned, and revealed them to little children.

Matthew 12:1 At that time Jesus went through the grainfields on the Sabbath. His disciples were hungry and began to pick some heads of grain and eat them.

Matthew 26:18 He replied, "Go into the city to a certain man and tell him, 'The Teacher says: My appointed time is near. I am going to celebrate the Passover with my disciples at your house.'"

SUCCOTH-TABERNACLES USAGE:

Hosea 12:9 "I am the LORD your God, [who brought you] out of Egypt; I will make you live in tents (reference to Festival of Tabernacles) again, as in the days of your appointed feasts.

In the Apostolic Writings we have the Greek word used in the Septuagint to translate mo'ed:

DEFINITION:

2540 kairos, kahee-ros'; of uncertain. affin.; an occasion, i.e. set or proper time:-X always, opportunity, (convenient, due) season, (due, short, while) time, a while. Comp. 5550.

5550 chronos, khron'-os; of uncert. der.; a space of time (in gen., and thus prop. distinguished from 2540, which designates a fixed or special occasion; and from 165, which denotes a particular period) or interval; by extens. an individ. opportunity: by impl. delay:-+ years old, season, space, (X often-) time (-s), (a) while.

CONCERNING THE ESCHATON...THE END

1 Thessalonians 5:1-11 Now, brothers, about times and dates we do not need to write to you, For you know very well that the day of the Lord will come like a thief in the night. While people are saying, "Peace and safety," destruction will come on them suddenly, as labor pains on a pregnant woman, and they will not escape. But you, brothers, are not in darkness so that this day should surprise you like a thief. You are all sons of the light and sons of the day. We do not belong to the night or to the darkness. So then, let us not be like others, who are asleep, but let us be alert and self-controlled. For those who sleep, sleep at night, and those who get drunk, get drunk at night. But since we belong to the day, let us be self-controlled, putting on faith and love as a breastplate, and the hope of salvation as a helmet. For God did not appoint us to suffer wrath but to receive salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ. He died for us so that, whether we are awake or asleep, we may live together with him. Therefore encourage one another and build each other up, just as in fact you are doing.

Notice, Paul instructs the early Messianic church to encourage one another and build another up around the festival days.

Answer for yourself: When was the last time your church every did that?

Luke 21:5-36 Some of his disciples were remarking about how the temple was adorned with beautiful stones and with gifts dedicated to God. But Jesus said, "As for what you see here, the time will come when not one stone will be left on another; every one of them will be thrown down." "Teacher," they asked, "when will these things happen? And what will be the sign that they are about to take place?" He replied: "Watch out that you are not deceived. For many will come in my name, claiming, 'I am he,' and, 'The time is near.' Do not follow them. When you hear of wars and revolutions, do not be frightened. These things must happen first, but the end will not come right away." Then he said to them: "Nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom. There will be great earthquakes, famines and pestilences in various places, and fearful events and great signs from heaven. "But before all this, they will lay hands on you and persecute you. They will deliver you to synagogues and prisons, and you will be brought before kings and governors, and all on account of my name. This will result in your being witnesses to them. But make up your mind not to worry beforehand how you will defend yourselves. For I will give you words and wisdom that none of your adversaries will be able to resist or contradict. You will be betrayed even by parents, brothers, relatives and friends, and they will put some of you to death. All men will hate you because of me. But not a hair of your head will perish. By standing firm you will gain life. "When you see Jerusalem being surrounded by armies, you will know that its desolation is near. Then let those who are in Judea flee to the mountains, let those in the city get out, and let those in the country not enter the city. For this is the time of punishment in fulfillment of all that has been written. How dreadful it will be in those days for pregnant women and nursing mothers! There will be great distress in the land and wrath against this people. They will fall by the sword and will be taken as prisoners to all the nations. Jerusalem will be trampled on by the Gentiles until the times of the Gentiles are fulfilled. "There will be signs in the sun, moon and stars. On the earth, nations will be in anguish and perplexity at the roaring and tossing of the sea. Men will faint from terror, apprehensive of what is coming on the world, for the heavenly bodies will be shaken. At that time they will see the Son of Man coming in a cloud with power and great glory. When these things begin to take place, stand up and lift up your heads, because your redemption is drawing near." He told them this parable: "Look at the fig tree and all the trees. When they sprout leaves, you can see for yourselves and know that summer is near

(season). Even so, when you see these things happening, you know that the kingdom of God is near. "I tell you the truth, this generation will certainly not pass away until all these things have happened. Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will never pass away. "Be careful, or your hearts will be weighed down with dissipation, drunkenness and the anxieties of life, and that day will close on you unexpectedly like a trap. For it will come upon all those who live on the face of the whole earth. Be always on the watch, and pray that you may be able to escape all that is about to happen, and that you may be able to stand before the Son of Man."

Matthew 24:42-47 "Therefore keep watch, because you do not know on what day your Lord will come. But understand this: If the owner of the house had known at what time of night the thief was coming, he would have kept watch and would not have let his house be broken into. So you also must be ready, because the Son of Man will come at an hour when you do not expect him. "Who then is the faithful and wise servant, whom the master has put in charge of the servants in his household to give them their food at the proper time? It will be good for that servant whose master finds him doing so when he returns. I tell you the truth, he will put him in charge of all his possessions.

Mark 12:1-11 He then began to speak to them in parables: "A man planted a vineyard. He put a wall around it, dug a pit for the winepress and built a watchtower. Then he rented the vineyard to some farmers and went away on a journey. At harvest time he sent a servant to the tenants to collect from them some of the fruit of the vineyard. But they seized him, beat him and sent him away empty-handed. Then he sent another servant to them; they struck this man on the head and treated him shamefully. He sent still another, and that one they killed. He sent many others; some of them they beat, others they killed. "He had one left to send, a son, whom he loved. He sent him last of all, saying, 'They will respect my son.' "But the tenants said to one another, 'This is the heir. Come, let's kill him, and the inheritance will be ours.' So they took him and killed him, and threw him out of the vineyard. "What then will the owner of the vineyard do? He will come and kill those tenants and give the vineyard to others. Haven't you read this scripture: 'The stone the builders rejected has become the capstone; The Lord has done this, and it is marvelous in our eyes'?"

Acts 1:4-9 On one occasion, while he was eating with them, he gave them this command: "Do not leave Jerusalem, but wait for the gift my Father promised, which you have heard me speak about. For John baptized with water, but in a few days you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit." So when they met together, they asked him, "Lord, are you at this time going to restore the kingdom to Israel?" He said to them: "It is not for you to know the times or dates (not given to them but how about us if we interpret the Scriptures properly?) the Father has set by his own authority. But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth." After he said this, he was taken up before their very eyes, and a cloud hid him from their sight.

Matthew 8:28-32 When he arrived at the other side in the region of the Gadarenes, two demon-possessed men coming from the tombs met him. They were so violent that no one could pass that way. "What do you want with us, Son of God?" they shouted. "Have you come here to torture us before the appointed time?" Some distance from them a large herd of pigs was feeding. The demons begged Jesus, "If you drive us out, send us into the herd of pigs." He said to them, "Go!" So they came out and went into the pigs, and the whole herd rushed down the steep bank into the lake and died in the water.

Matthew 13:24-30 Jesus told them another parable: "The kingdom of heaven is like a man who sowed good seed in his field. But while everyone was sleeping, his enemy came and sowed weeds among the wheat, and went away. When the wheat sprouted and formed heads, then the weeds also appeared. "The owner's servants came to him and said, 'Sir, didn't you sow good seed in your field? Where then did the weeds come from?' "'An enemy did this,' he replied. "The servants asked him, 'Do you want us to go and pull them up?' "'No,' he answered, 'because while you are pulling the weeds, you may root up the wheat with them. Let both grow together until the harvest. At that time I will tell the harvesters: First collect the weeds and tie them in bundles to be burned; then gather the wheat and bring it into my barn."

Matthew 24:20-22 Pray that your flight will not take place in winter or on the Sabbath. For then there will be great distress, unequalled from the beginning of the world until now--and never to be equaled again. If those days had not been cut short, no one would survive, but for the sake of the elect those days will be shortened.

Mark 13:29-33 Even so, when you see these things happening, you know that it is near, right at the door. I tell you the truth, this generation will certainly not pass away until all these things have happened. Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will never pass away. "No one knows about that day or hour, not even the angels in heaven, nor the Son, but only the Father. Be on guard! Be alert! You do not know when that time will come.

Luke 21:7-9 "Teacher," they asked, "when will these things happen? And what will be the sign that they are about to take place?" He replied "Watch out that you are not deceived. For many will come in my name, claiming, 'I am he,' and, 'The time is near.' Do not follow them. When you hear of wars and revolutions, do not be frightened. These things must happen first, but the end will not come right away."

Revelation 1:3 Blessed is the one who reads the words of this prophecy, and blessed are those who hear it and take to heart what is written in it, because the time is near.

II Thessalonians 2:1-8 Concerning the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ and our being gathered to him, we ask you, brothers, Not to become easily unsettled or alarmed by some prophecy, report or letter supposed to have come from us, saying that the day of the Lord has already come. Don't let anyone deceive you in any way, for that day will not come until the rebellion occurs and the man of lawlessness is revealed, the man doomed to destruction. He will oppose and will exalt himself over everything that is called God or is worshiped, so that he sets himself up in God's temple, proclaiming himself to be God. Don't you remember that when I was with you I used to tell you these things? And now you know what is holding him back, so that he may be revealed at the proper time. For the secret power of lawlessness is already at work; but the one who now holds it back will continue to do so till he is taken out of the way. And then the lawless one will be revealed, whom the Lord Jesus will overthrow with the breath of his mouth and destroy by the splendor of his coming.

Revelation 11:16-19 And the twenty-four elders, who were seated on their thrones before God, fell on their faces and worshiped God, Saying: "We give thanks to you, Lord God Almighty, the One who is and who was, because you have taken your great power and have begun to reign. The nations were angry; and your wrath has come. The time has come for judging the dead, and for rewarding your servants the prophets and your saints and those who reverence your name, both small and great--and

for destroying those who destroy the earth." Then God's temple in heaven was opened, and within his temple was seen the ark of his covenant. And there came flashes of lightning, rumblings, peals of thunder, an earthquake and a great hailstorm.

Revelation 12:10-14 Then I heard a loud voice in heaven say: "Now have come the salvation and the power and the kingdom of our God, and the authority of his Christ. For the accuser of our brothers, who accuses them before our God day and night, has been hurled down. They overcame him by the blood of the Lamb and by the word of their testimony; they did not love their lives so much as to shrink from death. Therefore rejoice, you heavens and you who dwell in them! But woe to the earth and the sea, because the devil has gone down to you! He is filled with fury, because he knows that his time is short." When the dragon saw that he had been hurled to the earth, he pursued the woman who had given birth to the male child. The woman was given the two wings of a great eagle, so that she might fly to the place prepared for her in the desert, where she would be taken care of for a time, times and half a time, out of the serpent's reach.

Daniel 12:6-7 One of them said to the man clothed in linen, who was above the waters of the river, "How long will it be before these astonishing things are fulfilled?" The man clothed in linen, who was above the waters of the river, lifted his right hand and his left hand toward heaven, and I heard him swear by him who lives forever, saying, "It will be for a time, times and half [a time]. When the power of the holy people has been finally broken, all these things will be completed."

Revelation 22:8-10 I, John, am the one who heard and saw these things. And when I had heard and seen them, I fell down to worship at the feet of the angel who had been showing them to me. But he said to me, "Do not do it! I am a fellow servant with you and with your brothers the prophets and of all who keep the words of this book. Worship God!" Then he told me, "Do not seal up the words of the prophecy of this book, because the time is near."

Luke 21:20-28 "When you see Jerusalem being surrounded by armies, you will know that its desolation is near. Then let those who are in Judea flee to the mountains, let those in the city get out, and let those in the country not enter the city. For this is the time of punishment in fulfillment of all that has been written. How dreadful it will be in those days for pregnant women and nursing mothers! There will be great distress in the land and wrath against this people. They will fall by the sword and will be taken as prisoners to all the nations. Jerusalem will be trampled on by the Gentiles until the times of the Gentiles are fulfilled. "There will be signs in the sun, moon and stars. On the earth, nations will be in anguish and perplexity at the roaring and tossing of the sea. Men will faint from terror, apprehensive of what is coming on the world, for the heavenly bodies will be shaken. At that time they will see the Son of Man coming in a cloud with power and great glory. When these things begin to take place, stand up and lift up your heads, because your redemption is drawing near."

MESSIAH'S APPOINTED TIME:

Matthew 26:17-18 On the first day of the Feast of Unleavened Bread, the disciples came to Jesus and asked, "Where do you want us to make preparations for you to eat the Passover?" He replied, "Go into the city to a certain man and tell him, 'The Teacher says: My appointed time is near. I am going to celebrate the Passover with my disciples at your house.'"

Romans 5:6 You see, at just the right time, when we were still powerless, Christ died for the ungodly.

Mark 1:14-15 After John was put in prison, Jesus went into Galilee, proclaiming the good news of God. "The time has come," he said. "The kingdom of God is near. Repent and believe the good news!"

Mark 10:28-30 Peter said to him, "We have left everything to follow you!" "I tell you the truth," Jesus replied, "no one who has left home or brothers or sisters or mother or father or children or fields for me and the gospel Will fail to receive a hundred times as much in this present age (homes, brothers, sisters, mothers, children and fields--and with them, persecutions) and in the age to come, eternal life.

Luke 12:54-56 He said to the crowd: "When you see a cloud rising in the west, immediately you say, 'It's going to rain,' and it does. And when the south wind blows, you say, 'It's going to be hot,' and it is. Hypocrites! You know how to interpret the appearance of the earth and the sky. How is it that you don't know how to interpret this present time?"

Luke 19:41-44 As he approached Jerusalem and saw the city, he wept over it And said, "If you, even you, had only known on this day what would bring you peace--but now it is hidden from your eyes. The days will come upon you when your enemies will build an embankment against you and encircle you and hem you in on every side. They will dash you to the ground, you and the children within your walls. They will not leave one stone on another, because you did not recognize the time of God's coming to you."

Notice this was written to believers in Yeshua like the church today.

John 7:1-9 After this, Jesus went around in Galilee, purposely staying away from Judea because the Jews there were waiting to take his life. But when the Jewish Feast of Tabernacles was near, Jesus' brothers said to him, "You ought to leave here and go to Judea, so that your disciples may see the miracles you do. No one who wants to become a public figure acts in secret. Since you are doing these things, show yourself to the world." For even his own brothers did not believe in him. Therefore Jesus told them, "The right time for me has not yet come; for you any time is right. The world cannot hate you, but it hates me because I testify that what it does is evil. You go to the Feast. I am not yet going up to this Feast, because for me the right time has not yet come." Having said this, he stayed in Galilee.

I Peter 1:3-5 Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! In his great mercy he has given us new birth into a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, And into an inheritance that can never perish, spoil or fade--kept in heaven for you, Who through faith are shielded by God's power until the coming of the salvation that is ready to be revealed in the last time.

Matthew 16:1-4 The Pharisees and Sadducees came to Jesus and tested him by asking him to show them a sign from heaven. He replied, "When evening comes, you say, 'It will be fair weather, for the sky is red,' And in the morning, 'Today it will be stormy, for the sky is red and overcast.' You know how to interpret the appearance of the sky, but you cannot interpret the signs of the times. A wicked and adulterous generation looks for a miraculous sign, but none will be given it except the sign of Jonah." Jesus then left them and went away.

Acts 3:18-24 But this is how God fulfilled what he had foretold through all the prophets, saying that his Christ would suffer. Repent, then, and turn to God, so that your sins may be wiped out, that times of refreshing may come from the Lord, And that he may send the Christ, who has been appointed for you (will die on a Passover)--even Jesus. He must remain in heaven until the time comes for God to restore everything, as he promised long ago through his holy prophets.

For Moses said, 'The Lord your God will raise up for you a prophet like me from among your own people; you must listen to everything he tells you. Anyone who does not listen to him will be completely cut off from among his people.' 'Indeed, all the prophets from Samuel on, as many as have spoken, have foretold these days.

Ephesians 1:7-10 In him we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, in accordance with the riches of God's grace That he lavished on us with all wisdom and understanding. And he made known to us the mystery of his will according to his good pleasure, which he purposed in Christ, To be put into effect when the times will have reached their fulfillment--to bring all things in heaven and on earth together under one head, even Christ.

I Corinthians 4:5 Therefore judge nothing before the appointed time; wait till the Lord comes. He will bring to light what is hidden in darkness and will expose the motives of men's hearts. At that time each will receive his praise from God.

CONCERNING PRAYER:

Ephesians 6:13-18 Therefore put on the full armor of God, so that when the day of evil comes, you may be able to stand your ground, and after you have done everything, to stand. Stand firm then, with the belt of truth buckled around your waist, with the breastplate of righteousness in place, And with your feet fitted with the readiness that comes from the gospel of peace. In addition to all this, take up the shield of faith, with which you can extinguish all the flaming arrows of the evil one. Take the helmet of salvation and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God. And pray in the Spirit on all occasions with all kinds of prayers and requests. With this in mind, be alert and always keep on praying for all the saints.

MISCELLANEOUS USAGE:

Galatians 6:7-10 Do not be deceived: God cannot be mocked. A man reaps what he sows. The one who sows to please his sinful nature, from that nature will reap destruction; the one who sows to please the Spirit, from the Spirit will reap eternal life. Let us not become weary in doing good, for at the proper time we will reap a harvest if we do not give up. Therefore, as we have opportunity, let us do good to all people, especially to those who belong to the family of believers.

JOHN THE BAPTIST WAS BORN AT PASSOVER, SO:

Luke 1:8-20 Once when Zechariah's division was on duty and he was serving as priest before God, He was chosen by lot, according to the custom of the priesthood, to go into the temple of the Lord and burn incense. And when the time for the burning of incense came, all the assembled worshipers were praying outside. Then an angel of the Lord appeared to him, standing at the right side of the

altar of incense. When Zechariah saw him, he was startled and was gripped with fear. But the angel said to him: "Do not be afraid, Zechariah; your prayer has been heard. Your wife Elizabeth will bear you a son, and you are to give him the name John. He will be a joy and delight to you, and many will rejoice because of his birth, For he will be great in the sight of the Lord. He is never to take wine or other fermented drink, and he will be filled with the Holy Spirit even from birth. Many of the people of Israel will he bring back to the Lord their God. And he will go on before the Lord, in the spirit and power of Elijah, to turn the hearts of the fathers to their children and the disobedient to the wisdom of the righteous--to make ready a people prepared for the Lord." Zechariah asked the angel, "How can I be sure of this? I am an old man and my wife is well along in years." The angel answered, "I am Gabriel. I stand in the presence of God, and I have been sent to speak to you and to tell you this good news. And now you will be silent and not able to speak until the day this happens, because you did not believe my words, which will come true at their proper time."

Luke 4:9-13 The devil led him to Jerusalem and had him stand on the highest point of the temple. "If you are the Son of God," he said, "throw yourself down from here. For it is written: "'He will command his angels concerning you to guard you carefully; They will lift you up in their hands, so that you will not strike your foot against a stone.'" Jesus answered, "It says: 'Do not put the Lord your God to the test.'" When the devil had finished all this tempting, he left him until an opportune time.

Luke 12:58 - 13:1 As you are going with your adversary to the magistrate, try hard to be reconciled to him on the way, or he may drag you off to the judge, and the judge turn you over to the officer, and the officer throw you into prison. I tell you, you will not get out until you have paid the last penny." Now there were some present at that time who told Jesus about the Galileans whose blood Pilate had mixed with their sacrifices.

Acts 13:6-12 They traveled through the whole island until they came to Paphos. There they met a Jewish sorcerer and false prophet named Bar-Jesus, Who was an attendant of the proconsul, Sergius Paulus. The proconsul, an intelligent man, sent for Barnabas and Saul because he wanted to hear the word of God. But Elymas the sorcerer (for that is what his name means) opposed them and tried to turn the proconsul from the faith. Then Saul, who was also called Paul, filled with the Holy Spirit, looked straight at Elymas and said, "You are a child of the devil and an enemy of everything that is right! You are full of all kinds of deceit and trickery. Will you never stop perverting the right ways of the Lord? Now the hand of the Lord is against you. You are going to be blind, and for a time you will be unable to see the light of the sun." Immediately mist and darkness came over him, and he groped about, seeking someone to lead him by the hand. When the proconsul saw what had happened, he believed, for he was amazed at the teaching about the Lord.

Acts 14:16-18 In the past, he let all nations go their own way. Yet he has not left himself without testimony: He has shown kindness by giving you rain from heaven and crops in their seasons; he provides you with plenty of food and fills your hearts with joy." Even with these words, they had difficulty keeping the crowd from sacrificing to them.

Matthew 12:1-8 At that time Jesus went through the grainfields on the Sabbath. His disciples were hungry and began to pick some heads of grain and eat them. When the Pharisees saw this, they said to him, "Look! Your disciples are doing what is unlawful on the Sabbath." He answered, "Haven't you read what David did when he and his companions were hungry? He entered the house of God,

and he and his companions ate the consecrated bread--which was not lawful for them to do, but only for the priests. Or haven't you read in the Law that on the Sabbath the priests in the temple desecrate the day and yet are innocent? I tell you that one greater than the temple is here. If you had known what these words mean, 'I desire mercy, not sacrifice,' you would not have condemned the innocent. For the Son of Man is Lord of the Sabbath."

Mark 11:11-13 Jesus entered Jerusalem and went to the temple. He looked around at everything, but since it was already late, he went out to Bethany with the Twelve. The next day as they were leaving Bethany, Jesus was hungry. Seeing in the distance a fig tree in leaf, he went to find out if it had any fruit. When he reached it, he found nothing but leaves, because it was not the season for figs.

Luke 8:11-15 "This is the meaning of the parable: The seed is the word of God. Those along the path are the ones who hear, and then the devil comes and takes away the word from their hearts, so that they may not believe and be saved. Those on the rock are the ones who receive the word with joy when they hear it, but they have no root. They believe for a while, but in the time of testing they fall away. The seed that fell among thorns stands for those who hear, but as they go on their way they are choked by life's worries, riches and pleasures, and they do not mature. But the seed on good soil stands for those with a noble and good heart, who hear the word, retain it, and by persevering produce a crop.

Acts 7:18-20 Then another king, who knew nothing about Joseph, became ruler of Egypt. He dealt treacherously with our people and oppressed our forefathers by forcing them to throw out their newborn babies so that they would die. "At that time Moses was born, and he was no ordinary child. For three months he was cared for in his father's house.

Romans 3:22-26 This righteousness from God comes through faith in Jesus Christ to all who believe. There is no difference, For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, And are justified freely by his grace through the redemption that came by Christ Jesus. God presented him as a sacrifice of atonement, through faith in his blood. He did this to demonstrate his justice, because in his forbearance he had left the sins committed beforehand unpunished-- He did it to demonstrate his justice at the present time, so as to be just and the one who justifies those who have faith in Jesus.

Romans 8:18 I consider that our present sufferings are not worth comparing with the glory that will be revealed in us.

THE SAGES UNDERSTOOD THAT ISAAC WAS BORN ON PASSOVER:

Romans 9:9 For this was how the promise was stated: "At the appointed time I will return, and Sarah will have a son."

Notice in this story that both Abraham (because he had to hurry) and Lot served unleavened bread.

Answer for yourself: Could this be informing us that this is the passover time and that both non-Jews, Abraham and Lot, were observing the Passover? Did we also mention that Abraham had just circumcised himself which is required of a male who partakes of the Passover lamb?

Genesis 18:13-14 Then the LORD said to Abraham, "Why did Sarah laugh and say, 'Will I really

have a child, now that I am old?' Is anything too hard for the LORD? I will return to you at the appointed time next year and Sarah will have a son."

Romans 11:2-5 God did not reject his people, whom he foreknew. Don't you know what the Scripture says in the passage about Elijah--how he appealed to God against Israel: "Lord, they have killed your prophets and torn down your altars; I am the only one left, and they are trying to kill me"? And what was God's answer to him? "I have reserved for myself seven thousand who have not bowed the knee to Baal." So too, at the present time there is a remnant chosen by grace.

Romans 13:10-11 Love does no harm to its neighbor. Therefore love is the fulfillment of the law. And do this, understanding the present time. The hour has come for you to wake up from your slumber, because our salvation is nearer now than when we first believed.

I Corinthians 7:3-5 The husband should fulfill his marital duty to his wife, and likewise the wife to her husband. The wife's body does not belong to her alone but also to her husband. In the same way, the husband's body does not belong to him alone but also to his wife. Do not deprive each other except by mutual consent and for a time, so that you may devote yourselves to prayer. Then come together again so that Satan will not tempt you because of your lack of self-control.

II Corinthians 6:1-2 As God's fellow workers we urge you not to receive God's grace in vain. For he says, "In the time of my favor I heard you, and in the day of salvation I helped you." I tell you, now is the time of God's favor, now is the day of salvation.

II Corinthians 8:13-14 Our desire is not that others might be relieved while you are hard pressed, but that there might be equality. At the present time your plenty will supply what they need, so that in turn their plenty will supply what you need. Then there will be equality,

Ephesians 2:11-13 Therefore, remember that formerly you who are Gentiles by birth and called "uncircumcised" by those who call themselves "the circumcision" (that done in the body by the hands of men)-- Remember that at that time you were separate from Christ, excluded from citizenship in Israel and foreigners to the covenants of the promise, without hope and without God in the world. But now in Christ Jesus you who once were far away have been brought near through the blood of Christ.

Ephesians 5:15-16 Be very careful, then, how you live--not as unwise but as wise, Making the most of every opportunity, because the days are evil.

Colossians 4:5 Be wise in the way you act toward outsiders; make the most of every opportunity.

I Timothy 2:5-6 For there is one God and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus, Who gave himself as a ransom for all men--the testimony given in its proper time.

II Timothy 4:2-6 Preach the Word; be prepared in season and out of season; correct, rebuke and encourage--with great patience and careful instruction. For the time will come when men will not put up with sound doctrine. Instead, to suit their own desires, they will gather around them a great number of teachers to say what their itching ears want to hear. They will turn their ears away from the truth and turn aside to myths. But you, keep your head in all situations, endure hardship, do the work of an evangelist, discharge all the duties of your ministry. For I am already being poured out

like a drink offering, and the time has come for my departure.

I Peter 4:16-18 However, if you suffer as a Christian, do not be ashamed, but praise God that you bear that name. For it is time for judgment to begin with the family of God; and if it begins with us, what will the outcome be for those who do not obey the gospel of God? And, "If it is hard for the righteous to be saved, what will become of the ungodly and the sinner?"

Acts 17:24-26 "The God who made the world and everything in it is the Lord of heaven and earth and does not live in temples built by hands. And he is not served by human hands, as if he needed anything, because he himself gives all men life and breath and everything else. From one man he made every nation of men, that they should inhabit the whole earth; and he determined the times set for them and the exact places where they should live.

Galatians 4:8-11 Formerly, when you did not know God, you were slaves to those who by nature are not gods. But now that you know God--or rather are known by God--how is it that you are turning back to those weak and miserable principles? Do you wish to be enslaved by them all over again? You are observing special days and months and seasons and years! I fear for you, that somehow I have wasted my efforts on you.

SO, WAS THE ANSWER YES OR NO?

Matthew 11:2-7 When John heard in prison what Christ was doing, he sent his disciples To ask him, "Are you the expected one, or should we expect someone else?" Jesus replied, "Go back and report to John what you hear and see: The blind receive sight, the lame walk, those who have leprosy are cured, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, and the good news is preached to the poor. Blessed is the man who does not fall away on account of me." As John's disciples were leaving, Jesus began to speak to the crowd about John: "What did you go out into the desert to see? A reed swayed by the wind?...

Matthew 11:25-27 At that time Jesus said, "I praise you, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because you have hidden these things from the wise and learned, and revealed them to little children. Yes, Father, for this was your good pleasure. "All things have been committed to me by my Father. No one knows the Son except the Father, and no one knows the Father except the Son and those to whom the Son chooses to reveal him.



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ISAIAH 56...GOING BEYOND THE LAWS OF NOAH & CHOOSING THOSE THINGS THAT PLEASE GOD...BUT ARE WE?

Often I am asked why as a Christian I keep the Biblical Festivals and the weekly Sabbath. The reason is so simple once you read and correctly understand the whole Bible.

First as Christians we must become aware of the Laws of Noah and the Covenant of Noah as referred to in Acts 15.

This Covenant of Noah is referred to in Acts 15 by James as "necessary" for Gentiles who are becoming grafted into Israel/Church WITHOUT formal conversion to Judaism which had, up to that time, been required for ANY fellowship between Gentiles and Jews religiously, etc. Due to bigotry and hatred by Jews toward Gentiles in the first century, the Jews had enforced and put upon Gentiles what God never did.....the requirement to keep the laws of God which had never been given to them as a people....such as circumcision. Such approach to the non-Jews by bigoted Jewry of the first century was intended to keep the Gentiles separate from the Jews. Circumcision often, for an adult male, meant death due to infection and disease in the first century and this was an effective way to keep these “dogs” as arms length. It worked. God wanted to change this and did so through the effective ministry of the followers of Jesus as seen in the Acts 15 account and the epistle of Galatians. Sadly Christians today when reading Paul (Galatians for example) fail to understand when he says “you are not under the Law” he only is referring to the major issue of circumcision. Such is the ignorance that goes with the lack of sufficient study of the our faith as followers of Jesus.

THE GODFEARERS....NON-JEWISH BELIEVERS IN GOD

There is a term often overlooked in the New Testament which is of major importance for correct interpretation of the requirements of Gentile believers before God....namely the term "Godfearers." These were Gentiles without circumcision who according to Acts 10:35 are accepted with God...but unfortunately were not accepted among Jews. So you have the background for what comes next.

As James tells us in Acts 15 these 4 of the 7 listed Laws of Noah (containing 66 subsets) were necessary for Gentiles...to be part of Jesus' church (notice that he said this after the cross)!

Acts 15:28-29 28 For it seemed good to the Holy Ghost, and to us, to lay upon you no greater burden than these necessary things [referring to the Covenant and Laws of Noah]; 29 That ye abstain from meats offered to idols, and from blood, and from things strangled, and from fornication: from which if ye keep yourselves, ye shall do well. Fare ye well. (KJV)

Answer for yourself: Since Acts 15 followed the death of Jesus then I have to ask you: "What has changed since the cross" when James made his decision as being "necessary" and "which seemed good to the Holy Spirit?"

NOTHING!

Answer for yourself: If adherence to the Laws of Noah were necessary and seemed good to the Holy Spirit for Gentile believers coming to God through Christ and his ministry through his followers then.....what about now?

Let me remind you that nothing has changed since the crucifixion and this event in Acts occurred over 20 years after the death and resurrection of Yeshua. Then James says in this recorded event (remember over 20 years after the cross)... **"as Moses is taught in the Synagogue every Sabbath"** thus implying that Gentiles who are turning from idols to serve the living God begin their repentance since coming to God with adherence to the Laws of Noah as the **"minimum required"** and then were instructed in **fulfilling Isaiah 56** where is it recorded for us that Gentiles are to learn to **"choose those things that please God from His Torah which go beyond the minimum [as Moses is taught in the Synagogue every Sabbath]."**

Understand that not all the Law (613 commandments) are applicable for Gentiles and they never were commanded by God to fulfill or obey all 613. Basically they were given 66 within the Covenant of Noah. The joy comes when you understand that **you don't have to do [observe] more, but you get to. Such is the demonstration of your love for God who saves you].**

ISA. 56..AND GOING BEYOND THE MINIMUM

Isa 56:1-6

- **1 Thus saith the LORD, Keep ye judgment, and do justice: for my salvation is near to come, and my righteousness to be revealed.**
- **2 Blessed is the man that doeth this, and the son of man that layeth hold on it; that keepeth the sabbath from polluting it, and keepeth his hand from doing any evil.**
- **3 Neither let the son of the stranger, that hath joined himself to the LORD, speak, saying, The LORD hath utterly separated me from his people: neither let the eunuch say, Behold, I am a dry tree (understand here that we are NOT to be separated from the Israel of God as non-Jewish believers).**
- **4 For thus saith the LORD unto the eunuchs [Eunuch are non-Jews] that keep my sabbaths, and choose the things that please me, and take hold of my covenant (notice that non-Jews kept God's Sabbaths [plural...including festivals and weekly sabbaths and took hold of God covenant with Israel and acquired more mitzvoth and commandments):**
- **5 Even unto them [speaking of the non-Jew] will I give in mine house and within my walls a place and a name better than of sons and of daughters: I will give them an everlasting name, that shall not be cut off.**
- **6 Also the sons of the stranger (again referring to non-Jews), that join themselves to the LORD, to serve him, and to love the name of the LORD, to be his servants, every one that keepeth the sabbath from polluting it, and taketh hold of my covenant;**

This passage is extremely important for the Christian today for although the Sabbath and Festival commandments were not required for Gentiles in the Laws of Noah (yet it can be shown for example that Abraham knew and

observed the Passover for instance), it is implied in Isa 56 and Acts 15 that Gentiles would meet on the Sabbath for instruction in God's Commandments where they could learn and then apply other Sabbaths (festivals) and Commandments to their lives, thus pleasing God, for how can we say we love Yeshua or the Father unless we obey them?

If one undertakes a serious study of their faith (Christianity) it can be shown, that although not commanded of non-Jews, Abraham and others can be found keeping them. This love for God is demonstrated in their willingness to do what pleases God. It is our hope the same spirit be upon you. But if you are a typical denominational or non-denominational Christian today your experience is anything but the above. You have for your authority a book called the New Testament which in places calls such obedience to these Laws and Commandments a curse and if that was not enough you Church calendar is filled with pagan solar and astral days which have been made to look as if Jesus has something to do with such idolatry.

Hosea 4:6 6 My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge: because thou hast rejected knowledge, I will also reject thee, that thou shalt be no priest to me: seeing thou hast forgotten the law of thy God, I will also forget thy children. (KJV)

Answer for yourself: Is God serious in the above passage and could this ever happen to you once you die and then find out that your "experience" was wrong and that just a little study on your part would have shown the folly of many things in your "Christian experience"?

WHY HAS NOT YOUR PASTOR TAUGHT YOU THESE THINGS?

Lets look at just one example of "choosing those things that please God" which the New Testament can be shown to teach; but the key is recognizing them and this is almost impossible without a background in Judaism and Jewish Roots of Christianity.

Also in Acts 20:8 is recorded that **"there were many lights in the upper chamber."** Most of us have read this passage over and over our whole lives and just pass right over it moving on to the next passage. For your information this passage is recording for us the **Havdalah worship service** which is a religious **service that ends the Sabbath on Saturday evenings at sunset; thereby .separating the Sabbath Holy Day from secular days.** The Fourth Commandment is:

Exod 20:8-11 8 Remember the sabbath day, to keep it holy. 9 Six days shalt thou labour, and do all thy work: 10 But the seventh day is the sabbath of the LORD thy God: in it thou shalt not do any work, thou, nor thy son, nor thy daughter, thy manservant, nor thy maidservant, nor thy cattle, nor thy stranger that is within thy gates: 11 For in six days the LORD made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is, and rested the seventh day: wherefore the LORD blessed the sabbath day, and hallowed it. (KJV)

PLEASE PAY CLOSE ATTENTION

Notice that in Troas, a Greek city, the Apostle Paul is teaching Gentiles to observe Havdalah on the Sabbath evening. In other words followers of Jesus, in fulfillment of the Great Commission were

observing the Sabbath on Friday evening to Saturday evening long after Jesus' death and resurrection. Gentile believers were keeping the Sabbath and not Sunday. Rome will change this with Constantine and since then followers of Jesus have disobeyed the Sabbath and kept days set aside for sun-worship instead. Neglect of the sabbath and sanctification of pagan holy days is considered idolatry and this is where the vast majority of good Christian people find themselves today; most never find out until they die. Needless to say the experience of the non-Jewish believers in Troas is NOT the experience of most Christians. Why not?

Repeatedly in Paul's trips he entered the synagogue as was his custom, and it was in these Greek cities that Gentiles were attending "church" on the Sabbath. With just a little study you would find out that the early church knew what we do not: namely that Yeshua was crucified on Wednesday afternoon and raised at the end of Friday evening (at the beginning of the Sabbath which is a picture of the world to come where believers in God realize Eternal Life where there is not more death...figures does it not): So much for Catholic tradition and Good Friday when it was Good Wednesday (ha ha)!

It would be many years after Yeshua's death before Gentiles would later take control of Christianity and change the day of worship from the Sabbath to Sunday.

Let us look at another example.

In 1st Cor 11:2 Paul thanks the Gentiles in Corinth for "remembering him in all ways and KEEPING the ordinances." The root word for "ordinances" when traced to the Greek and Hebrew will refer to "divine appointed times"...festivals and Sabbaths.

Answer for yourself: Have you forgotten that Isa. 56 spoke of this very thing regarding non-Jews who come to God were allowed to keep such Festivals and Sabbaths so that would not be separated from God people (the Jews)? I hope not because what follows next is another example of the New Testament rightly "divided" where we see such things again taught to non-Jews in the fulfillment of the Great Commission.

Again in Corinthians Paul admonishes Gentiles to "keep the feast" [Passover] because Yeshua was killed on that day.

It is not my intention at this point to embark on who and why the meaning of Jesus' death was changed later by some who deviated from normative Judaism but let me say that Jesus'/Yeshua's death was the catalyst that generated from a Gentile hating Judaism a movement into all the world whereby God's Covenant and Commandments were taken in the Great Commission in the form of the Laws of Noah whereby non-Jews would learn and turn from idolatry to the living God. Had Jesus not died then this momentous event mostly likely would never have happened and the world as we know it would have been vastly different and the Judeo-Christian ethic would be absent from this planet today. Contrary to what most Gentile Christian believers understand today regarding this "Passover" passage of Paul in contemporary Christianity, one should understand that it was through Jesus' death that the salvation of the non-Jew was accomplished because it would be from this ministry that would begin after his death that would come a movement which would go into all the world and take to the non-Jews the Covenants of God and the path for non-Jews to come to the saving knowledge of God. This is the historical understanding of the passages that relate to how the death of Jesus saved the non-Jew. His "blood" was simply a metaphor for his death and his death accomplished what Israel was failing to do at the time, namely, not being a priest to the nations and not bringing their non-Jewish brothers to God. Jesus' death did this through the missionizing of the world by his followers. So, again, metaphorically, you can understand how non-Jews were saved by Jesus' blood (or should I say death). Many will dispute this and claim literally that the "blood" saves but this only betrays they lack of adequate

understanding on how the sacrificial system worked. If only one looks to Lev. 17 where it says:

Lev 17:11

11 For the life of the flesh is in the blood: and I have given it to you upon the altar to make an atonement for your souls: for it is the blood that maketh an atonement for the soul.

Look at the subject of the sentence. I defy anyone to tell me that the subject accomplishing the action (atonement) is not the word "life" and not "blood." The word "blood" is the **object of the preposition in the sentence.** This realization many years ago awoke me to serious study into the dynamics of the sacrificial system where I surprisingly learned that I had been taught it 100% incorrectly by the Christian Church as well as my pseudo-professional teachers. It is time we learn the truth about Jewish things from Jews who KNOW and literally know Jesus better than Christians (such irony).

Returning to Paul:

1st Corinthians chapter 16:2 states:

1 Cor 16:2

2 (Speaking to non-Jews in Corinth...a Gentile city)...Upon the first day of the week let every one of you lay by him in store, as God hath prospered him, that there be no gatherings when I come.

One should note that **"day" in most Bibles is in italics** and this means it was **"added" to the text by the Bible society which printed the Bible.** In reality it is saying, by interpretation, **"on the first of the week" or "as the week was dawning."** This refers to the time period when the first of the week was beginning to dawn **(in Hebrew time the day begins at evening and end in the morning the first day).**

So again reference is again made to a Havdalah service on Saturday evening for non-Jewish believers in Corinth...thus concluding the Sabbath just before the beginning of our Sunday which, according to Jewish time, begins at 6:01 P.M. in the evening.

Also another example:

In I Corinthians 10:16 it is recorded: is this not the **"cup of blessing"** which refers to the **ONLY** cup of the Passover Seder...other than Elijah's cup at the end of the **Seder**, which again shows us a **picture of Gentiles keeping Passover and the Sabbath.**

I could go on and on but by now you get the point I hope...**we don't have to keep Sabbath....but if it is recorded that Gentiles doing so pleases God in Isa 56..."who keep my Sabbaths...[referring to Feasts and Weekly Sabbaths]"** ..then what kind of follower of Jesus are we when we choose not to do things knowingly when they please God?

To top this off understand that non-Jewish believers were taught these things by Israel until early in the 4th century when Constantine and Rome would create an official state religion which would destroy the existing "faith once given to the saints...both Jew and non-Jew; and out jumped the golden calf of Gentile Roman Christianity which would lead

the way to the official recognition and production of the New Testament some 70 plus years later."

We at Bet Emet Ministries are dedicated to instructing Gentile believers [Christians] in returning to the hidden truths of the Bible. Today in English we miss so much since few have the skills to rightly interpret this Bible correctly (historically, linguistically, culturally, politically, etc). By God's calling and grace we have been shown these truths which have caused us to repent from the errors in our religious belief system...such errors caused us to have a life-style that was less than pleasing to God in many areas...and this was do the fact that we lacked only knowledge (the Bible says 'my people perish because of a lack of knowledge).

Please understand that these few examples which I have shared is just the tip of the iceberg for Christians. Our texts are full of errors in key places where the crafters of our New Testament took great pains to make sure the Gentile readers would not see nor understand the Jewish Roots of their faith; such was Rome's ploy in creating this New Testament in the first place. I have only touched on just a few examples in this article but please understand that such errors of omission involve other important areas of our faith as well: atonement, Christology, Messianism, Covenants, etc. If you are a serious student or desire to be then our websites can be of great value to you in your desire to learn the truth and ultimately be able to discern the shaft from the wheat in Gentile Christianity.

I hope this has opened your heart and eyes...and given you a desire to learn how you can live a life more pleasing to God. If we can be of further assistance to you in sharing our many teachings and newsletters...please let me know and I will include you on our mailings. Watch for our Web Sites. May God bless you and may He cause you to walk in His statutes...shalom!



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WHO ARE YOU GOING TO BELIEVE FOR YOUR ETERNAL LIFE: JESUS OR PAUL? #2

EXAMINING WHERE PAUL DEPARTS FROM YESHUA AND HIS TEACHINGS CONCERNING ETERNAL LIFE

Paul shaped the Gentile Church after 70 C.E. in a manner which stripped away all links to Judaism and cursed it at the same time. The New Testament in places says Judaism is bad and abandoned by God, while Christianity is good and beloved. In other places the New Testament teaches just the opposite as you were shown in article one of this series. In places the New Testament says the law of Moses is not valid and the Covenant is dead for the Jews. Instead of Moses being taught to all mankind, Paul teaches that the Church's laws and the existing Covenant is dead for the Jews as well as Non-Jews. Instead, the Church's laws and the New Covenant take their place. While Paul advanced separation from Judaism, Yeshua announced Judaism's greatness. The same New Testament in which you just saw Yeshua promote Judaism, in other places debases Judaism through Paul. I just showed you that Yeshua was a practicing, believing Jew who taught faithfulness to his religion's Torah and the Jewish way of salvation. Yeshua affirmed Torah, Moses, and the Prophets as the way to God and eternal life. He and his family all observed the Jewish customs, holidays, and Saturday Sabbath in the synagogue. Yeshua said personal salvation is obtained through Judaism and not another way. In fact Yeshua would command that such teachings be taken into all the world whereby all Non-Jews be taught to "observe those things" Yeshua had commanded of his followers. Paul and his brand of Christianity, in contradiction to all that had been both believed and taught before by Moses, the Prophets, as well as Yeshua, has announced a new way to salvation, through belief in Yeshua's vicarious atonement for sins and resurrection, not through faith in God and obedience to Him through His commandments, but through belief in Yeshua's death for sins and resurrection from death.

Answer for yourself: Can you find just one time where Yeshua teaches the same salvation doctrine as espoused by Paul?

What I ask you to do is keep the teachings of Yeshua in focus as you read Paul. The New Testament, in places, contradicts itself. That is a fact. You must be sharp enough to see it for yourself when you read. No matter what Paul says he cannot invalidate Yeshua's own words in the same book. It is a matter of who you will believe. If you listen to Yeshua, as I have laid out for you, you see that he proclaimed continually Judaism's eternal truths. Paul will not. Now let us look at Paul.

PAUL CONTRADICTS HIMSELF....DID YOU EVER SEE IT BEFORE?

What is the most perplexing for me when studying Paul is that he is not consistent in what he says. Most of you have never probably seen this but I will in the remaining pages attempt to reveal to you the contradictions that come from the mouth and pen of Paul regarding salvation. When we look at Yeshua his message is consistent with what has always been taught by Moses and the Prophets. But with Paul we have another matter because he

won't always agree with what he has said before. But if you are not sharp in your Bible study you can easily overlook such things. Let us begin our critical examination of the message of Paul on salvation.

Remembering what Yeshua just said about eternal life and observance of the commandments let us contrast Paul's view on the matter.

Answer for yourself: Does Paul in Romans 2:13 agree or disagree with what Yeshua has said about eternal life and the observance of the commandments of God? Well, let's read it and see.

Romans 2:13 For not the hearers of the law are just before God, but the doers of the law shall be justified.

So far so good. Paul in this verse agrees with the message of Yeshua regarding acceptance and eternal life with God..

But just wait. Now on the back of the same page in my Bible where the above verse was quoted from Paul, we see Paul writes something totally different and contradictory to the teachings of Yeshua in Romans 3:28:

Romans 3:28 Therefore we conclude that a man is justified by faith without the deeds of the law.

Answer for yourself: In light of what I just showed you can you justify Paul's quick turn-around on this doctrinal stance so quickly, let alone a change in the same epistle?

Notice that within the space of 44 verses Paul reverses completely his stance on justification and righteousness through obedience to the law and commandments of God. Just 44 verses!

Answer for yourself: Did Paul teach "doing the Law" for justification AFTER THE CROSS in Romans 2:13? DEFINITELY YES!

Answer for yourself: Does Paul contradict himself in Romans 3:28? DEFINITELY YES!

Answer for yourself: So what are we to believe in the face of such contradictions of Paul when contrasted with the teachings of Yeshua and the other Apostles which teach otherwise than Paul?

Answer for yourself: Seeing this material for yourself, who are you going to believe for your salvation....Yeshua, Moses, and the Prophets and their message of salvation or Paul and his message whatever it is in its final form?

I Corinthians 6:11

And such were some of you: but ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified in the name of the Lord Yeshua, and by the Spirit of our God.

Please take note that the above verse says that those who "were" transgressors had been helped by the Christologic message of Paul and belief in his gospel which taught justification of the unGodly through belief in the death and resurrection of Yeshua for eternal life.

Answer for yourself: How did that happen?

Let us understand what is really being said by Paul in this verse. Let us remember that Paul has just previously taught in 1 Corinthians 6:9-10 that the heathen who are guilty of the transgression of the Laws of God is led to death and separation from God, let alone the loss of eternal life. Having understood this, then we can understand his message intended for Non-Jews whereby he uses "Yeshua" literally as bait to get the Non-Jew to believe in "Paul's Yeshua" as a way for their eternal life. Let us understand that Paul used cunning (become all

things to all men in order to win some) in not telling the heathen he has to accept the Torah right off the bat, but rather shrewdly uses this "Pauline Yeshua" and relaxation of the Torah in his effort to win converts from the heathen gradually. Because Paul's adherents among the Non-Jews, in patterning themselves after such a Jewish Rabbi and his ethical teachings, would gradually develop lives of ethical and moral conduct which would assure that they become more Godly than before. Such is repentance which is the first step in coming to God. Of course, if you give up evil you are closer to God, Christianity's way, Judaism's way, or any other way.

But there is one important difference from those who Paul was attempting to teach and you...the reader of this article. You are not like the heathen, but rather, most likely have been raised in church most of your life. With your religious background and your love for God most of your life what excuse do we have not to obey God fully and choose those things which please him which I have demonstrated is His Law?

Luke 1:46-47,50-55, "And Mary said, My soul Both magnify the Lord, And my spirit hath rejoiced in God, my Savior. And his mercy is on them that fear him from generation to generation. He hath showed strength with his arm; he hath scattered the proud in the imagination of their hearts. He hath put down the mighty from their seats, and exalted them of low degree. He hath filled the hungry with good things; and the rich he hath sent empty away. He hath helped his servant Israel in remembrance of his mercy; As he spake to our fathers, to Abraham, and to his seed for ever."

Answer for yourself: Did Mary, Yeshua' mother, call the God of Judaism, the same God who gave her People the Torah for salvation her Savior or did she, based on her new revelation, call her son Yeshua the "new" Savior?

Mary knew what most Christians don't. That's because today's Christians have read and believe Paul more than the Gospels. God alone is the Savior not Yeshua or His Messiah. Hence, Jews have salvation by God the Father and need no second or alternate source of salvation. She spoke of God's greatness and His help of His servant, Israel. She spoke of God's message to Abraham's children, that the Covenant is eternal. This was the understanding of Mary after she was allegedly informed that she would have, according to the New Testament, a miraculous virgin birth and that the child would be the Messiah. As you surely can see, she spoke as a traditional, believing Jewish person, not the holy figure of Christianity.

Luke 1:6, (Luke) "And they (Zacharias and Elizabeth) were both righteous before God, walking in all the commandments and ordinances of the Lord blameless."

Answer for yourself: According to the New Testament does "walking in the commandments and ordinances of the Lord" allow a person to be "blameless" before God? It sure does.

Jews as well as Non-Jews can be free of sin, blameless, following the law of Moses, as exemplified by these two people. Therefore, we know according to the New Testament witness that the law does give justification for eternal life.

Again let us see what Paul has to say on the matter.

Romans 4:3, (Paul) "For what saith the scripture? Abraham believed God, and it was counted unto him for righteousness."

Answer for yourself: You most likely have heard this passage your whole life. But do you know what believing truly consists of as spoken of in this verse?

Believe without response, or as James said it "faith without works is dead" is the meaning of the passage. Abraham believed God according to the revelation of God and RESPONDED because of that belief. He took his son to Mount Moriah to be offered to God. Abraham had faith and he had a concrete response to that faith. Consequently, righteousness in God's eyes is believing God's instructions and doing as God

commands. In Abraham's situation, it was offering his son Isaac as a sacrifice. **In our situation, it is obeying and following God's commandments in His Torah and His laws, not just believing they exist.**

Answer for yourself: Do you find that following God's commandments somewhat difficult or foolish to keep and observe since the vast majority of Christianity today teaches because of Paul that the Christian is no longer under the law but under a grace which allows him to break and not keep these laws at will?

Lets see what Paul has to say about being righteous and walking in the commandments and ordinances of God.

Answer for yourself: Is this Paul's doctrine as well and does he agree with Yeshua and the Apostles on this major issue? No, again we see where Paul contradicted the teachings of Yeshua.

Rom 3:20-22 Therefore **by the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified** in his sight: for by the law is the knowledge of sin. 21 But now **the righteousness of God without the law is manifested, being witnessed by the law and the prophets;** 22 Even the righteousness of God which is by faith of Yeshua Christ **unto all and upon all them that believe:** for there is no difference:

Remembering what you previously read in the first article concerning the teachings of Yeshua, let us examine closely the above passage from Paul for contradictions to what both Yeshua, Moses, and the Prophets taught.

1. Moses (the Law) and Prophets NEVER taught that obedience of God's laws did not justify, in fact it was just the opposite they taught; namely, that obedience to the laws of God does justify.
2. Moses (the Law) and the Prophets NEVER taught that righteousness existed apart from obedience to the laws of God, in fact they taught just the opposite.
3. Paul discounts what Moses, the Prophets, and Yeshua all taught and held in common, and substitutes his own theology that replaces 4000 years of Biblical Truth with a "BUT NOW" theology of justification before God through belief in Yeshua's death and resurrection.

Answer for yourself: Who are we to believe? What do the other Apostles have to say?

I John 5:2-3, (John) "... we love the children of God, when we love God, and keep his commandments. For **this is the love of God, that we keep his commandments: and his commandments are not grievous.**"

Earlier I stated that we love God by keeping his commandments. Now we see the second phase of the Greatest Commandment: loving His children and our neighbors. Notice also that ironically only by loving our neighbor are we actually loving God! **Such loving of God and our neighbor requires fidelity to His laws, which are not hard to bear or perform. So, we read here in the New Testament that the commandments of the Torah are to be kept and can be kept. These laws should be observed to demonstrate our love of God and our fellow man.**

Answer for yourself: Can I obey literally all of God's laws?

It may be beyond human ability to perform all our duties to God, always and perfectly. But, God gave the commandments which are not hard to uphold, when you use all your good intentions with all your heart. **God's laws require your effort, not perfection.**

Again let us look at Paul.

Romans 3:24 Being justified freely by his grace **through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus:** 25 Whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God; 26 To declare, I say, at this time his righteousness: that he might be just, and the **justifier of him which believeth in Yeshua**

Again you should notice Paul is teaching a completely different message from what Yeshua, Moses, Prophets,

and the Apostles taught. Again Paul stands alone in his belief. No where is any of Paul's theology can we find references to what Yeshua, Moses, the Prophets or other Apostles taught.

Rom 10:9-16

9 That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Yeshua, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. 10 For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation.

Again we see that Paul has a different way of salvation from what was taught by Yeshua, Moses, the Prophets, and the Apostles as demonstrated in the first article in this series. Paul stresses "faith only" for righteousness and not what Yeshua, Moses, the Prophets, and the other Apostles taught; namely walking in the commandments of God for righteousness.

Answer for yourself: Who are you going to trust for correct teaching for eternal life...Paul or Yeshua, Moses, the Prophets, and the Apostles?

If you are honest with yourself up to now I have repeatedly shown you that Yeshua's message revolved around keeping the Commandments and ordinances of God. Yeshua both taught and knew for certain that love for God and those created in His image could only be accomplished by adhering to a standard of righteousness (God's laws) set by God and not by man. Thus the need and availability of God's laws and commandments, which when earnestly attempted to keep produces acceptance and salvation. Remember God requires our effort and not our perfection.

Again look at Paul and his views on the law.

Romans 7:12,14,16,22, (Paul) "Wherefore the law is holy, and the commandment holy, and just, and good. For we know that the law is spiritual: . . . I consent unto the law that it is good. For I delight in the law of God after the inward man:"

I Timothy 1:8, (Paul) "But we know that the law is good, if a man use it lawfully;"

Answer for yourself: Does it stand to reason that God would need to replace something that is holy, just, spiritual, and good?

Answer for yourself: Did you notice that Paul even said that he delights in the law of God after the inward spirit?

2 Timothy 3:16-17, (Paul) "All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works."

Answer for yourself: Are you aware that when Paul wrote this in his letter to Timothy that there was only the Jewish Scriptures (Law, Prophets, Writings) in existence and that the New Testament would not be canonized till 397 A.D. (almost 300 years later)?

Answer for yourself: Are you also aware that Paul is saying that the Law, the Prophets, and the Writings are, at the time of writing of this epistle which is around 30 years after Yeshua's death, profitable for DOCTRINE, REPROOF, CORRECTION, AND INSTRUCTION?

Answer for yourself: Don't you find it rather strange that something that is profitable for doctrine, reproof, correction, and instruction for the first church is considered passed away by today's church?

Answer for yourself: Are you aware that Paul's writings and his theology were not, even by him, considered Scripture?

You should not find these facts surprising since the creation of a New Testament or the creation of an alternate view of salvation and how to attain it was the furthestmost thing from anyone's mind at this time....except Paul's.

I Peter 1:25, (Peter) "But the word of the Lord (the Law, Prophets, and Writings) **endureth for ever....**"

Understanding when Peter wrote this Paul's teachings were very limited in scope and accepted by only a few. In fact scholars today teach us that in no time during Paul's life did he have over 50 adherents to his message. In fact Paul would later say "all in Asia have forsaken me." All in Asia? This again shows you his message had a very limited scope since men from James continually followed him around to "undo" his teachings. Thus you can better understand why Paul was required to appear before James twice in his life. Literally this was to answer charges as seen in Acts 21:21: "And they are informed of thee, that thou teachest all the Jews which are among the Gentiles to forsake Moses, saying that they ought not to circumcise their children, neither to walk after the customs."

What I have demonstrated to you in this article is that Yeshua continually walked after the customs of Moses and the Prophets. Paul did not. Tragically we have grown up in Churches which did not follow Yeshua, the Prophets, or the customs as well. We grew up most likely in Churches that followed Paul and literally oppose the teachings of Yeshua, the Prophets, and the Apostles.

Answer for yourself: How are we to reconcile that the Law endures forever but your church teaches that Christ is the end of the Law and that the Law has ceased and that we are no longer under the Law but grace?

Amazingly, the verses presented above from the pen of the Apostle Paul and Peter affirm the validity of the laws and the commandments of the Torah. They are described as sacred and beneficial, effective and everlasting. So you must face the fact that after the cross Paul at one time believed the laws of God to be holy, just, spiritual and good. So did Peter for that matter.

Stop here and ask yourself this:

Answer for yourself: If the Torah is all these things of God, shouldn't the laws be performed and Biblical Judaism, which is the embodiment of such laws, be observed by all Jews and Non-Jews?

Romans 10:5, (Paul) "For Moses describeth the righteousness which is of the law, That the man which **doeth those things shall live by them.**"

Answer for yourself: Did you again notice that the Apostle Paul states in agreement with Moses that "righteousness is of the law" and "that those do those things in the law" shall "live" by them (eternal life)?

But again another conflict of Paul is seen below.

Romans 3: 21 But now the **righteousness of God without the law is manifested**, being witnessed by the law and the prophets;

Answer for yourself: How are we to understand Paul's comments about a righteousness "without the law" in light of Yeshua's teachings that connect all righteousness with observance of the commandments?

Answer for yourself: How do you reconcile that Paul speaks of "**righteousness without the law**" in Romans 3:21 and "**righteousness which is of the law**" in Romans 10:5?

Answer for yourself: Are you willing to trust contradictions like this from Paul for your eternal life?

Answer for yourself: Although we are warned by Paul not to believe another "gospel," is it not evident to you that in comparison to Yeshua and his message about eternal life that ironically it is Paul who teaches "another

gospel”?

Answer for yourself: Which of the two teachings are we to trust for our eternal life as taught by Paul....”the man which doeth those things (law) shall live (eternal life) by them” [Romans 10:5] or [Rom 10:9] “That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Yeshua, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved”?

The Hebrew Bible teaches that the Torah's laws lead to virtue, which is rewarded by everlasting life. Paul, in this passage from Romans 10:5 admits that this is the message of Moses in the Holy Scriptures, who communicated God's will to the Hebrew people. Then he contradicts again this only 4 verses later!

James 5:16, (James) "... The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much."

I John 3:22, (John) "And whatsoever we ask, we receive of him, because we keep his commandments, and do those things that are pleasing in his sight."

Answer for yourself: Could some of our prayers not being answered and our lack of receiving what we ask of God be because we believe we are under grace and not under the law and commandments of God and don't attempt to know let alone keep as many of them as possible?

These two verses, from two different Apostles, show that keeping commandments and being righteous are connected. Both lead to God's hearing us, being pleased, and helping us. The verse quoted is very Judaic in nature, and that's a fact.

James 2:8, (James) "If ye fulfill the royal law according to the scripture, Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself, ye do well."

Answer for yourself: Is James telling us we “do well” if we fulfill and keep the law? Sure is.

A person is good if he obeys the golden rule as given in the law of Moses.

James 1:27, (James) "Pure religion and undefiled before God and the Father is this, To visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and to keep himself unspotted from the world."

Here is the golden rule made specific and said to be the basis of religious requirements. Also, to be pure from worldly evils in general makes for a religious person. These are Jewish ideas, totally.

Let us look again at Paul.

Galatians 3:21, (Paul) "Is the law then against the promise of God ? God forbid: for if there had been a law given which could have given life, verily righteousness should have been by the law."

Here is where you have to read close as well as remember what you have already learned from reading Yeshua and the other Apostles regarding the law and its connection with eternal life. Strange as it may be to read, Paul is, in the first part of the verse anyway, seemingly lending support to the validity of the law of Moses. Now for a problem which most fail to grasp its significance. Paul is double-minded. Remember I told you that he contradicts not only himself but Yeshua and the other Apostles? Here again is another place where Paul deviates from the message of the other Apostles as well as the early church. For Paul says "if" the law could be effective Moses' law would suffice for salvation. Paul is in reality stating that it is his personal feeling that no such law exists which is connected to salvation. For Paul the condition "if such a law existed" indicates that such a law and condition does not exist...at least for Paul!

Answer for yourself: What? Is this a complete reversal by Paul of what he has said previously in some of his other epistles let alone a complete contradiction of the teaching of Yeshua and the other Apostles? It sure is.

Answer for yourself: Well, have you with your own eyes earlier in this article already seen that Yeshua said that keeping the commandments is the path to salvation and the law is effective to this end? If you read the article you have. This produces quite a dilemma for the Christian.

Answer for yourself: Does Paul agree or disagree with the teachings of Yeshua regarding salvation and eternal life? He does not!

Therefore, Paul, if he "believes" Yeshua, must conclude that righteousness is obtained by one's effort to follow and pattern one's life after the Scriptural laws. But this is not the message of Paul therefore we must question if Paul really "believed in Yeshua."

Notice that Paul actually contradicts Yeshua on this essential matter and, in effect, created Christianity's separation from its Hebraic roots in Judaism.

Paul claims that sin is not overcome, but is created, by the law. Ironically, it is Paul's teaching, not Yeshua's, which invalidated the law for the budding Church. Such destroys the teachings of Yeshua and the other Apostles!

WERE WE WARNED ABOUT PEOPLE LIKE PAUL BY YESHUA? AND HAVE WE HEEDED THE WARNING?

Let's read what Yeshua said about this kind of opposition. In Matthew 10:24 (Luke 6:40) (John 13:16) Yeshua said, "The disciple (Paul) is not above his master (Yeshua), nor the servant (Paul) above his lord (Yeshua)."

Answer for yourself: So we ask, whose statements take precedence...Yeshua's or Paul's?

Answer for yourself: Who is to be believed...Yeshua or Paul?

You have to decide that for yourself. We only desire to lay the materials out for you in such a way that you can make an intelligent decision.

Answer for yourself: What will you trust for your salvation...the message of Yeshua or Paul?

Answer for yourself: Which is truly linked to eternal life and God's salvation.....Christologics (believing in Yeshua) or Judaics (following the faith of Yeshua)?

Answer for yourself: What is the real message of salvation of God since the New Testament teaches two ways which are mutually exclusive of each other.....faith in Yeshua or adopting the faith of Yeshua?

Let me warn and encourage all of our readers that if you should "believe" on Yeshua to be saved, believe his teachings about the eternal and effective holy law of God revealed by Moses and begin to do them. Begin a life before God where you tell Him that His laws and commandments are important to you and that you choose to try to do them to the best of your ability because you know they please Him. Begin to live by as many as possible for in them you demonstrate your love of God and those created in His image. *And you will be saved as a Jew or a Non-Jew.*

Paul also writes as follows:

Romans 14:14, (Paul) "I know. . . that there is nothing unclean of itself: but to him that esteemeth any thing to

be unclean, to him it is unclean."

Certainly, this is true. Jews consider things unclean because God announced it in the Torah, not because they are unclean of themselves. The law of kashruth (kosher) is God's law, as detailed by those who seek Him. God's ordinances create uncleanness, not the thing itself. And Jews and Non-Jews who want to please God and get close to Him keep the kosher laws. This is what God desires of us.

Romans 3:1-2, (Paul) "What advantage then hath the Jew? or what profit is there of circumcision? Much every way: chiefly, because that unto them were committed the oracles of God."

Romans 9:4, Romans 10:2, (Paul) "Who are Israelites: to whom pertaineth the adoption, and the glory, and the covenants, and the giving of the law, and the service of God, and the promises: For I bear them record that they have a zeal of God . . ."

Romans 11:29, (Paul) "For the gifts and calling of God are without repentance."

Acts 2:5 (Author) "And there were dwelling at Jerusalem Jews, devout men . . ."

Jews have a fervor for God and are devout, said Paul. In other words, Biblical Judaism promoted enthusiasm for God. Jews were given the Covenant, the law, the prophets, and the promises. Jews minister to God by being His Chosen People. There is benefit, much benefit, in being Jewish. Paul even bolsters the firm foundation of the Torah, God's gift, lasting for eternity, without God changing His mind, without repenting of His Torah. That is what Paul actually said.

Notice that Paul, however, in a complete reversal of what he said elsewhere, is recorded to having believed that all these positive features of being Jewish are canceled, and of no avail, due to the Jew's lack of belief in Yeshua the Christ. We will leave Paul's reasoning and reversal to others. Instead, we ask you to keep in mind his positive appreciation of Judaism. And also remember that Yeshua said, in effect, that Judaism is of God. Yeshua, himself, taught that "Jews for Judaism" is the way even for the Non-Jew. We have shown abundant evidence of this in our present article.

Answer for yourself: Who is the authority you choose, Yeshua or Paul?

Ephesians 6:2-3, (Paul) "Honor thy father and mother; which is the first commandment with promise; That it may be well with thee, and thou mayest live long on the earth."

Matthew 15:4 (Mark 7:10), "For God commanded (Moses said), saying, Honor thy father and mother: and, He that curseth father or mother, let him die the death."

These verses are Paul's and Yeshua's utterances, condemning anyone who doesn't bestow honor upon his parents, as taken from the Ten Commandments. This means dutifully regarding them and respecting them, and **implicitly honoring your heritage as well.** This commandment is considered important enough to be put forward separately. Therefore, shaming your parents and their teaching by turning from them and the God of their heritage is prohibited and deserving of worldly death as well as loss of life in the hereafter. This is also what we read elsewhere in the New Testament.

Luke 5:37-39, "And no man putteth new wine into old bottles; else the new wine will burst the bottles, and be spilled, and the bottles shall perish. But new wine must be put into new bottles; and both are preserved. **No man also having drunk old wine straightway desireth new:** for he saith, The old is better."

Yeshua's saying appears to fit Judaism and its offspring, Christianity. To carry this analogy through, the new wine, Christianity, should not be placed into the old, Judaism. This, of course, is just what happened. In order for it to be good, the new should be nurtured separately. Both are then properly maintained, the old as it should be and the new as it should be. This did not occur. Sadly, the new has caused great harm to the old by claiming to succeed it, while mixing with it. And the new, by so doing, has harmed itself. Isn't that the proper conclusion

to be drawn? Taken one step further, Yeshua also said that those who know the old, Judaism, prefer it.

Answer for yourself: Shouldn't you, as a Non-Jew and most likely a follower of Yeshua, prefer it too?

Answer for yourself: Whose teachings will you trust to lead you to eternal life...Paul's [which are filled with contradictions of Yeshua, Moses, the Prophets, the Torah, as well as the other followers and Apostles of Yeshua who knew him personally and walked with him 40 days after his resurrection], or Yeshua's [which agree totally with Moses and the Prophets and which contains not one contradiction among them]?

I would think having read this article it is rather obvious.

NOW FOR THE BIG QUESTION

Since now you have seen for yourself that Yeshua's and Paul's way of salvation differ, then you should be asking yourself "Why"? What you will come to see if you continue your diligent search for truth is that the New Testament documents which you have relied upon since your childhood as "received from God" are no such thing at all. Upon close scrutiny you will come to find that they are a collection of both truth and error; the problem is discerning one from the other. As you have already seen we cannot have two conflicting paths to salvation. There are many other discrepancies contained within these documents; many of which go unnoticed by those who do not devote a considerable amount of time for study into these areas. We at Bet Emet Ministries have and continue to do so in order to present you, our readers, the absolute best of scholarship in these areas in hopes you will be led to the truth before you die. Your rewards and standing in the World to Come hinges upon it. We realize that the reason for so much confusion today in the Christian community stems for the multiple contradictions within the New Testament which blurs "the faith once given to the saints". It is our hope by revealing to you the hundreds of misquotations of the Jewish Scriptures, the numerous Jewish Scriptures taken out of context by the New Testament writers to serve their own anti-Semitic agendas, and the gross mistranslations contained within it as well that you might come to see the truth for yourself....Yeshua was not a Christian and does not want you to follow such Gentile Christian doctrines that destroy the Sabbath, the Biblical Festivals, Monotheism, true righteous giving of the Tithe, true spiritual warfare, etc. Today we have a collection of writings that billions of people have accepted as "authoritative" for their faith and practice which are anything but that. If you have the courage to continue your study...you will be shocked, saddened, broken, and ashamed before you finish. You will see for yourself the greatest deception foisted upon mankind by the Roman Religious Establishment....a substitute faith that opposes what the real Yeshua believed at almost every turn of his life. You might be saying to yourself now: "those are big charges...can he prove it"? I would only ask that you prayerfully study and use the intellect that God has given you to see if what I say does not add up. You will never be sorry you did, and eternally grateful you continued in this rather difficult study. Shalom and may the LORD'S blessings overtake you.



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WHO ARE YOU GOING TO BELIEVE FOR YOUR ETERNAL LIFE: JESUS OR PAUL? #1

EXAMINING YESHUA AND HIS TEACHINGS CONCERNING ETERNAL LIFE

For many of our readers the information in this article will be startling. After reading this article you will see for yourself that if you follow contemporary Christianity and its teachings then you are following Paul and not Jesus/Yeshua, because **Yeshua's message of redemption is entirely opposite to what Paul teaches.** I can hear many of you say...."that's not so" or "he is wrong." Let me sincerely tell you that in the beginning, even after my seminary training I did not see it as clearly as I do today. But I beg of you to read this article and **THINK...THINK....**of what I will show you. For in the end, you are directly responsible before God, and HaShem is sending you and many of His children today appeals to repent and return to the true faith once given to the saints. Time is of the essence, and it will be horrible to die and find out that you followed the wrong faith...a faith that does not save.

One last thing; you might wonder what the end-result should be of such a series of studies. It is our hope at Bet Emet ministries that when you complete these articles the reader will be able to understand that Christianity is best understood and practiced from a Jewish viewpoint which restores the Sabbaths and the Seven Biblical Festivals. Such emphasis is almost totally lacking in the Christian church today. Also, a renewed emphasis in proper tithing and righteous giving hopefully will replace the current perversion of giving as seen in most churches and on televisions today. What you will come to see is that all these above things, and more, embody the true salvation experience. Let us begin...shall we?

YESHUA WAS A JEW...AND TAUGHT BIBLICAL JUDAISM

I think few will take issue with my statement that in the New Testament Yeshua is pictured as a Jew who believed in Judaism and taught others to be faithful to his religion's precepts and laws forever!

In this article I will quote many verses from the New Testament, and it is important to understand from the outset that although much in the New Testament is unreliable, when we find places in it which agrees with Moses and the Prophets we have found a witness to the Word of God as recorded in the Tanakh (the Jewish Bible). Let us not stagger at the comment that "much in the New Testament is unreliable," **because in this article I will show you that many of these New Testament verses oppose Moses and the Prophet, let alone Yeshua's teachings, and are irreconcilably contradictory to the Gospel Yeshua preached which can be found along side them in the New Testament. Both passages confirming that Yeshua believed and both taught Moses and the Prophets regarding salvation, as well as verses contradicting what Yeshua taught, have remained included in the New Testament through the ages. These verses remain for a purpose today. They remain to show the careful reader and student the truth amidst fiction as written in the New Testament.**

Likewise, the purpose could well be to reassure Jews who are in doubt about their Judaism, and are thinking of

leaving Judaism for Christianity, that **Judaism and Torah has always been and will always be the road to God for the people of God; both Jew and Non-Jew.** Those unsure Jews and deceived Christians perhaps can have their belief in God, Torah, and Israel (Judaism) kindled and can be kept on God's pathway by the very same Christian Book through which they have unknowingly deserted their true people and God! Indeed, Jews who already have left their faith as well as Christians who are returning to the Jewish faith once given the saints are daily having their eyes opened to the truths I will reveal in this article. Prayerfully, many will return as baal teshuvah and through repentance turn to the God of Israel, who surely is waiting with fatherly understanding and forgiveness. ***Believe Yeshua in this matter - Eternal life is obtained through Judaism. Paul teaches otherwise and contradicts Yeshua on this matter.***

For devout Jews who were once Christians and Christians who have studied to see the errors of their prior faith and have returned to a more correct and Biblical Sinai faith, the revelations in this article will be very comfortable corroboration of their firm faith in the holiness of the religion of Yeshua; namely Biblical Judaism. Others who read these verses will bring to them their own heritage and will make of them what they will. In other words they will continue to selectively hear what they choose regardless of the facts presented here.

These pages of reverse proof-texts are intended to strengthen the course God set up for Jews as well as Non-Jews and to fortify their faith and devotion to His plan of salvation for all mankind. In effect, here you will discover confirmation of Biblical Judaism's everlasting truth and validity through the words of Yeshua and others in the New Testament. Often this confirmation will conflict with what Paul taught, but more on that later. Now, let's get into it.

WHO WILL YOU BELIEVE.....YESHUA OR PAUL? LISTEN.YESHUA SPEAKS!!!!!!!!!!!!!!

Matthew 5:17-19, **"Think not that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfill. For verily I say unto you, Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one little shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled. Whosoever therefore shall break one of these least commandments, and shall teach men so, he shall be called the least in the kingdom of heaven: but whosoever shall do and teach them, the same shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven."**

Try and read the above passage over three or four times. Get the intent of Yeshua into your mind and soul. You can read this over and over and never end your astonishment; especially in light of what you have heard preached in your churches. **Remember, these are Yeshua's words saying he is here to follow the law of Moses, not end the law. Until the world ends, the law as written will be in effect.** Jews and Non-Jews who obey the law and teach it are greatly loved by God, while those who transgress the law and teach its transgression are not. Notice that although the word "fulfill" could mean "to complete or end," in this case and context it clearly means "to obey and do." We know this because the following sentence continues the idea that the law will not change until the world ends, which still has not occurred two thousand years later. Just look outside your window.

Luke 16:16-17, "The law and the prophets were until John (the Baptist): since that time the kingdom of God is preached, and every man presseth into it. And it is easier for **heaven and earth to pass, than one little of the law to fail.**"

Preaching the kingdom (God's rule and reign over mankind through submission to the King's decrees....laws and commandments) is emphasized since John the Baptist, Yeshua said. But the laws of the Torah are still effective and good, to be fulfilled until the world ends. **Notice for yourself that in no way does "until John" signify the end of the law, because the very next sentence substantiates the law's validity forever (easier for heaven and earth to pass....notice again that this has not occurred yet).**

Luke 16:19-20,22-24,27-31, "There was a certain rich man, . . . And there was a certain beggar named Lazarus,

... the beggar died, and was carried by the angels into Abraham's bosom: the rich man also died, and was buried; And in hell he lift up his eyes, being in torments, ... And he cried and said, Father Abraham, have mercy on me, ... I pray thee ... send him (Lazarus) to my father's house: ... that he may testify unto them, lest they also come into this place of torment. Abraham saith unto him, They have Moses and the prophets; let them hear them. And he said, Nay, father Abraham: but if one went unto them from the dead, they will repent (Yeshua and not Paul). And he said unto him, If they hear not Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded, though one rose from the dead."

Answer for yourself: Is this a New Testament teaching?

Answer for yourself: Did you notice that Yeshua in the New Testament is teaching that making it to Abraham's bosom (Heaven) was connected to listening to Moses and the Prophets?

Answer for yourself: What is this parable from Luke really teaching?

Notice first that it is Yeshua and not Paul who is doing the teaching in this story. Yeshua clearly relates in this story that the laws of Moses and the words of the prophets which teach repentance lead the faithful to Abraham's bosom, instead of hell. Moses and the prophets are the pathway to eternal life in heaven according to Yeshua. Yeshua taught this and not Paul. If you will be honest with yourself most of you are typical Christians who read our articles, and the vast majority have been told by their Pastors and Churches that they are not under the Law (Moses and the Prophets), but rather, they are under grace (Paul). They have been told that the Law (Moses and the Prophets) has passed away for Christians and they are no longer under the Law but under grace (Paul's gospel). In other words you have listened to Paul more than you have to Yeshua.

Answer for yourself: But how can the teaching of Paul in this regard be opposite to what Yeshua said, and since opposite, who are you to trust for your eternal life?

Matthew 19:16-19 (Mark 10:17,19) (Luke 18:18,20), "... Good Master, what good thing shall I do, that I may have eternal life? And he said unto him ... if thou wilt enter into life, keep the commandments ... Which? Yeshua said, Thou shalt do no murder, Thou shalt not commit adultery, Thou shalt not steal, Thou shalt not bear false witness, Honor thy father and thy mother: and, thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself "

Answer for yourself: Did you notice that "having eternal life" is connected by Yeshua with "keeping the commandments" (all of these except one are categories of the law and commandments called The Ten Commandments and under each of these categories are grouped 613 other laws)?

Answer for yourself: Is Yeshua just referring to the Ten Commandments or is there something we as Non-Jews unacquainted with Yeshua's religion are missing in this teaching?

It may amaze you but upon my study of Biblical Judaism I have discovered that each Tablet of the Law was separated by commandments between man and God and between man and man. In other words, the First Tablet of the Law is dealing with how man relates to God according to God's commandments, and the Second Tablet of the Law is dealing with how man relates with mankind. But more than that, each of the Ten Commandments is best understood as categories consisting of many commandments within the 613 Commandments grouped under each of the ten headings. So in effect, when Yeshua tells this man "thou shalt not steal" he is telling the man to obey all the different facets of the broad commandment, because under such a heading the Bible enumerates the various ways such a commandments can be kept and broken.

Answer for yourself: Is Yeshua teaching that eternal life and salvation in Heaven is connected to keeping and observing the Laws of God? The answer to that question is yes.

There you have it. The way to eternal life for both the Jew and the Non-Jew and salvation in heaven, according to Yeshua, is living like a good Jew and submitting to the laws of the commandments of God. These detailed

instructions by Yeshua are plainly presented.

Notice that in the following verses the man asks what more he needed do. And Yeshua replies, to be perfect he should sell everything he owns and give it to the poor and receive treasure in heaven: "and come and follow me." The man, on hearing this, leaves disturbed because he has great wealth and doesn't want to lose it. There is no indication that the "follow me" means anything else but to accompany Yeshua penniless. The message remains intact that observing Torah law gives eternal life. Perfection is another story.

Mark 12: 28-31 (Matthew 22:36-40), "... Which is the first (great commandment in the law) commandment of all? And Yeshua answered him, The first of all the commandments is, Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God is one Lord: And thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and with all thy strength: this is the first commandment. And the second is like, namely this, Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself. There is none other commandment greater than these. (On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets)."

So, Yeshua selected Deuteronomy 6:4-5 and Leviticus 19:18 as the greatest two laws. This was very Jewish of him, as most rabbis would completely agree, especially Rabbi Hillel. He chose the Shema prayer, the Jew's affirmation of God's oneness and dedication to love of Him together with Judaism's great moral teaching of loving people with the love you have for yourself. What could be more indicative of the essence of Judaism?

Luke 10:25-28, "... Master, what shall I do to inherit eternal life? He said unto him, What is written in the law? how redest thou? And he answering said, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy strength, and with all thy mind: and thy neighbor as thyself. And he said unto him. Thou hast answered right: this do, and thou shalt live."

Answer for yourself: Did you make the connection between "inherit eternal life" and "thou shalt live" as also referring to eternal life? I hope you did because this is typical of Hebrew parallelism.

Answer for yourself: Have you noticed that in Luke 10:25-28, Matthew 19:16-19, Mark 10:17-19, and Luke 18:18-20 something very important is repeated?

Answer for yourself: What is it?

Namely, that possessing and inheriting eternal life is always connected with **doing something..... not with believing something!**

Answer for yourself: How does Luke 10:25-28 teach us more than we learn from Mark 12:28-31?

The writer of the Gospel of Luke goes one step further than the just given, Mark 12:28-31. Here we have the New Testament teaching us of the indisputable link between the "doing" of the commandments of God and eternal life, which is the reward for obeying them.

Answer for yourself: Are you aware that Yeshua is teaching in the New Testament that eternal life is to be taught from the Law.....the same Law that tells us "what to do" and what you most likely have been told has passed away or which you are no longer under?

It is evident that Yeshua said, in the New Testament no less, that the law of Moses, as epitomized in Deuteronomy 6:5 and Leviticus 19:18, is the pathway to personal salvation and eternal life. Yes, Yeshua said this as found in the New Testament. Let us continue.

Mark 12:32-34, "And the scribe said unto him, Well, Master, thou hast said the truth: **for there is one God; and there is none other but he: And to love him with all the heart (alone as the one God), and with all the understanding, and with all the soul, and with all the strength, and to love his neighbor as himself,** is more than

all burnt offerings and sacrifices. ... Yeshua . . . said unto him, **Thou art not far from the kingdom of God . . .**"

Answer for yourself: Did you notice that acknowledging the oneness of God, and not the Trinity or triuneness of God, is connected with the reward of God's kingdom and eternal life?

Answer for yourself: Did you likewise notice that loving God and one's neighbor who is created in the likeness of God is connected with inheriting God's eternal life?

I John 5:3, "For this is the love of [for] God, **that we keep his commandments**: and his commandments are not grievous

Answer for yourself: Since we are told that loving God is connected to eternal life, did you notice the New Testament teaches **"how" the love for God is to be manifested?**

Answer for yourself: Does the New Testament teach us **that loving God is manifested through the keeping of the 613 commandments?** It sure does!

This is a straight follow-through of Mark 12:28-31, which connects the acknowledgment of the oneness of God, loving Him, and loving ones neighbor as written in the law, with the reward of God's kingdom. Burnt offerings and sacrifices are secondary to the commandments in Judaism and always have been. With no Temple, there is no doubt about this low degree of importance. This passage demonstrates Yeshua' Judaism through and through. Notice likewise that the term "Master" means good teacher, not anything more.

Matthew 7:12 (Luke 6:31), "Therefore all things whatsoever ye would that men should **do to you, do ye even so to them: for this is the law and the prophets.**"

If you thought that "do unto others" is not Judaic or that it is different from "love your neighbor as yourself" you see here that it is totally of Jewish origin. Yeshua declared that it is the law and the prophets. It is Judaic.

Luke 11:28, ". . . blessed are they that hear the word of God and keep it."

Notice also with me that when the writer of Luke penned this verse, that there was not a New Testament in existence and that the only possible identity we can give to "the word of God" is the Law, the Prophets, and the Writings....the Jewish Bible.

Matthew 7:21, "Not every one . . . shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven."

Again we find the expressed will of the Father in the Law, Prophets, and Writings...the Jewish Bible.

Matthew 3:15, ". . . it becometh us to fulfill all righteousness . . ."

These powerful statements are tucked in between verses which emphasize other ideas. But they can stand alone. And, standing alone they are Judaism's own. Yeshua believed that the will of God is revealed in the word of God, the Hebrew Bible. In the Hebrew Scriptures we learn the law of Moses (Torah) and the Prophets. Thereby, we can perform righteousness as God desires by adhering to what they teach. This Yeshua believed.

Luke 19:8-9, ". . . half of my goods **I give to the poor**; and if I have taken any thing from any man by false accusation, **I restore him fourfold**. And Yeshua said unto him, **This day is salvation come to this house forsomuch as he also is a son of Abraham.**"

What comes next is very important to keep your ears open. **It appears that Yeshua believed that even a partial fulfillment of the commandments of the Torah is sufficient to be accepted by God.** In the above verse it is recorded for us that Zaccheus repented by observing 2 commandments. **In fact, as taught by Yeshua, even by rectifying transgression of the Torah's laws and doing good deeds a person is**

deserving of salvation. As Jews trust, it is the trying to please God, it is the effort, not the success in total compliance with God's ordinances which is required of us to be righteous and gains us salvation.

Answer for yourself: How confident should we feel about our salvation if we have followed teachings that state that obedience of the law or the striving to observe the laws and commandments of God don't matter any longer because we are saved by "grace" or that this same law that Yeshua connects with eternal life has been taught to us as if it has passed away and of little importance in our lives any longer?

Answer for yourself: Are we absolved by God to not try to choose those things to please Him by keeping His commandments? Is this conduct really connected to eternal life as Yeshua taught, or is he wrong and Paul right?

All the more reason to study to learn how to acquire mitzvot and commandments, thereby taking upon yourself the yoke of the Kingdom of God. Such obedience to commandments is both pleasing to God as well as our demonstration of our love for Him and our fellow man. To do otherwise is not to love God, but rather, show our ambivalence toward Him and our neighbor.

Luke 13:28, "There shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth, when ye shall see Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, and all the prophets, in the kingdom of God, and you yourselves thrust out."

Keep your ears open for this as well. Here Yeshua said that the fathers of Judaism and the goodly Hebrew prophets are all accepted into the kingdom of God. Evidently, good Jews need nothing more than the Hebrew religion for life eternal in Yeshua's own belief.

Now for the hard part. Notice that Yeshua also said that many of his followers (the "ye" in the above verse) will not get into God's kingdom and inherit eternal life and salvation because of their sinfulness.

Answer for yourself: Does this same New Testament teach that "transgression of the law is sin"? Yes.

Answer for yourself: Did you notice what is missing from the above words of Yeshua?

There is no Pauline religious belief system mentioned as a means of salvation for the followers of Yeshua!

There is no Christological "belief" presented here as an antidote for spiritual wickedness for mankind.

There is no "easy believeism" taught by Yeshua or his Apostles as a way to eternal life; on the contrary, every time he and the other Apostles emphasize the same thing; namely an earnest attempt to live by the commandments and laws of God for eternal life!

If you have paid attention so far in this article I have shown you repeatedly that Yeshua repeatedly connects eternal life with keeping and observing the Law and Commandments of God.

Nowhere does Yeshua teach that a belief "in him" brings for its adherents eternal life! In fact he teaches just the opposite!!!!!!!!!!!!!!

John 4:22, "(to Samaritan) Ye worship ye know not what: we (the Jewish people) know what we

worship: for salvation is of the Jews."

Yeshua "worships" what Jews worship, namely God.

Answer for yourself: Salvation is of whom...the Jews (Jewish theology) or the Christians (Christian theology)?

This passage from John 4:22 is even more startling when one realizes that the Samaritan woman who is part Non-Jew mixed with Jewish heritage and ancestry. In other words, she is a mixture; not only of blood line but religious teaching as well. She is a perfect example of the Christian today who follows Paul instead of Yeshua. He has part right and part wrong.

Lets look at Paul where he get some things correct.

I Corinthians 6:9-10, (Paul) "Know ye not that the **unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God?** Be not deceived: neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor abusers of themselves with mankind, Nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners, shall inherit the kingdom of God."

Answer for yourself: In this passage are you aware that Paul is in full agreement with Yeshua and his teachings on eternal life?

Answer for yourself: Are you aware that there are commandments in the Torah forbidding each of the above conducts?

Although Paul adds some of his own ideas, the listing of "thou shalt nots" is derived from the commandments. He stresses what he considers unrighteousness **and Paul says that transgression of the Law prevents people from earning reward of heaven.** Paul, here, reveals his faith in the teachings of the Torah and its stance on eternal life. Paul is in agreement with Yeshua and the other Apostles and their teachings on inheriting eternal life. So far so good.

But I wish I could end here but I cannot. In the next article we will look intently to where Paul deviates from and teaches against Yeshua's teachings concerning eternal life. This exercise will be difficult for many, but as I have tried to show you, such an exercise to recover truth is very necessary because your eternal life is dependent upon whom you believe and follow....Yeshua or Paul. More to follow in the conclusion to this article. Let us now look at Paul's Salvation Message and see if it agrees with what you just read.

Shalom.



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SO YOU THOUGHT YOU WERE A FOLLOWER OF YESHUA.....YOU MIGHT NEED TO RECONSIDER

Let me begin with a quote from the New Testament...from an epistle written to non-Jews like most of our readers.

2 Cor. 13:5

Examine yourselves, whether ye be in the faith; prove your ownelves.....

I think that this is a very good idea to prove to ourselves that what we believe is true; in fact I have practiced self-examination of such religious beliefs in light of the facts regarding the “real historical Yeshua” for over a decade. Because of such self-examination in light of my discoveries as I combed through 2000 years of Biblical history, culture, as well as in-depth analysis of Biblical language, I have been forced to change much of my religious belief system along the way. It is my desire that this article challenge you to scrutinize your religious beliefs as I have been challenged over the years. May God witness truth to your soul.

Answer for yourself: Was Yeshua a Christian and would he ascribe today to the vast majority of doctrines taught in his name in churches which go by his name as well?

Well let us investigate. But first we need to set the stage for what is coming next. Try and be as honest with yourself as possible in answering these next questions.

TO WHICH RELIGION WOULD A PERSON BE A MEMBER IF HE DID THE FOLLOWING?

- Was circumcised on the eighth day.
- Kept Sabbath from Friday sundown to Saturday sundown.
- Attended a synagogue regularly.
- Kept the Biblical Festivals such as Passover, Hag Ha Matzah (Unleavened Bread), Shavuot (Pentecost), Rosh HaShanah, Yom Kippur (Day of Atonement), Sukkoth (Tabernacles) and Hanukkah.
- Was a citizen and friend of Israel and believed Israel is the example for all non-Jewish people in the world
- His Bible contained the Torah, the Prophets and the Writings ONLY!
- Quoted passages as authoritative from the Mishnah (the Oral Law).
- Taught that Deuteronomy 6:4 was the most important commandment.
- Wore a tallith and phylacteries in religious services
- Did not eat unclean foods
- Taught the eternalness of God's Covenants and His Laws

- Taught that faith without works is no faith at all
- Taught that salvation is more concerned with events in the here and now than what occurs beyond the grave

I suppose that most of you came up with the same answer.....you don't have to be a scholar to recognize that one that practiced such a faith does not practice Christianity.....he holds to the teachings of Judaism.

NOW, LET'S TAKE A LOOK AT ANOTHER PERSON. SEE IF YOU CAN IDENTIFY THE RELIGION OF THIS PERSON

- Keeps the Sabbath on Sunday which is the legacy of Sun worship today.
- Attends a church which most likely rejects most things Jewish.
- Keeps Easter and Christmas which were pagan festivals made to look religious to those who don't know the difference.
- Carries a Bible containing an Old Testament and a New Testament which ironically contradicts the Old.
- Stresses a person's beliefs over his actions.
- Teaches that people had to be "saved" by acknowledging a creed or an established set of beliefs in order to go to heaven.
- Teaches that they are not under the law and that the Law has passed away and they are under grace.
- Teaches that the church had replaced Israel as God's people and sees itself as the fulfillment of prophecies given to Israel.
- Teaches that you can eat anything...even Biblically unclean foods
- Attaches no special significance to circumcision

I bet you got the right answer again – a Christian.

GOING DEEPER THAN YOU POSSIBLY HAVE EVEN GONE BEFORE

Now let's take this discussion one more step by answering this question.

Answer for yourself: If a Jew wanted to become a member of a Christian religion could he continue practicing Judaism in the church?

The answer is so simple. You would only have to ask your Pastor that one question to get the answer. Probably in the 99.9% of the cases the answer would be - NO!

TURN ABOUT IS FAIR PLAY

Answer for yourself: If a Christian wanted to become a convert to Judaism could he continue practicing Christianity and the items listed above? Again the answer is rather obvious.

Now, the percentage moves upwards, probably in 100% of the cases the answer would be - NO!

It is very apparent that not only are Judaism and Christianity different religions, they are exclusive in many ways. This reveals an amazing fact which can be seen by asking one very simple question –

WHICH RELIGION DID YESHUA BELONG TO...CHRISTIANITY OR

JUDAISM?

- Was circumcised on the eighth day.
- Kept Sabbath from Friday sundown to Saturday sundown.
- Attended a synagogue regularly.
- Kept the Biblical Festivals such as Passover, Hag Ha Matzah (Unleavened Bread), Shavuot (Pentecost), Rosh HaShanah, Yom Kippur (Day of Atonement), Sukkoth (Tabernacles) and Hanukkah.
- Was a citizen and friend of Israel and believed Israel is the example for all non-Jewish people in the world
- His Bible contained the Torah, the Prophets and the Writings ONLY!
- Quoted passages as authoritative from the Mishnah (the Oral Law).
- Taught that Deuteronomy 6:4 was the most important commandment.
- Wore a tallith and phylacteries in religious services
- Did not eat unclean foods
- Taught the eternalness of God's Covenants and His Laws
- Taught that faith without works is no faith at all
- Taught that salvation is more concerned with events in the here and now than what occurs beyond the grave

Now for the easy part. The answer to the above question is a matter of historical record which is easily attested to by the New Testament itself-- Yeshua was a Jew, not a Christian and he was certainly not both. It is clear that Yeshua was a practicing Jew who lived a very observant Jewish life-style.

In fact we cannot find any instance whatsoever where Yeshua ever: Kept the Sabbath on Sunday, attended or affiliated with any group which rejected things Jewish, kept the pagan festival of Ishtar/Easter or the sun god's birthday (Saturnalia...December 25th....Christmas) which were pagan festivals made to look religious to us today, ever taught anything that contradicted the Old Testament as does much in the New Testament, ever stressed a person's beliefs over his actions, ever taught that people had to be "saved" by acknowledging a creed or an established set of beliefs in order to go to heaven, ever taught that people are not under the law or that the Law had passed away and they were under grace alone, ever taught that the church had replaced Israel as God's people, and ever taught that you can eat anything...even Biblically unclean foods.

YESHUA NEVER RENOUNCED JUDAISM OR QUIT BEING A JEW

An amazing discovery for any Christian is the fact that there is simply no evidence that Yeshua ever renounced Judaism and quit being a Jew. Also, his teachings do not indicate that he ever wanted any Jew to renounce their Judaism and join a new religion. If this revelation every breaks into your conscious mind then you will have to confront Gentile Christianity for what it has actually become despite Yeshua's wishes or example set for us.

Answer for yourself: How then, did Yeshua get credited with the distinct label that he was the person responsible for creating a new religion?

Answer for yourself: How did Yeshua get credit for creating another religion which opposed the religion and way of life he continued to live...even up to his death?

Let us try to answer questions raised by such an assumption:

LOOKING THROUGH THE EYES OF A JEWISH RABBI NAMED YESHUA

Answer for yourself: Would a rabbi prohibit circumcision or downplay its significance?

Answer for yourself: Would a rabbi change the Sabbath to another day...let alone to the day set aside for sun worship by the pagans?

Answer for yourself: Would a rabbi create a replacement for the synagogue?

Answer for yourself: Would a rabbi substitute a pagan feast which was clearly idolatrous, Ishtar (Easter), for Passover?

Answer for yourself: Would a rabbi want his followers to celebrate the birth of a Roman god (Saturnalia -- December 25)?

Answer for yourself: Would a rabbi teach his students to not keep the biblical commandments or that they no longer applied when God already said they were forever?

Answer for yourself: Would a rabbi teach Gentiles to hate Jews?

Answer for yourself: Would a rabbi add books to the Torah in spite of the warning in Deuteronomy forbidding the changing or adding to the Word of God?

Answer for yourself: Would a rabbi replace Deuteronomy 6:4 as the most important commandment?

Answer for yourself: Would a rabbi teach Gentiles that it is permissible to eat unclean food when Noah, himself a non-Jew separated animals based on the principle of clean/unclean long before there were any Jews?

The answer to all the above questions is that a rabbi wouldn't, and that includes a rabbi named Yeshua!

TOUGH - THOUGHT PROVOKING QUESTIONS YOU NEED TO ANSWER FOR YOURSELF

Answer for yourself: If Yeshua didn't create a new anti-Jewish religion, who did?

Answer for yourself: Who is responsible and what were their motives in replacing the faith of Yeshua with a faith about Yeshua?

Answer for yourself: Was it the men who acquired leadership after Yeshua's departure and the death of the Apostles who did such a thing ?

Answer for yourself: Were those responsible for changing the faith of Yeshua actually Jews or Non-Jews and were their motives in changing Jewish doctrines consistent with anti-Semitism?

Answer for yourself: Did they continue teaching Yeshua's message and his gospel or did they change Yeshua's message in places, and are you, at the present not yet aware of it at your present level of knowledge?

THE BOOK OF ACTS PAINTS US A PICTURE WE WOULD DO WELL TO EXAMINE CLOSELY

The book of Acts provides us with some very valuable information too long overlooked by most Christians. Acts

21:17-25 records Paul's return to Jerusalem and his meeting with the leaders of the "church." Keep in mind that these were the men who had been personally taught by and lived with Yeshua. Their words provide us with some very enlightening information. The translation given below is based on a cultural and historical methodology. Your translation most probably reflects the doctrines of the Roman church and therefore may differ.

"You see, brother (referring to the Apostle Paul), how many thousands of Jews have become faithful (observant). All of them are zealous for the Torah (Law). They have been informed that you have taught the Jews of the Diaspora to not keep the Torah, that they should not circumcise their children or live according to the Jewish religion.... Take these men and do the following... so that everybody will know that there is no truth in these reports about your teachings, but that you yourself are living an observant life-style and keeping the Torah."

REMEMBERING THAT THIS IS A PICTURE OF JESUS' CHURCH.....

A quick summary provides us with some very significant information. Understanding that this passage reflects events which occurred long after Yeshua's death then I ask you to be truthful to the text as well as yourself in asking yourself this: Is your church producing the same results?

- **Jews who believe in Yeshua are becoming more faithful (observant to the Law) because of the message taught by Yeshua's followers.**
- **The message of Yeshua's church caused adherents to become zealous for the Torah (Law).**
- **The members of Yeshua's church kept the Laws of Moses (the Torah).**
- **The members of Yeshua's church circumcised their children.**
- **The members of Yeshua's church lived according to the traditions of the elders of Judaism (the Jewish religion).**

Notice that Paul did as he was requested - Paul example, at least while he was in Jerusalem under the watchful eyes of the Apostles, wasn't teaching the Jews to abandon their religion. On the contrary, Paul's behavior and example was one as "under the law" and as one who lived an observant Jewish life-style.

Answer for yourself: How then could he have been the author of a doctrine that advocated rejecting the law as is ascribed to him by most Christians today?

Answer for yourself: Not meaning to over-stress this point, but are you really getting the importance of this message as taught by Yeshua's church in Palestine?

IS YOUR CHURCH PREACHING THE SAME GOSPEL AND MESSAGE AS YESHUA'S CHURCH?

Again looking at Acts 21 for our information.....let us examine what we are taught by this New Testament picture:

- **The message of the apostles caused Jews to repent and become observant Jews who practiced Judaism faithfully.**
- **The apostles were causing Jews to become eager for the Torah and to pursue it with fervor. It is clear that they were not teaching them that "they were under grace and no longer under the law" or that "the law has passed away after Yeshua's death" as we have been told today. This one point is in complete opposition to most fundamental teaching of every modern Christian doctrine.**
- **The Jewish members of the early church continued to circumcise their children. In other words,**

they continued to see themselves as participant's in the Abrahamic Covenant, just as every practicing Jew does today. Their children were Jews, not members of some new mystical religion that replaced Judaism.

- The Jewish members of the early church continued to practice Judaism. They did not switch to a new religion.

HOW ARE WE TO INTERPRET PAUL'S ACTIONS?

When we look at Paul's actions, after being ordered by James to take several men with him to the Temple, thereby paying for their animal sacrifices in order to prove that he was an observant Jew by bringing blood sacrifices and sin offerings necessary in finishing his Nazarite vow, we are faced with two possibilities: (A) Paul intentionally deceived the apostles and the Jews in Jerusalem; or, (B) Paul's image and/or the teachings attributed Paul may have been altered by the Roman Church a hundred or more years later.

Answer for yourself: Did Paul intentionally deceive the apostles by faking his true beliefs when bringing sacrifices in the Temple after Yeshua's death?

Answer for yourself: If Paul did deceive them, could you put much confidence in his teachings at other places in the New Testament? Remember he already has said that he can become anything to anyone to prove his argument and accomplish his goals.

Answer for yourself: On the other hand, if Paul's words were changed by the Roman Church could we base our foundational beliefs on forged documents?

Christianity, almost universally, requires a Jew to convert to Christianity before he can become a member of the church or be saved. This conversion process forces the Jew to renounce his or her Judaism and terminate or redefine many Biblical and Jewish practices.

Having read this article so far, please think deeply while answering these next questions:

Answer for yourself: Would your church require a Jew to renounce or stop practicing Judaism if he or she wanted to become a member?

Answer for yourself: How many circumcisions have you attended for the children of Jewish members of your church?

Answer for yourself: How many of your church's members are Jewish and are zealous for the Torah and are pursuing it with fervor?

Answer for yourself: Does your church conduct at least one Torah study per week?

Answer for yourself: How many of your church's Jewish members are observant Jews?

Answer for yourself: When was the last time you attended a Passover Seder, or a Rosh HaShanah or Yom Kippur service at your church?

Answer for yourself: Do you have a rabbi or a minister well educated in the Hebraic Roots of Christianity leading your church?

Your answers to the above questions are probably -- Yes, None, None, No, None, Never and Minister.

I want you take some time to think about the next question before you answer it.

Answer for yourself: What would your church require a rabbi to do if he applied for membership?

Answer for yourself: Would they allow him to continue to be a rabbi, practice Judaism, teach the Torah, wear his prayer shawl, observe all the Jewish festivals and teach the members that they were under the Law?

Answer for yourself: *What if that rabbi was Yeshua?*

Are you beginning to see the truth?

Without a great deal of effort it becomes glaringly apparent that neither Rabbi Yeshua, the apostles nor the Paul of Acts 21, would be allowed to join a Christian Church the likes of which we see today. On the other hand, it is also clear that Rabbi Yeshua would not participate in any religion that not only opposes, but is actively dedicated to destroying his Father's religion!

Gentile Christianity has for centuries felt it was given a mandate from God to "save the world." This is the goal and stated mission of Christianity.

THE SILENT SLAUGHTER OF TRUTH

Answer for yourself: How is this mission to "save the world" to be accomplished?

Just ask the Southern Baptist Convention who just last year vowed to win every Jew to Yeshua by the year 2000. To put it very simply, the goal is to convert every Jew (non-Christian) to Christianity. The Jewish convert must renounce his Judaism (or any non-Christian religion he may hold), agree to accept the doctrines of Gentile Christianity and oppose any religion that opposes Gentile Christianity.

Instead of a physical holy war (Jihad), Gentile Christianity has engaged in a doctrinal holy war. As I stated above, Christianity is an exclusive religion. Christians are not allowed to simultaneously practice Islam, Buddhism, Judaism or any other religion. Therefore, if Christianity was to attain its goal of "getting every person on the face of the earth to believe in Yeshua," including all the Jews, Judaism would be totally destroyed and cease to exist. If this were ever to happen, and I pray it does not, then Christianity would have the dubious honor which Hitler in vain tried to achieve; namely the eradication of not only the Jewish people from the face of this planet, but the total destruction of the true faith of Yeshua...Biblical Judaism.

This would accomplish something that the crusaders, the inquisition, Hitler and a number of others have failed to accomplish.

Answer for yourself: How do you think a Jewish Yeshua would react to the idea that such a mission was being carried out in his name?

This really gets weird when you think about it! Christians base their proof for their ultimate salvation on a Jewish rabbi named Yeshua (Jesus), who was an observant Jew who faithfully practiced Judaism. On the one hand, his religion would most probably not allow him to practice modern Christianity. On the other hand, modern Christianity would not allow him to practice its religion without first renouncing his religion -- Judaism!

This should present a very important challenge to every Christian:

If a Jewish Yeshua could not, and would not, practice a religion dedicated to destroying his religion, how can anyone who bases their salvation on Rabbi Yeshua participate in and perpetuate it?

Answer for yourself: Would Rabbi Yeshua agree with the church's salvation message which is based on such a system? Are you getting the drift of this discussion?

Answer for yourself: How did the religion that Rabbi Yeshua and his followers practice evolve into what it is today? To begin to unravel this problem let's ask how a religion whose foundational position focused on teaching its members "to keep the Law" became a religion whose main message was that "members are no longer under the Law."

Early Christian writers taught that the Law had been fulfilled with the coming of Yeshua. Fulfilled, as they defined it, meant that it had been canceled and therefore was of no importance to Christians. However, to Rabbi Yeshua, "fulfilled" meant (1) to keep the Law; and (2) to correctly interpret the teachings of the Bible. There is absolutely nothing said by Rabbi Yeshua that would support modern Christianity's doctrine of grace.

Next, the Roman Christian leaders focused on the story of God's unconditional and unending support. However, they claimed that this was something new and was created when God made a new covenant of grace. Again, this was unknown to Rabbi Yeshua and his apostles. Early Gentile Christian leaders and theologians continued to develop their new doctrines from the mid-second century on through the seventh century. As they refined their arguments they became much more antagonistic toward Judaism.

This Gentile anti-Judaic movement spanned almost all of Christianity -- from the Roman African communities represented by Tertullian (160-220 C.E.), to the Iranian monk Aphrahat (300-350 C.E.) of the eastern Syriac Christian tradition, and to Bishop John Chrysostom (349-400 C.E.) in Antioch.

Studies have clearly shown the extent to which leaders of the early church attacked Judaism for its position on the law, calling Jews "slavish adherents to the letter of the law." They claimed that Judaism was allowed to continue to exist primarily as an example of degradation.

Answer for yourself: What do you think that Rabbi Yeshua would have thought about that position?

Origin, the third-century leader of the Christian community in Caesarea, summed up the difference between Judaism's and Roman Christianity's approaches to Scripture:

"It seems necessary also to explain how certain people by failing to read or understand Scripture correctly have given themselves up to a great many errors, since the way one ought to approach the understanding of divine letters is unknown to a great many people. And so, the Jews, through the hardness of their heart and because they wish to seem wise in themselves, have not believed in our Lord and Savior....

Now the reason that those we have just mentioned [Jews and heretical Christians] have a false understanding of these matters is quite simply that they understand Scripture not according to the spiritual meaning but according to the sound of the letter....

[But] a person ought to describe threefold in his soul the meaning of divine letters, that is, so that the simple may be edified by, so to speak, the body of the Scriptures; for that is what we call the ordinary and narrative meaning. But if any have begun to make some progress and can contemplate something more fully, they should be edified by the soul of Scripture. And those who are perfect... should be edified by that spiritual Law (Rom. 7:14) which has a shadow of the good things to come (Heb. 10:1), edified by the spirit of Scripture. Thus, just as a human being is said to be made up of body, soul, and spirit, so also is sacred Scripture, which has been granted by God's gracious dispensation for man's salvation."

This new scheme for reading Scripture, and the charge that Jews miss all but the literal meaning, made for powerful arguments. Origin's dichotomy between "letter" and "spirit," or in other words, between reading biblical materials either at their face value for norms of behavior and as a more generalized stance toward the world, set the stage throughout history for Christians to increase the fervor of the charge of legalism. Legalism

became synonymous with Jewish, and therefore was viewed in a negative light. However, the word "legalism" simply means someone that "lives in accordance with or adheres to a legal system."

Answer for yourself: What would you call someone who "did not adhere to or live in accordance with a legal system" -- a Christian? The products of this anti-Jewish tradition still shapes the thoughts of over 1.6 billion Christians regarding Judaic law.

I am challenging every Christian to make a decision to return to the religion, teachings and life-style expounded by Rabbi Yeshua. **Don't misunderstand what I am saying; I am not advocating adopting and accepting the current "theology or faith" about Yeshua; rather, return to the real faith of Yeshua and the place within it for the Gentile Godfearer.** As I stated above, according to the book of Acts, your conversion experience to the faith of the Apostolic church of Yeshua as seen in Acts 21 should have made you zealous for the Torah and brought you back to an observant Biblical life-style as defined by the commandments of God.

Answer for yourself: Has it?

Becoming a member of Rabbi Yeshua's movement should have caused you to become a serious student of the Torah. You should be teaching the Torah to others, especially the flood of Gentiles who are coming to you to be taught.

Answer for yourself: Has it?

Answer for yourself: Is there any other way for you to be a "light to the Gentiles?"

If you are a Gentile, you will also need to take a very close look at Acts 15. Gentiles who were coming to the movement originated by Rabbi Yeshua were given very special instructions. First they were to place themselves under specific laws. For all practical purposes those laws were the Ten Commandments. Of special importance was their keeping the Jewish Sabbath and studying the Torah at the synagogue with the Jews.

Keeping the Jewish Sabbath is something that you can do immediately, however; many of you may find it difficult to locate a synagogue where you will be allowed to study the Torah. For very good reasons, after thousands of years of persecutions, the Jewish community is very cautious. I believe that as Christian Jews return to the synagogue, because of the teachings of Rabbi Yeshua, the doors will be opened wider to Gentiles desiring to know the God of Rabbi Yeshua.

Two things must be kept in mind as both Jews and Gentile Christians choose to return to the teachings of Rabbi Yeshua. First, almost two thousand years of conflict between Judaism and Christianity has left many scars. Both religions have developed reactionary doctrines and theologies. A reactionary doctrine created as a reaction to the another religion's actions or doctrines.

An example would be the Jewish position concerning kneeling for prayer. Because Christians knelt for prayer, the Jews took the position that they should no longer kneel but stand for prayers. Judaism altered its form of worship because of this practice of Christianity. There have been many reactionary doctrines created both between and within both religions. This is an area of research that deserves much attention. I would challenge my readers to consider such a research project.

It must be kept in mind that the Judaism of Yeshua is not exactly the same as the Judaism of today. Also, the movement attributed to Yeshua is not the same as modern Christianity. Obviously, many things have taken place since the time of Yeshua which resulted in the separation and numerous differences between the two religions.

It is of the utmost importance for both Christians and Jews to understand these changes. You must know when the changes were made, identify the people who were responsible for making the changes, and discover why they made them. You must come to an understanding which changes were motivated by inspiration, which were produced by the hunger for power and wealth and which were the results of human frailties such as anger,

rejection, fear and hatred.

As you embark on this journey you will quickly come to realize that you have stumbled upon the greatest cover-ups in history.

As you become more acquainted with the truth upon your study you will realize two very important things:

- Leaders, especially scholars, have always been aware of this information and have deliberately chosen to ignore it.
- This information has been virtually within the grasp of every American. In many cases it is as close as an encyclopedia or attainable today through the Internet.

Today, there are over 2.5 billion Christians on the face of the earth – the vast majority who believe in their heart they are true followers of Yeshua, but as I have shown you, are practicing a different religion from which Yeshua practiced. If they all returned to the teachings and life-style taught in Acts, we would see a moral and ethical revolution that would literally rock the foundations of the world and no longer would America, touted to be the most Christian nation in the world, be recognized as the world's most violent and law-breaking nation of the world. That should make you wonder what it would be like if Christians really followed the faith of Yeshua and if your church would really allow you to be like Yeshua.

If you would like more articles and information on topics such as these, please contact us at:

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EXAMPLES OF PAUL TEACHING THE GENTILES WHO ATTENDED THE SYNAGOGUES OF ASIA MINOR

Acts 13: 5 And when they were at Salamis, they preached the word of God in the synagogues of the Jews: and they had also John to their minister.

- **14** But when they departed from Perga, they came to Antioch in Pisidia, and went into the synagogue on the sabbath day, and sat down.
- **42** And when the Jews were gone out of the synagogue, the Gentiles besought that these words might be preached to them the next sabbath.
- **43** And when the meeting of the synagogue broke up, many Jews and devout converts to Judaism followed Paul and Barnabas, who spoke to them and urged them to continue in the grace of God.
- **44** And the next sabbath day came almost the whole city together to hear the word of God.

Acts 14:1 1 And it came to pass in Iconium, that they went both together into the synagogue of the Jews, and so spake, that a great multitude both of the Jews and also of the Greeks believed. (KJV)

Acts.15.21 For from early generations Moses has had in every city those who preach him, for he is read every sabbath in the synagogues."

Acts 17:1-2 1 Now when they had passed through Amphipolis and Apollonia, they came to Thessalonica, where was a synagogue of the Jews: **2** And Paul, as his manner was, went in unto them, and three sabbath days reasoned with them out of the scriptures, (KJV)

Acts 17:10 10 And the brethren immediately sent away Paul and Silas by night unto Berea: who coming thither went into the synagogue of the Jews. (KJV)

Acts 17:17 17 Therefore disputed he in the synagogue with the Jews, and with the (KJV)

Acts 18:4 4 And he reasoned in the synagogue every sabbath, and persuaded the Jews and the Greeks. (KJV)

Acts 18:8 8 And Crispus, the chief ruler of the synagogue, believed on the Lord with all his house; and many of the Corinthians hearing believed, and were baptized. (KJV)

Acts 18:19 19 And he came to Ephesus, and left them there: but he himself entered into the synagogue, and reasoned with the Jews. (KJV)

Acts 19:8 8 And he went into the synagogue, and spake boldly for the space of three months, disputing and persuading the things concerning the kingdom of God. (KJV)

Acts.22.19 And I said, `Lord, they themselves know that in every synagogue I imprisoned and beat those who

believed in thee.

Acts.24.12 and they did not find me disputing with any one or stirring up a crowd, either in the temple or in the synagogues, or in the city.

Acts.26.11 And I punished them often in all the synagogues and tried to make them blaspheme; and in raging fury against them, I persecuted them even to foreign cities.



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DISTURBING QUOTES ABOUT THE CHRISTIAN FAITH...CAN THIS BE TRUE AND I NOT KNOW IT?

Let us begin this serious study with a series of very disturbing quotes. The information presented in these Web Pages is not provided as a form of entertainment. I strongly suggest that you do not continue your study and search for truth in these pages unless you are willing to take responsibility for what you learn.

2 Peter 2:21..."For it had been better for them not to have know the way of righteousness, than, after they have known it, to turn from the holy commandments delivered unto them. (KJV)

THE TESTIMONY OF THE APOSTLE PAUL INCRIMINATES THE FAITH THAT HE IS TEACHING THE GENTILES

We find Saint Paul, the first Apostle of the Gentiles, avowing that he was made a minister of the Gospel which had already been preached to every creature under heaven...

Col 1:23 23 If ye continue in the faith grounded and settled, and be not moved away from the hope of the gospel, which ye have heard, and which was preached to every creature which is under heaven; whereof I Paul am made a minister; (KJV)

Answer for yourself: Did you catch that?

Paul is stating that he, the Apostle to the Gentiles, is preaching a message that **HAS ALREADY BEEN PREACHED TO EVERY CREATURE UNDER HEAVEN!** This bears some deep thought. I did just that. This opened my heart and mind to considerable in-depth study to fathom out the depths of what this one verse alluded.

Simply said, Saint Paul was preaching a God manifest in the flesh, who had been believed on in the world **before** the commencement of his ministry. Dear one, this could not have been Jesus of Nazareth, who had certainly not been preached at that time, nor generally believed on in the world till ages after. Saint Paul owns himself a deacon, which is the lowest ecclesiastical grade of the Therapeutan church. Many wonderful books yet exist which explains this verse. Unfortunately it is not comforting to a Christian to learn the truth about "the Gospel" which Paul taught. I will now quote from a rather old book by Bunsen called The Angel-Messiah published in London in 1867. The following quote is taken from page 240:

"The Gospel of which Paul's Epistles speak had been extensively preached and fully established before the time of Jesus by the Therapeutae or Essenes, who believed in the doctrine of the Angel-

Messiah, the Aeon from heaven; the doctrine of the "Anointed Angel," the doctrine of the atoning sacrificial death of Jesus by the blood of his cross; the doctrine of the Messianic ante-type of the Paschal lamb and of the Paschal omer, and thus the resurrection of Jesus Christ the third day according to the Scriptures-these doctrines of Paul can with more or less certainty be connected with the Essenes...It becomes almost a certainty that Eusebius was right in surmising that Essenic writing have been used by Paul and the evangelists. Not Jesus, but Paul, is the cause of the separation of the Jews from the Christians."

What Bunsen fails to tell us here explicitly, and which is alluded to only implicitly, is that the origin of this crucified "Angel-Anointed, Angel-Messiah" had its roots in the paganized worship of the Sun by the Gentile nations.

What one fails to understand when he hears the word "Essene" is that in the time of Yeshua these "Essenes" were no longer a holy lineage from Zadok, but were rather Pythagorean in their beliefs. Such a religious synthesis explains on the part of the Essenes of the first century how they came to believe in the crucified Sun god-men of which I will explain later. Let us resume for now.

The very ancient and Eastern doctrine of an Angel-Messiah had been applied to Gautama-Buddha, who predicted that another Avatar (an incarnated deity in some shape in the earth; usually of Hindu origin) would come upon the earth in six hundred years after his death. This time had nearly expired; so Jesus of Nazareth was proclaimed as the expected Messiah by these Buddhist Jews, and the Sun-Myths were interwoven with his real history. Jesus unquestionably possessed a nature as divine as it is possible for a human being to possess, or he would not otherwise have been received as the Angel-Messiah by a sect so pure and holy as were the Essenes.

But let us not stop short of the other disturbing quotes.

THE EARLY CHURCH FATHERS INCRIMINATE THEMSELVES AND THE GENTILE CHRISTIAN FAITH...AND I BET YOU NEVER KNEW THIS...DID YOU?

In Seminary I remember looking at the Library shelves that supported the multiple volumes of the Ante-Nicean Fathers. I beheld thousand and thousands of pages of their writings. I even amused myself that to read and understand such a large volume of literature would take years. It did!

What I came to admire about such writings is when you read enough of them you find that these "pro-Christian" writers often incriminated themselves with what they wrote. The following examples are for your benefit.

JUSTIN MARTYR

Eusebius, in his Church History, tells us that Justin, in his Dialogue with Trypho, says "there exists not a people, civilized or semi-civilized, who have not offered up prayers in the name of a crucified Savior to the Father and Creator of all things" (Hist. Eccl. lib i. ch. iv).

The honesty of Justin Martyr as portrayed here is the heart of the subject matter of these web pages. I intend to show you that from the beginning of time the pagan nations had their "crucified Sun-gods" and much recorded about Jesus of Nazareth in the New Testament is nothing more than the "re-telling" of the same Sun-Myths; the only difference is that now they are applied to the life of Jesus the Jew. **Do you want the truth before you die?** Then keep reading.

EUSEBIUS

Eusebius says that "the names of Jesus and Christ were both known and honored by the ancients" (Hist. Eccl. lib. i. ch. iv). **How could this be?**

Eusebius, the great champion of Christianity, admits in his book: "that which is called the Christian religion is neither new nor strange, but-if it be lawful to testify the truth-was known to the ancients"

(Hist. Eccl. lib. 2, ch. v.). **How could this be?**

Eusebius, who is our chief guide for the early history of the Church, confesses that he was by no means scrupulous to record the whole truth concerning the early Christians in the various works which he has left behind him (Eusebius, Hist. Eccl., ch. viii. p. 21).

Edward Gibbon, speaking of Eusebius says: "The gravest of the ecclesiastical historians, Eusebius himself, indirectly confesses that he has related what might rebound to the glory, and that he has suppressed all that could tend to the disgrace, of religion. Such an acknowledgment will naturally excite a suspicion that a writer who has so openly violated one of the fundamental laws of history has not paid a very strict regard to the observance of the other; and the suspicion will derive additional credit from the character of Eusebius, which was less tinctured with credulity, and more practiced in the arts of courts, than that of almost any of his contemporaries" (Gibbon, Rome, vol. ii., Philadelphia, 1876).

SAINT AUGUSTINE

Augustine is quoted as saying: "That in our time is the Christian Religion, which to know and follow is the most sure and certain health, called according to that name, but not according to the thing itself, of which is the name; for the thing itself which is now called the Christian Religion really was known to the ancients, nor was wanting at any time from the beginning of the human race until the time when Christ came in the flesh, from whence the true religion, which had previously existed, began to be called "Christian;" and this in our days is the Christian religion, not as having been wanting in former times, but as having in later times received this name" (Opera Augustini, vol. i. p. 12; quoted in Taylor's Diegesis, p. 42).

Now if you read these quotes you have to admit that they are very troubling to the contemporary Christian. I always heard: "Where there is smoke there is fire" [pardon the pun please]. If you find the courage to look beyond these quotes then you will find the kindling used for the paganization of Christianity by the Gentile Church whereby it become little more than another manifestation of Sun Worship. Jesus know the difference and you should as well.

TERTULLIAN

Tertullian, one of the Christian Fathers (A.D. 200), originally a Pagan, and at one time Presbyter of the Christian Church in Africa, reasons in the following manner on the evidences of Christianity: "I find no other means to prove myself to be impudent with success, and happily a fool, than by my contempt of shame, - as, for instance, I maintain that the Son of God was born. Why am I not ashamed of maintaining such a thing? Why, but because it is itself a shameful thing. I maintain that the Son of God died. Well, that is wholly credible, because it is monstrously absurd. I maintain that after having been buried he rose again; and that I take to be mainly true, because it was manifestly impossible" (Taylor, Diegesis, p. 326).

For example, early Church Father Tertullian (@ 160-220 C.E.), an "ex-Pagan" and Bishop of Carthage, ironically admits the true origins of the Christ story and of all other such god-men by stating in refutation of his critics, "You say we worship the sun; so do you" (Wheless, Forgery in Christianity, p. 147).

Interestingly, a previously strident believer and defender of the faith, Tertullian later renounced Christianity. (Wheless, Forgery in Christianity, p. 147).

OTHER INCRIMINATING QUOTES CHALLENGING THE TRUTHFULNESS OF THE CHRISTIAN FAITH

THOMAS PAINE

"The Christian religion is a parody on the worship of the Sun, in which they put a man whom they call Christ, in the place of the Sun, and pay him the same adoration which was originally paid to the Sun."

AMMONIUS SACCUS

Ammonius Saccus, a Greek philosopher, founder of the Neoplatonic school, taught that Christianity and Paganism when rightly understood, differ in no essential points, but had a common origin, and are really one and the same religion" (Taylor, Diegesis, p. 329).

GODFREY HIGGINS

Godfrey Higgins, in Anacalypsis, states: "that every part of the vulgar Christian religion is the same as that of the vulgar religion of the Gentiles; that there is nothing new in the Roman Catholic religion; that, in short it is Reformed or Protestant Gentilism." He goes on to say: "several of the most important doctrinal parts of corrupt modern Christianity are nothing more than scraps of the Heathen mythologies of various kinds taught by different nations, long previous to the Christian era...the immaculate conception, the incarnation, the trinity, with its various hypostases, and the crucifixion and resurrection..." He further states: "It is more than probable that every part has been copied from some former religion; that no part of what has been really the system of the Christian priests was invented originally for their use. To tradition it is indebted for every doctrine and rite which it possesses; to fraudulent and dishonest practices it is chiefly indebted for their establishment."

CELSUS

Celsus, the Epicurean philosopher, wrote that "the Christian religion contains nothing but what Christians hold in common with heathen; nothing new" (Justin, Apol 2).

Celsus, in the Octavius of Minucius Felix, says: "All these fragments of crack-brained opiniary and silly solaces played off in the sweetness of song by deceitful [Pagan] poets, by you too credulous creatures [that is, the Christians] have been shamefully reformed and made over to your own god]."

ISAAC DE CASAUBON

Issac de Casaubon, one of the greatest ecclesiastical scholars, says: "It mightily affects me to see how many there were in the earliest times of the Church, who considered it as a capital exploit to lend to heavenly truth the help of their own inventions, in order that the new doctrine might be more readily received by the wise among the Gentiles. These officious lies, they were wont to say, were devised for a good end" (Taylor, Diegesis, p. 44).

FAUSTUS

Faustus, writing to St. Augustine, says: "You have substituted your agape for the sacrifices of the Pagans; for their idols you martyrs, whom you serve with the very same honors. You appease the shades of the dead with wine and feasts; you celebrate the solemn festivals of the Gentiles, their calendars, and their solstices; and as to their manners, those you have retained without any alteration. Nothing distinguishes you from the Pagans, except that you hold your assemblies apart from them" (Draper, Science and Religion, p. 48. New York: 1876).

GREGORY OF NAZIANZUS

Gregory, writing to St. Jerome, says: "A little jargon is all that is necessary to impose on the people. The less they comprehend the more they admire. Our forefathers and doctors have often said, not what they thought, but what circumstances and necessity dictated" (Hieron ad. Nep., quoted in Volney's Ruins, p. 177, Boston, 1872).

ALBERT CHURCHWARD

Mythicist Albert Churchward stated a century ago: "The canonical gospels can be shown to be a collection of sayings from the Egyptian Mythos and Eschatology" (The Origin and Evolution of Religion).

JOSEPH WHELESS

"The reason why all these narratives are so similar, with a god-man who is crucified and resurrected, who does miracles and has 12 disciples, is that these stories were based on the movements of the sun through the heavens, an astro-theological development that can be found throughout the planet because the sun and the 12 zodiac signs can be observed around the globe. In other words, Jesus Christ and all the others upon whom this character is predicated are personifications of the sun, and the Gospel fable is merely a rehash of a mythological formula (the "Mythos," as mentioned above) revolving around the movements of the sun through the heavens." The logical question arises: Why, if Jesus is a historical character, are there presently two dates for both Christmas and Easter? This purportedly well-known character, who set the world on fire, has no birthdate whatsoever, and the "historical" references and genealogies found in the gospel accounts differ from each other. The gospels are not history at all but a retelling of the Mythos. The historical Jesus is a phantom. "These, which cannot both be historical, are based on the two birthdays of the double Horus in Egypt." In addition, early Christian "doctors" were constantly contradicting themselves as to when exactly "the Lord" died or "ascended to heaven" after "he" was resurrected. Two of the most powerful early bishops, Irenaeus and Papias recorded that Christ lived to be very old, "flatly denying as 'heresy' the Gospel stories as to his crucifixion at about thirty years of age."

Joseph Wheless states, "The gospels are all priestly forgeries over a century after their pretended dates." "As said by the great critic, Salomon Reinach, 'With the exception of Papias, who speaks of a narrative by Mark, and a collection of sayings of Jesus, no Christian writer of the first half of the second century (i.e., up to 150 A.D.) quotes the Gospels or their reputed authors.'" In The Book Your Church Doesn't Want You to Read, John Remsburg states: "The Four Gospels were unknown to the early Christian Fathers. Justin Martyr, the most eminent of the early Fathers, wrote about the middle of the second century. His writings in proof of the divinity of Christ demanded the use of these Gospels had they existed in his time. He makes more than 300 quotations from the books of the Old Testament, and nearly one hundred from the Apocryphal books of the New Testament; but none from the four Gospels. Rev. Giles says: 'The very names of the Evangelists, Matthew, Mark, Luke and John, are never mentioned by him (Justin) - do not occur once in all his writings.'" In A Short History of the Bible, Keeler says, "The books [canonical gospels] are not heard of till 150 A.D., that is, till Jesus had been dead nearly a hundred and twenty years. No writer before 150 A.D. makes the slightest mention of them." (J. Wheless, Forgery in Christianity).

"Those who concocted some of the hundreds of "alternative" gospels and epistles that were being kicked about during the first several centuries C.E. have even admitted that they had forged the documents." Wheless quotes the Catholic Encyclopedia: "Enterprising spirits responded to this natural craving by pretended gospels full of romantic fables, and fantastic and striking details; their fabrications were eagerly read and accepted as true by common folk who were devoid of any critical faculty and who were predisposed to believe what so luxuriously fed their pious curiosity. Both Catholics and Gnostics were concerned in writing these fictions. The former had no motive other than that of a PIOUS FRAUD."

Forgery during the first centuries of the Church's existence was admittedly rampant, so common in fact that a

new phrase was coined to describe it: "pious fraud." Wheless, op cit. Mangasarian states: "The church historian, Mosheim, writes that, 'The Christian Fathers deemed it a pious act to employ deception and fraud.' [Ecclesiastical Hist., Vol. I, p. 347.] Again, he says: 'The greatest and most pious teachers were nearly all of them infected with this leprosy.' Will not some believer tell us why forgery and fraud were necessary to prove the historicity of Jesus. . . . Another historian, Milman, writes that, 'Pious fraud was admitted and avowed by the early missionaries of Jesus.' 'It was an age of literary frauds,' writes Bishop Ellicott, speaking of the times immediately following the alleged crucifixion of Jesus. Dr. Giles declares that, 'There can be no doubt that great numbers of books were written with no other purpose than to deceive.' And it is the opinion of Dr. Robertson Smith that, 'There was an enormous floating mass of spurious literature created to suit party views.'"

Such prevarication is confessed to repeatedly in the Catholic Encyclopedia. Wheless: "The clerical confessions of lies and frauds in the ponderous volumes of the Catholic Encyclopedia alone suffice . . . to wreck the Church and to destroy utterly the Christian religion. . . . The Church exists mostly for wealth and self-aggrandizement; to quit paying money to the priests would kill the whole scheme in a couple of years. This is the sovereign remedy" (J. Wheless, Forgery in Christianity). As Wheless says, "The proofs of my indictment are marvelously easy."

BARBARA WALKER

The assertion that Jesus Christ is a myth [reincarnation of Pagan Sun-Myths] can be proved not only through the works of dissenters and "pagans" who knew the truth - and who were viciously refuted or murdered for their battle against the Christian priests and "Church Fathers" fooling the masses with their fictions - but also through the very statements of the Christians themselves, who continuously disclose that they knew Jesus Christ was a myth founded upon more ancient deities located throughout the known ancient world. In fact, Pope Leo X, privy to the truth because of his high rank, made this curious declaration, "What profit has not that fable of Christ brought us!" (The Woman's Encyclopedia of Myths and Secrets, by Barbara Walker, p. 471). Rev. Taylor, in The Diegesis, reports a slightly different version of Leo X's admission: "It was well known how profitable this fable of Christ has been to us." (footnote, p. 35.)

KERSEY GRAVES

The Jesus story incorporated elements from the tales of other deities recorded in this widespread area, such as many of the following world saviors and "sons of God," most or all of whom predate the Christian myth, and a number of whom were crucified or executed. Many on this list come from The World's Sixteen Crucified Saviors by Graves. This is not to suggest that all of these god-men characters were utilized in the formation of the Christian myth, as overt contact had not occurred in such places as Mexico or Bermuda. Also, modern orthodoxy does not allow for the dates provided by Graves, i.e., that Quetzalcoatl originates in the 6th B.C.E., a date far too early in the orthodox perspective. However, we utilize this list to demonstrate that the same concepts are found worldwide with and without cultural exchange, because they are derived from the same astro-theological observations. Also, we are in concurrence with the "ancient advanced civilization" theory ("Atlantis") that would allow for one or more centralized civilizations to have spread throughout the world during a very remote period in protohistory, thus taking with it the well-developed Mythos and Ritual, which would then mutate into the various forms found around the globe.

M. TURRETIN

Mr. Turretin, in describing the state of Christianity in the fourth century, says "that it was not so much the empire that was brought over to the faith, as the faith that was brought over to the empire; not the Pagans who were converted to Christianity, but Christianity that was converted to Paganism" (Taylor, Diegesis, p. 50).

EDWARD GIBBON

Edward Gibbon says: "It must be confessed that the ministers of the Catholic Church imitated the profane

model which they were impatient to destroy. The most respectable bishops had persuaded themselves that the ignorant rustics would more cheerfully renounce the superstitions of Paganism if they found some resemblance, some compensation, in the bosom of Christianity. The religion of Constantine achieved in less than a century the final conquest of the Roman empire; but the victors themselves were insensibly subdued by the arts of their vanquished rivals" (Gibbon, Rome, vol. iii. p. 163).

EMPEROR HADRIAN

The early Christians were charged with being a sect of sun-worshippers (Bonwick, Egyptian Belief, p. 283). The Emperor Hadrian could see no difference between them and the followers of the ancient Egyptian god Serapis, who was the Sun. In a letter to the Consul Servianus, the Emperor says: "There are there [in Egypt] Christians who worship Serapis and devoted to Serapis are those who call themselves 'Bishops of Christ'" (Giles, Hebrew and Christian Records, vol. ii. p. 86. London: 1877).

Now lets return to where we left off.



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NUMBERS 9:2-10

Num 9:2-10 2 Let the children of Israel also **keep the passover at his appointed season.**

Answer for yourself: Did you notice the word play when you read "appointed season" which refers to the day as one of God's "appointed times"?

3 In the fourteenth day of this month, at even, **ye shall keep it in his appointed season:** according to all the rites of it, and according to all the ceremonies thereof, shall ye keep it. 4 And Moses spake unto the children of Israel, that they should keep the passover. 5 And they kept the passover on the fourteenth day of the first month at even in the wilderness of Sinai: according to all that the LORD commanded Moses, so did the children of Israel. 6 And there were certain men, **who were defiled** by the dead body of a man, that they could not keep the passover on that day: and they came before Moses and before Aaron on that day: 7 And those men said unto him, We are defiled by the dead body of a man: wherefore are we kept back, that we may not offer an offering of the LORD in his appointed season among the children of Israel? 8 And Moses said unto them, Stand still, and I will hear what the LORD will command concerning you. 9 And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying, 10 Speak unto the children of Israel, saying, If any man of you or of your posterity shall be unclean by reason of a dead body, or be in a journey afar off, yet he shall keep the passover unto the LORD. 11 The fourteenth day of the second month at even they shall keep it, and eat it with unleavened bread and bitter herbs. 12 They shall leave none of it unto the morning, nor break any bone of it: according to all the ordinances of the passover they shall keep it. 13 But the man that is clean, and is not in a journey, and forbeareth to keep the passover, even the same soul shall be cut off from among his people: because he brought not the offering of the LORD in his appointed season, that man shall bear his sin. **14 And if a stranger shall sojourn among you, and will keep the passover unto the LORD; according to the ordinance of the passover, and according to the manner thereof, so shall he do: ye shall have one ordinance, both for the stranger, and for him that was born in the land. (KJV)**



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LEVITICUS 17:10-16

And whatsoever man there be of the house of Israel, or of the strangers that sojourn among you, that eateth any manner of blood; I will even set my face against that soul that eateth blood, and will cut him off from among his people. 11 For the life of the flesh is in the blood: and I have given it to you upon the altar to make an atonement for your souls: for it is the blood that maketh an atonement for the soul. 12 Therefore I said unto the children of Israel, No soul of you shall eat blood, neither shall any stranger that sojourneth among you eat blood. 13 And whatsoever man there be of the children of Israel, or of the strangers that sojourn among you, which hunteth and catcheth any beast or fowl that may be eaten; he shall even pour out the blood thereof, and cover it with dust. 14 For it is the life of all flesh; the blood of it is for the life thereof: therefore I said unto the children of Israel, Ye shall eat the blood of no manner of flesh: for the life of all flesh is the blood thereof: whosoever eateth it shall be cut off. 15 And every soul that eateth that which died of itself, or that which was torn with beasts, whether it be one of your own country, or a stranger, he shall both wash his clothes, and bathe himself in water, and be unclean until the even: then shall he be clean. 16 But if he wash them not, nor bathe his flesh; then he shall bear his iniquity. (KJV)



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DEUTERONOMY 14:21

21 Ye shall not eat of any thing that dieth of itself: thou shalt give it unto the stranger that is in thy gates, that he may eat it; or thou mayest sell it unto an alien: for thou art an holy people unto the LORD thy God. Thou shalt not see the kid in his mother's milk. (KJV)



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EXODUS 20:10 10

But the seventh day is the sabbath of the LORD thy God: in it thou shalt not do any work, thou, nor thy son, nor thy daughter, thy manservant, nor thy maidservant, nor thy cattle, **nor thy stranger that is within thy gates:** (KJV)



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DEUTERONOMY 5:14

14 But the seventh day is the sabbath of the LORD thy God: in it thou shalt not do any work, thou, nor thy son, nor thy daughter, nor thy manservant, nor thy maidservant, nor thine ox, nor thine ass, nor any of thy cattle, nor thy stranger that is within thy gates; that thy manservant and thy maidservant may rest as well as thou. (KJV)



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DEUTERONOMY 16:1-22

16 1 Observe the month of Abib, and **keep the passover unto the LORD thy God**: for in the month of Abib the LORD thy God brought thee forth out of Egypt by night. 2 Thou shalt therefore sacrifice the passover unto the LORD thy God, of the flock and the herd, in the place which the LORD shall choose to place his name there. 3 Thou shalt eat no leavened bread with it; seven days shalt thou eat unleavened bread therewith, even the bread of affliction; for thou camest forth out of the land of Egypt in haste: that thou mayest remember the day when thou camest forth out of the land of Egypt all the days of thy life. 4 And there shall be no leavened bread seen with thee in all thy coast seven days; neither shall there anything of the flesh, which thou sacrificedst the first day at even, remain all night until the morning. 5 Thou mayest not sacrifice the passover within any of thy gates, which the LORD thy God giveth thee: 6 But at the place which the LORD thy God shall choose to place his name in, there thou shalt sacrifice the passover at even, at the going down of the sun, at the season that thou camest forth out of Egypt. 7 And thou shalt roast and eat it in the place which the LORD thy God shall choose: and thou shalt turn in the morning, and go unto thy tents. 8 Six days thou shalt eat unleavened bread: and on the seventh day shall be a solemn assembly to the LORD thy God: thou shalt do no work therein. 9 Seven weeks shalt thou number unto thee: begin to number the seven weeks from such time as thou beginnest to put the sickle to the corn. 10 And thou shalt keep the feast of weeks unto the LORD thy God with a tribute of a freewill offering of thine hand, which thou shalt give unto the LORD thy God, according as the LORD thy God hath blessed thee: 11 **And thou shalt rejoice before the LORD thy God, thou, and thy son, and thy daughter, and thy manservant, and thy maidservant, and the Levite that is within thy gates, and the stranger, and the fatherless, and the widow, that are among you, in the place which the LORD thy God hath chosen to place his name there.** 12 And thou shalt remember that thou wast a bondman in Egypt: and thou shalt observe and do these statutes. 13 Thou shalt observe the feast of tabernacles seven days, after that thou hast gathered in thy corn and thy wine: 14 And thou shalt rejoice in thy feast, thou, and thy son, and thy daughter, and thy manservant, and thy maidservant, and the Levite, **the stranger**, and the fatherless, and the widow, that are within thy gates. 15 Seven days shalt thou keep a solemn feast unto the LORD thy God in the place which the LORD shall choose: because the LORD thy God shall bless thee in all thine increase, and in all the works of thine hands, therefore thou shalt surely rejoice. 16 Three times in a year shall all thy males appear before the LORD thy God in the place which he shall choose; **in the feast of unleavened bread**, and in the **feast of weeks**, and in the **feast of tabernacles**: and they shall not appear before the LORD empty: 17 Every man shall give as he is able, according to the blessing of the LORD thy God which he hath given thee. 18 Judges and officers shalt thou make thee in all thy gates, which the LORD thy God giveth thee, throughout thy tribes: and they shall judge the people with just judgment. 19 Thou shalt not wrest judgment; thou shalt not respect persons, neither take a gift: for a gift doth blind the eyes of the wise, and pervert the words of the righteous. 20 That which is altogether just shalt thou follow, that thou mayest live, and inherit the land which the LORD thy God giveth thee. 21 Thou shalt not plant thee a grove of any trees near unto the altar of the LORD thy God, which thou shalt make thee. 22 Neither shalt thou set thee up any image; which the LORD thy God (KJV)



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EXODUS 19:10-11

10 And the LORD said unto Moses, Go unto the people, and sanctify them to day and to morrow, and **let them wash their clothes (Hebrew idiom for immersion of the body)**, 11 And be ready against the third day: for the third day the **LORD will come down in the sight of all the people upon mount Sinai (Shavuot, Pentecost).** (KJV)



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LEVITICUS 16:1-34

Lev 16:1-34 1 And the LORD spake unto Moses after the death of the two sons of Aaron, when they offered before the LORD, and died; 2 And the LORD said unto Moses, Speak unto Aaron thy brother, that he come not at all times into the holy place within the vail before the mercy seat, which is upon the ark; that he die not: for I will appear in the cloud upon the mercy seat. 3 Thus shall Aaron come into the holy place: with a young bullock for a sin offering, and a ram for a burnt offering. 4 He shall put on the holy linen coat, and he shall have the linen breeches upon his flesh, and shall be girded with a linen girdle, and with the linen mitre shall he be attired: these are holy garments; therefore shall he wash his flesh in water, and so put them on. 5 And he shall take of the congregation of the children of Israel two kids of the goats for a sin offering, and one ram for a burnt offering. 6 And Aaron shall offer his bullock of the sin offering, which is for himself, and make an atonement for himself, and for his house. 7 And he shall take the two goats, and present them before the LORD at the door of the tabernacle of the congregation. 8 And Aaron shall cast lots upon the two goats; one lot for the LORD, and the other lot for the scapegoat. 9 And Aaron shall bring the goat upon which the LORD's lot fell, and offer him for a sin offering. 10 But the goat, on which the lot fell to be the scapegoat, shall be presented alive before the LORD, to make an atonement with him, and to let him go for a scapegoat into the wilderness. 11 And Aaron shall bring the bullock of the sin offering, which is for himself, and shall make an atonement for himself, and for his house, and shall kill the bullock of the sin offering which is for himself: 12 And he shall take a censer full of burning coals of fire from off the altar before the LORD, and his hands full of sweet incense beaten small, and bring it within the vail: 13 And he shall put the incense upon the fire before the LORD, that the cloud of the incense may cover the mercy seat that is upon the testimony, that he die not: 14 And he shall take of the blood of the bullock, and sprinkle it with his finger upon the mercy seat eastward; and before the mercy seat shall he sprinkle of the blood with his finger seven times. 15 Then shall he kill the goat of the sin offering, that is for the people, and bring his blood within the vail, and do with that blood as he did with the blood of the bullock, and sprinkle it upon the mercy seat, and before the mercy seat: 16 And he shall make an atonement for the holy place, because of the uncleanness of the children of Israel, and because of their transgressions in all their sins: and so shall he do for the tabernacle of the congregation, that remaineth among them in the midst of their uncleanness. 17 And there shall be no man in the tabernacle of the congregation when he goeth in to make an atonement in the holy place, until he come out, and have made an atonement for himself, and for his household, and for all the congregation of Israel. 18 And he shall go out unto the altar that is before the LORD, and make an atonement for it; and shall take of the blood of the bullock, and of the blood of the goat, and put it upon the horns of the altar round about. 19 And he shall sprinkle of the blood upon it with his finger seven times, and cleanse it, and hallow it from the uncleanness of the children of Israel. 20 And when he hath made an end of reconciling the holy place, and the tabernacle of the congregation, and the altar, he shall bring the live goat: 21 And Aaron shall lay both his hands upon the head of the live goat, and confess over him all the iniquities of the children of Israel, and all their transgressions in all their sins, putting them upon the head of the goat, and shall send him away by the hand of a fit man into the wilderness: 22 And the goat shall bear upon him all their iniquities unto a land not inhabited: and he shall let go the goat in the wilderness. 23 And Aaron shall come into the tabernacle of the congregation, and shall put off the linen garments, which he put on when he went into the holy place, and shall leave them there: 24 And he shall wash his flesh with water in the holy place, and put on his garments, and come forth, and offer his burnt offering, and the burnt offering of the people, and make an atonement for himself, and for the people. 25 And the fat of the sin offering shall he burn upon the altar. 26 And he that let go the goat for the scapegoat shall wash his clothes, and bathe his flesh

in water, and afterward come into the camp. 27 And the bullock for the sin offering, and the goat for the sin offering, whose blood was brought in to make atonement in the holy place, shall one carry forth without the camp; and they shall burn in the fire their skins, and their flesh, and their dung. 28 And he that burneth them shall wash his clothes, and bathe his flesh in water, and afterward he shall come into the camp. 29 And this shall be a statute for ever unto you: that in the seventh month, on the tenth day of the month, ye shall afflict your souls, and do no work at all, whether it be one of your own country, or a stranger that sojourneth among you: 30 For on that day shall the priest make an atonement for you, to cleanse you, that ye may be clean from all your sins before the LORD. 31 It shall be a sabbath of rest unto you, and ye shall afflict your souls, by a statute for ever. 32 And the priest, whom he shall anoint, and whom he shall consecrate to minister in the priest's office in his father's stead, shall make the atonement, and shall put on the linen clothes, even the holy garments: 33 And he shall make an atonement for the holy sanctuary, and he shall make an atonement for the tabernacle of the congregation, and for the altar, and he shall make an atonement for the priests, and for all the people of the congregation. 34 And this shall be an everlasting statute unto you, to make an atonement for the children of Israel for all their sins once a year. And he did as the LORD commanded Moses. (KJV)



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LEVITICUS 17:8

8 And thou shalt say unto them, Whatsoever man there be of the house of Israel, or of the strangers which sojourn among you, that offereth a burnt offering or sacrifice, (KJV)



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LEVITICUS 22:18

18 Speak unto Aaron, and to his sons, and unto all the children of Israel, and say unto them, Whatsoever he be of the house of Israel, or of the strangers in Israel, that will offer his oblation for all his vows, and for all his freewill offerings, which they will offer unto the LORD for a burnt offering; (KJV)



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NUMBERS 15:1-16

1 And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying, 2 Speak unto the children of Israel, and say unto them, When ye be come into the land of your habitations, which I give unto you, 3 And will make an offering by fire unto the LORD, a burnt offering, or a sacrifice in performing a vow, or in a freewill offering, or in your solemn feasts, to make a sweet savour unto the LORD, of the herd, or of the flock: 4 Then shall he that offereth his offering unto the LORD bring a meat offering of a tenth deal of flour mingled with the fourth part of an hin of oil. 5 And the fourth part of an hin of wine for a drink offering shalt thou prepare with the burnt offering or sacrifice, for one lamb. 6 Or for a ram, thou shalt prepare for a meat offering two tenth deals of flour mingled with the third part of an hin of oil. 7 And for a drink offering thou shalt offer the third part of an hin of wine, for a sweet savour unto the LORD. 8 And when thou preparest a bullock for a burnt offering, or for a sacrifice in performing a vow, or peace offerings unto the LORD: 9 Then shall he bring with a bullock a meat offering of three tenth deals of flour mingled with half an hin of oil. 10 And thou shalt bring for a drink offering half an hin of wine, for an offering made by fire, of a sweet savour unto the LORD. 11 Thus shall it be done for one bullock, or for one ram, or for a lamb, or a kid. 12 According to the number that ye shall prepare, so shall ye do to every one according to their number. 13 All that are born of the country shall do these things after this manner, in offering an offering made by fire, of a sweet savour unto the LORD. 14 And if a stranger sojourn with you, or whosoever be among you in your generations, and will offer an offering made by fire, of a sweet savour unto the LORD; as ye do, so he shall do. 15 One ordinance shall be both for you of the congregation, and also for the stranger that sojourneth with you, an ordinance for ever in your generations: as ye are, so shall the stranger be before the LORD. 16 One law and one manner shall be for you, and for the stranger that sojourneth with you. (KJV)



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EXODUS 12:48-50

48 And when a stranger shall sojourn with thee, and will keep the passover to the LORD, let all his males be circumcised, and then let him come near and keep it; and he shall be as one that is born in the land: for no uncircumcised person shall eat thereof. 49 One law shall be to him that is homeborn, and unto the stranger that sojourneth among you. 50 Thus did all the children of Israel; as the LORD commanded Moses and Aaron, so did they. (KJV)



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NUMBERS 9:14

14 And if a **stranger shall sojourn among you, and will keep the passover unto the LORD**; according to the ordinance of the passover, and according to the manner thereof, so shall he do: **ye shall have one ordinance, both for the stranger**, and for him that was born in the land. (KJV)



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ISAIAH 56...GOING BEYOND THE LAWS OF NOAH CHOOSING THOSE THINGS THAT PLEASE GOD...BUT ARE WE?

Often I am asked why as a Christian I keep the Biblical Festivals and the weekly Sabbath. The reason is so simple once you read and correctly understand the whole Bible.

First as Christians we must become aware of the Laws of Noah and the Covenant of Noah as referred to in Acts 15.

This Covenant of Noah is referred to in Acts 15 by James as "necessary" for Gentiles who are becoming grafted into Israel/Church WITHOUT formal conversion to Judaism which had, up to that time, been required for ANY fellowship between Gentiles and Jews religiously, etc. Due to bigotry and hatred by Jews toward Gentiles in the first century, the Jews had enforced and put upon Gentiles what God never did.....the requirement to keep the laws of God which had never been given to them as a people....such as circumcision. Such approach to the non-Jews by bigoted Jewry of the first century was intended to keep the Gentiles separate from the Jews. Circumcision often, for an adult male, meant death due to infection and disease in the first century and this was an effective way to keep these “dogs” as arms length. It worked. God wanted to change this and did so through the effective ministry of the followers of Jesus as seen in the Acts 15 account and the epistle of Galatians. Sadly Christians today when reading Paul (Galatians for example) fail to understand when he says “you are not under the Law” he only is referring to the major issue of circumcision. Such is the ignorance that goes with the lack of sufficient study of the our faith as followers of Jesus.

THE GODFEARERS....NON-JEWISH BELIEVERS IN GOD

There is a term often overlooked in the New Testament which is of major importance for correct interpretation of the requirements of Gentile believers before God....namely the term "Godfearers." These were Gentiles without circumcision who according to Acts 10:35 are accepted with God...but unfortunately were not accepted among Jews. So you have the background for what comes next.

As James tells us in Acts 15 these 4 of the 7 listed Laws of Noah (containing 66 subsets) were necessary for Gentiles...to be part of Jesus' church (notice that he said this after the cross)!

Acts 15:28-29 28 For it seemed good to the Holy Ghost, and to us, to lay upon you no greater burden than these necessary things [referring to the Covenant and Laws of Noah]; 29 That ye abstain from meats offered to idols, and from blood, and from things strangled, and from fornication: from which if ye keep yourselves, ye shall do well. Fare ye well. (KJV)

Answer for yourself: Since Acts 15 followed the death of Jesus then I have to ask you: "What has changed since the cross" when James made his decision as being "necessary" and "which seemed good to the Holy Spirit?"

NOTHING!

Answer for yourself: If adherence to the Laws of Noah were necessary and seemed good to the Holy Spirit for Gentile believers coming to God through Christ and his ministry through his followers then.....what about now?

Let me remind you that nothing has changed since the crucifixion and this event in Acts occurred over 20 years after the death and resurrection of Yeshua. Then James says in this recorded event (remember over 20 years after the cross)... **"as Moses is taught in the Synagogue every Sabbath"** thus implying that Gentiles who are turning from idols to serve the living God begin their repentance since coming to God with adherence to the Laws of Noah as the **"minimum required"** and then were instructed in **fulfilling Isaiah 56** where is it recorded for us that Gentiles are to learn to **"choose those things that please God from His Torah which go beyond the minimum [as Moses is taught in the Synagogue every Sabbath]."**

Understand that not all the Law (613 commandments) are applicable for Gentiles and they never were commanded by God to fulfill or obey all 613. Basically they were given 66 within the Covenant of Noah. The joy comes when you understand that **you don't have to do [observe] more, but you get to. Such is the demonstration of your love for God who saves you].**

ISA. 56..AND GOING BEYOND THE MINIMUM

Isa 56:1-6

- **1 Thus saith the LORD, Keep ye judgment, and do justice: for my salvation is near to come, and my righteousness to be revealed.**
- **2 Blessed is the man that doeth this, and the son of man that layeth hold on it; that keepeth the sabbath from polluting it, and keepeth his hand from doing any evil.**
- **3 Neither let the son of the stranger, that hath joined himself to the LORD, speak, saying, The LORD hath utterly separated me from his people: neither let the eunuch say, Behold, I am a dry tree (understand here that we are NOT to be separated from the Israel of God as non-Jewish believers).**
- **4 For thus saith the LORD unto the eunuchs [Eunuch are non-Jews] that keep my sabbaths, and choose the things that please me, and take hold of my covenant (notice that non-Jews kept God's Sabbaths [plural...including festivals and weekly sabbaths and took hold of God covenant with Israel and acquired more mitzvoth and commandments):**
- **5 Even unto them [speaking of the non-Jew] will I give in mine house and within my walls a place and a name better than of sons and of daughters: I will give them an everlasting name, that shall not be cut off.**
- **6 Also the sons of the stranger (again referring to non-Jews), that join themselves to the LORD, to serve him, and to love the name of the LORD, to be his servants, every one that keepeth the sabbath from polluting it, and taketh hold of my covenant;**

This passage is extremely important for the Christian today for although the Sabbath and Festival commandments were not required for Gentiles in the Laws of Noah (yet it can be shown for example that Abraham knew and

observed the Passover for instance), it is implied in Isa 56 and Acts 15 that Gentiles would meet on the Sabbath for instruction in God's Commandments where they could learn and then apply other Sabbaths (festivals) and Commandments to their lives, thus pleasing God, for how can we say we love Yeshua or the Father unless we obey them?

If one undertakes a serious study of their faith (Christianity) it can be shown, that although not commanded of non-Jews, Abraham and others can be found keeping them. This love for God is demonstrated in their willingness to do what pleases God. It is our hope the same spirit be upon you. But if you are a typical denominational or non-denominational Christian today your experience is anything but the above. You have for your authority a book called the New Testament which in places calls such obedience to these Laws and Commandments a curse and if that was not enough your Church calendar is filled with pagan solar and astral days which have been made to look as if Jesus has something to do with such idolatry.

Hosea 4:6 6 My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge: because thou hast rejected knowledge, I will also reject thee, that thou shalt be no priest to me: seeing thou hast forgotten the law of thy God, I will also forget thy children. (KJV)

Answer for yourself: Is God serious in the above passage and could this ever happen to you once you die and then find out that your "experience" was wrong and that just a little study on your part would have shown the folly of many things in your "Christian experience"?

WHY HAS NOT YOUR PASTOR TAUGHT YOU THESE THINGS?

Lets look at just one example of "choosing those things that please God" which the New Testament can be shown to teach; but the key is recognizing them and this is almost impossible without a background in Judaism and Jewish Roots of Christianity.

Also in Acts 20:8 is recorded that "there were many lights in the upper chamber." Most of us have read this passage over and over our whole lives and just pass right over it moving on to the next passage. For your information this passage is recording for us the Havdalah worship service which is a religious service that ends the Sabbath on Saturday evenings at sunset; thereby separating the Sabbath Holy Day from secular days. The Fourth Commandment is:

Exod 20:8-11 8 Remember the sabbath day, to keep it holy. 9 Six days shalt thou labour, and do all thy work: 10 But the seventh day is the sabbath of the LORD thy God: in it thou shalt not do any work, thou, nor thy son, nor thy daughter, thy manservant, nor thy maidservant, nor thy cattle, nor thy stranger that is within thy gates: 11 For in six days the LORD made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is, and rested the seventh day: wherefore the LORD blessed the sabbath day, and hallowed it. (KJV)

PLEASE PAY CLOSE ATTENTION

Notice that in Troas, a Greek city, the Apostle Paul is teaching Gentiles to observe Havdalah on the Sabbath evening. In other words followers of Jesus, in fulfillment of the Great Commission were

observing the Sabbath on Friday evening to Saturday evening long after Jesus' death and resurrection. Gentile believers were keeping the Sabbath and not Sunday. Rome will change this with Constantine and since then followers of Jesus have disobeyed the Sabbath and kept days set aside for sun-worship instead. Neglect of the sabbath and sanctification of pagan holy days is considered idolatry and this is where the vast majority of good Christian people find themselves today; most never find out until they die. Needless to say the experience of the non-Jewish believers in Troas is NOT the experience of most Christians. Why not?

Repeatedly in Paul's trips he entered the synagogue as was his custom, and it was in these Greek cities that Gentiles were attending "church" on the Sabbath. With just a little study you would find out that the early church knew what we do not: namely that Yeshua was crucified on Wednesday afternoon and raised at the end of Friday evening (at the beginning of the Sabbath which is a picture of the world to come where believers in God realize Eternal Life where there is not more death...figures does it not): So much for Catholic tradition and Good Friday when it was Good Wednesday (ha ha)!

It would be many years after Yeshua's death before Gentiles would later take control of Christianity and change the day of worship from the Sabbath to Sunday.

Let us look at another example.

In 1st Cor 11:2 Paul thanks the Gentiles in Corinth for "remembering him in all ways and KEEPING the ordinances." The root word for "ordinances" when traced to the Greek and Hebrew will refer to "divine appointed times"...festivals and Sabbaths.

Answer for yourself: Have you forgotten that Isa. 56 spoke of this very thing regarding non-Jews who come to God were allowed to keep such Festivals and Sabbaths so that would not be separated from God people (the Jews)? I hope not because what follows next is another example of the New Testament rightly "divided" where we see such things again taught to non-Jews in the fulfillment of the Great Commission.

Again in Corinthians Paul admonishes Gentiles to "keep the feast" [Passover] because Yeshua was killed on that day.

It is not my intention at this point to embark on who and why the meaning of Jesus' death was changed later by some who deviated from normative Judaism but let me say that Jesus'/Yeshua's death was the catalyst that generated from a Gentile hating Judaism a movement into all the world whereby God's Covenant and Commandments were taken in the Great Commission in the form of the Laws of Noah whereby non-Jews would learn and turn from idolatry to the living God. Had Jesus not died then this momentous event mostly likely would never have happened and the world as we know it would have been vastly different and the Judeo-Christian ethic would be absent from this planet today. Contrary to what most Gentile Christian believers understand today regarding this "Passover" passage of Paul in contemporary Christianity, one should understand that it was through Jesus' death that the salvation of the non-Jew was accomplished because it would be from this ministry that would begin after his death that would come a movement which would go into all the world and take to the non-Jews the Covenants of God and the path for non-Jews to come to the saving knowledge of God. This is the historical understanding of the passages that relate to how the death of Jesus saved the non-Jew. His "blood" was simply a metaphor for his death and his death accomplished what Israel was failing to do at the time, namely, not being a priest to the nations and not bringing their non-Jewish brothers to God. Jesus' death did this through the missionizing of the world by his followers. So, again, metaphorically, you can understand how non-Jews were saved by Jesus' blood (or should I say death). Many will dispute this and claim literally that the "blood" saves but this only betrays they lack of adequate

understanding on how the sacrificial system worked. If only one looks to Lev. 17 where it says:

Lev 17:11

11 For the life of the flesh is in the blood: and I have given it to you upon the altar to make an atonement for your souls: for it is the blood that maketh an atonement for the soul.

Look at the subject of the sentence. I defy anyone to tell me that the subject accomplishing the action (atonement) is not the word "life" and not "blood." The word "blood" is the object of the preposition in the sentence. This realization many years ago awoke me to serious study into the dynamics of the sacrificial system where I surprisingly learned that I had been taught it 100% incorrectly by the Christian Church as well as my pseudo-professional teachers. It is time we learn the truth about Jewish things from Jews who KNOW and literally know Jesus better than Christians (such irony).

Returning to Paul:

1st Corinthians chapter 16:2 states:

1 Cor 16:2

2 (Speaking to non-Jews in Corinth...a Gentile city)...Upon the first day of the week let every one of you lay by him in store, as God hath prospered him, that there be no gatherings when I come.

One should note that "day" in most Bibles is in italics and this means it was "added" to the text by the Bible society which printed the Bible. In reality it is saying, by interpretation, "on the first of the week" or "as the week was dawning." This refers to the time period when the first of the week was beginning to dawn (in Hebrew time the day begins at evening and end in the morning the first day).

So again reference is again made to a Havdalah service on Saturday evening for non-Jewish believers in Corinth...thus concluding the Sabbath just before the beginning of our Sunday which, according to Jewish time, begins at 6:01 P.M. in the evening.

Also another example:

In I Corinthians 10:16 it is recorded: is this not the "cup of blessing" which refers to the ONLY cup of the Passover Seder...other than Elijah's cup at the end of the Seder, which again shows us a picture of Gentiles keeping Passover and the Sabbath.

I could go on and on but by now you get the point I hope...we don't have to keep Sabbath....but if it is recorded that Gentiles doing so pleases God in Isa 56..."who keep my Sabbaths...[referring to Feasts and Weekly Sabbaths"] ..then what kind of follower of Jesus are we when we choose not to do things knowingly when they please God?

To top this off understand that non-Jewish believers were taught these things by Israel until early in the 4th century when Constantine and Rome would create an official state religion which would destroy the existing "faith once given to the saints...both Jew and non-Jew; and out jumped the golden calf of Gentile Roman Christianity which would lead

the way to the official recognition and production of the New Testament some 70 plus years later."

We at Bet Emet Ministries are dedicated to instructing Gentile believers [Christians] in returning to the hidden truths of the Bible. Today in English we miss so much since few have the skills to rightly interpret this Bible correctly (historically, linguistically, culturally, politically, etc). By God's calling and grace we have been shown these truths which have caused us to repent from the errors in our religious belief system...such errors caused us to have a life-style that was less than pleasing to God in many areas...and this was do the fact that we lacked only knowledge (the Bible says 'my people perish because of a lack of knowledge).

Please understand that these few examples which I have shared is just the tip of the iceberg for Christians. Our texts are full of errors in key places where the crafters of our New Testament took great pains to make sure the Gentile readers would not see nor understand the Jewish Roots of their faith; such was Rome's ploy in creating this New Testament in the first place. I have only touched on just a few examples in this article but please understand that such errors of omission involve other important areas of our faith as well: atonement, Christology, Messianism, Covenants, etc. If you are a serious student or desire to be then our websites can be of great value to you in your desire to learn the truth and ultimately be able to discern the shaft from the wheat in Gentile Christianity.

I hope this has opened your heart and eyes...and given you a desire to learn how you can live a life more pleasing to God. If we can be of further assistance to you in sharing our many teachings and newsletters...please let me know and I will include you on our mailings. Watch for our Web Sites. May God bless you and may He cause you to walk in His statutes...shalom!



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GENTILES AND JUDAISM

In the Jewish worldview all gentiles who are ethical monotheists will achieve salvation. Judaism does not denigrate gentiles and does not see them as condemned to eternal damnation. Rather we see them as fellow human beings, from other nations, searching for God and for meaning in life. Judaism wishes them well with their search and celebrates those who succeed in becoming ethical monotheists. Jews are obligated in many rituals and ceremonies and those Jews who fail to fulfill these rituals are considered sinners. Gentiles, however, are not obligated in these commandments and are only obligated to be ethical monotheists. Those who fulfill this obligation receive their full reward in the world-to-come.

There are three main categories of gentiles [see R. Yom Tov ben Avraham Alshevili, Chiddushei HaRitva, Makkot 9a n.].

THE NOACHIDE MONOTHEIST:

This person is generally called a **Ben Noach (or Noachide) meaning a proud descendant of the biblical Noah.** In the Jewish tradition Noah and his sons were commanded to fulfill seven commandments which amount to ethical monotheism [see Aaron Lichtenstein, The Seven Laws of Noah]. **Those gentiles who observe these commandments are considered righteous gentiles. They are, however, not Jews and are not considered part of Jewish society.** They are righteous people and recognized for their accomplishments. However, they remain part of the human brotherhood but not part of Jewish society.

THE GER TOSHAV: NON-JEWS WHO GO BEYOND THE LAWS OF NOAH AND WHO, BEFORE A BET DIN (COURT) VOW TO OBSERVE THEIR COMMANDMENTS AS ETHICAL MONOTHEISTS

The Path of the Righteous Gentile states: "When one of the Children of Noah resolves to fulfill the Seven Universal Laws, his or her soul is elevated. This person becomes one of the Chasidei Umot Haolam - Pious Ones of the Nations - and receives a share of the Eternal World. The Holy Scriptures calls one who accepts the yoke of fulfilling the Seven Universal Laws a Ger Toshav - a Proselyte of the Gate. This person is permitted to live in the land of Israel and to enter to the Holy Temple in Jerusalem and to offer sacrifices to the God of Israel."

As the Rambam explains, **the Ger Toshav is a person that actively accepted upon himself in front of a Jewish Bet Din to fulfill these Mitzvot, in a way that's similar to conversion.** [According to some opinions he undergoes Brit milah (circumcision or the drawing of blood from his penis as well already circumcised). As opposed to a regular goy that adheres to the 7 Noahide laws out of his or her own rational understanding, feeling that that's the "humane thing to do", and has not committed him/herself to keep these laws on a definite basis, the "Ger Toshav" consciously accepts that Hashem, our God, commanded him to keep them (through

Moshe) and for that basic reason, he/she is fully committed to fulfilling them. Moreover, if he is interested in keeping more than the basic seven laws, he can commit himself to more Mitzvot at the time of his "conversion", and can even accept upon himself Shmirat Shabbat- something that a regular goy is forbidden to do. A "Ger Toshav" can come to Bet din and decide upon any number of Mitzvot from the minimum seven up to a maximum of 613, and from that point on is obliged to keep them. A "Ger To Shav" cannot accept all 613 Mitzvot- because if he did, he'd simply be a... Jew!

By pledging that he will fulfill his obligation to be an ethical monotheist he enters Jewish society. He is not a convert and does not become Jewish. In fact, he can worship any monotheistic religion he chooses. He is, however, a righteous gentile and is gladly received into the Jewish community. He is welcome to live in Jewish neighborhoods (should he so choose), is supported by Jewish charities (if he so needs), and is considered part of the fabric of Jewish society in many ways [see Talmud Pesachim 21b; Talmud Avodah Zarah 65b; Nachmanides, Additions to Book of Commandments, 16; Maimonides, Mishneh Torah, Hilchot Zechi'ah Umattanah 3:11, Hilchot Melachim 10:12; Ra'avad of Posquieres, Comments to Mishneh Torah, Hilchot Issurei Biah 14:8]. Both the Ben Noach and the Ger Toshav are righteous gentiles. However, the Ben Noach has not entered Jewish society and perhaps does not wish to. Therefore, he is treated like a stranger. He is respected as a righteous human being, one who is fulfilling his divine purpose in the world. However, he is not part of the Jewish community.

GENTILES WHO ARE NOT MONOTHEISTS

The third category is of the gentile who is not an ethical monotheist. He is violating the covenant God made with Noah and his descendants and will be punished for those sins. It is with these people that Judaism has a very ambivalent attitude. On the one hand, they are acting contrary to God's purpose in the world. For this reason, Judaism tries to distance Jews from them. On the other hand, they are people created in God's image and must be respected as such. The compromise is that their positive traits, examples of which we will shortly see, are recognized and respected. However, their negative traits are never fully forgotten and full societal integration with such people is discouraged.

Those gentiles who have the status of Ger Toshav, who have requested acceptance into Jewish society and have pledged obedience to their commandments, are treated almost like Jews. Those who have the status of Ben Noach because they have not requested acceptance are respected but are not treated like brethren. They receive letter-of-the-law treatment because to treat them beyond that would be to detract from our brothers. What has a Ger Toshav gained if a Ben Noach is treated the same? What extra connection is there between fellow Jews and within the entire Jewish/Ger Toshav society if everyone is treated extra specially? Within the Jewish/Ger Toshav society all members, both Jewish and gentile, are joined together as a community united in its single goal of worshipping the one God. While Judaism treats all human beings with the respect due to someone created in the divine image, those within the Jewish/Ger Toshav society get slightly better treatment. They are handled above and beyond the letter of common human interaction.

There are those who point out these differences in treatment and wish to demonstrate that Judaism is anti-gentile. Quite the opposite. Judaism is one of the few religions that recognizes that even those outside its faith can be saved and allows them into its community. Righteous gentiles have a place in the world to come and can choose to join Jewish society if they wish. If they decline this invitation then they are given the full respect that these righteous people deserve. We shall show that the differences in treatment are reasonable and that all gentiles are treated honestly and respectfully.

CONVERSION OF THE GENTILE

There is ample evidence of a widespread conversion to Judaism during the period of the Second Temple, especially the latter part of the period, and the word ger, which in biblical times meant a stranger, or an alien, became synonymous with a proselyte.

Among the notable converts to Judaism may be mentioned the royal family of Adiabene, Aquila and/or Onkelos, Flavius Clemens, the nephew of Vespasian, and Fulvia, wife of Saturninus, a Roman senator. Unique, as the only case of forced conversion in Judaism, was the mass conversion of the Edomites by John Hyrcanus.

In addition to those outstanding figures, however, it is obvious that proselytism was widespread among the ordinary people. The statement of the New Testament that the Pharisees **"compass sea and land to make one proselyte"** (Matt. 23:15), suggesting a vigorous and active proselytization may possibly be an exaggeration, but on the other hand, the near pride which the rabbis took in the claim that some of their greatest figures were descended from proselytes point to an **openhanded policy toward their acceptance**. Such incidents as the different approach of Shammai and Hillel to the request to be taught the principles of Judaism by a potential proselyte (Shabb. 31a) and the incidental mention of "Judah the Ammonite proselyte" (Ber. 28a) point to the fact that the movement was not confined to the upper classes. In fact Josephus states explicitly that in his day the inhabitants of both Greek and barbarian cities evinced a great zeal for Judaism (Contra Ap. 2. 39).

It was during this period that the detailed laws governing the acceptance of proselytes were discussed and codified, and they have remained standard in Orthodox Judaism.

Laws of Conversion

The procedure, established by the tannaim, according to which a non-Jew may be accepted into the Jewish faith, was elucidated as follows: "In our days, when a proselyte comes to be converted, we say to him: 'What is your objective? Is it not known to you that today the people of Israel are wretched, driven about, exiled, and in constant suffering?' If he says: 'I know of this and I do not have the merit,' we accept him immediately and we inform him of some of the lighter precepts and of some of the severer ones... we inform him of the chastisements for the transgression of these precepts... and we also inform him of the reward for observing these precepts... we should not overburden him nor be meticulous with him..." (Yev. 47a; cf. Ger. 1, in: M. Higger, Sheva Massekhtot Ketannot (1930), 68–69). This text refers to a person who converted through conviction. The halakhah also accepts a posteriori, proselytes who had converted in order to marry, to advance themselves, or out of fear (Yev. 24b, in the name of Rav, see TJ, Kid. 4:1, 65b–d; Maim. Yad, Issurei Bi'ah 13:17; Sh. Ar., YD 268:12). The acceptance of a proselyte "under the wings of the Divine Presence" is equivalent to Israel's entry into the covenant, i.e., with **circumcision, immersion, and offering a sacrifice** (Ger. 2:4, in: M. Higger; loc. cit. 72).

A proselyte had to sacrifice a burnt offering either of cattle or two young pigeons. R. Johanan b. Zakkai instituted that in those times when sacrifice was no longer possible, a proselyte was not obliged to set aside money for the sacrifice (Ker. 9a). Therefore, only circumcision and immersion remained. R. Eliezer and R. Joshua disagreed as to whether someone who immersed himself but was not circumcised or vice versa could be considered a proselyte. According to R. Eliezer, he is a proselyte, even if he performed only one of these commandments. R. Joshua, however, maintained that immersion was indispensable. The halakhic conclusion is that "he is not a proselyte unless he has both been circumcised and has immersed himself" (Yev. 46). The act of conversion must take place before a bet din, consisting of three members; a conversion carried out by the proselyte when alone is invalid (Yev. 46b–47a). There is a suggestion that the three members of the bet din must be witnesses only to his acceptance of the precepts but not to the immersion. Maimonides, however, decided (Yad, Issurei Bi'ah 13:7), that a proselyte who immersed himself in the presence of two members only is not a proselyte. The schools of Shammai and Hillel differed on the issue of a proselyte who had already been circumcised at the time of his conversion: "Bet Shammai states: 'One must draw from him the blood of circumcision'; Bet Hillel states: 'One need not draw the blood of circumcision from him'" (Tosef., Shah. 15:9; TB, Shab. 135a). Most of the rabbinic authorities decide in favor of Bet Shammai (Tos. to Shab. 135a; Maim. Yad, Issurei Bi'ah 14:5; Sh. Ar., YD 268:1), and "who hast sanctified us with Thy commandments and hast commanded us to circumcise proselytes and to draw from them the blood of the covenant" (Shab. 137b) is said in the circumcision benediction of proselytes.

A proselyte must observe all the precepts that bind Jews. The statement: "There shall be one

law for the citizen and for the stranger that dwelleth amongst you" (Ex. 12:49), which refers to the paschal lamb, the sages interpreted to mean that the stranger (proselyte) was the equal of the citizen concerning all the precepts of the Torah (Mekh. Pisha, 15). They tried to equalize the status of the proselyte and that of the Jew; certain differences stemming from the origin of the convert, however, remained. According to an anonymous Mishnah, a proselyte may not confess himself after taking out the tithes since the statement occurs in the confession "the land which Thou hast given to us"; nor does he read the section on the first fruits, where the statement is: "which the Lord hath sworn unto our fathers to give unto us." The proselyte, praying by himself must say: "the God of the Fathers of Israel"; in the synagogue he says: "the God of your Fathers" (Ma'as. Sh. 5:14; Bik. 1:4). According to one tradition, R. Judah permitted a proselyte to read the section on the first fruits, claiming that Abraham was the father of the whole world (TJ, Bik. 1:4, 64a; but in Tosef., Bik. 1:2 this permission is only extended to the Kenites). The Palestinian amoraim, R. Joshua b. Levi and R. Avihu, agreed with R. Judah. The authorities (particularly R. Samson in his commentary to Bikkurim (ibid.), and Maimonides in his letter to Obadiah the Proselyte, below) in permitting a proselyte to say "the God of our Fathers" in the prayers based themselves on the same rationale.

A proselyte terminates all former family ties upon conversion and **"is considered a newly born child (BORN AGAIN).**" His Jewish name is not associated with that of his father and he is referred to as "the son of Abraham (our father)." Later, it became the custom to name the proselyte himself after the first Jew who knew his Creator "Abraham the son of Abraham." According to the letter of the law, a proselyte may marry his relatives. The sages, however, decreed against this "So that they should not say: 'We have come from a greater sanctity to a lesser sanctity'" (Yev. 22a, Yad, Issurei Bi'ah 14:12). The disqualifications pertaining to testimony of relatives in judicial cases of family members do not apply to the proselyte; his relatives also may not inherit from him. If no heirs were born to him after his conversion, his property and his possessions are considered not to belong to anyone, and whoever takes hold of them becomes their owner (BB 3:3, 4:9; Git. 39a; Yad, Zekhi'ah u-Mattanah 1:6).

A proselyte may marry a Jewish woman, even the daughter of a priest (Kid. 73a; Yad, Issurei Bi'ah 19:11; Sh. Ar., EH 7:22). A female proselyte, however, cannot marry a kohen, unless she was converted during childhood, not later than the age of three years and one day (Yev. 60b; Kid. 78a). R. Yose permits the marriage of the daughter of a male or female proselyte to a kohen; R. Eliezer b. Jacob, however, disputes the matter. The statement "From the day of the destruction of the Temple, the kohanim have preserved their dignity and followed the opinion of R. Eliezer b. Jacob" shows that tradition tended toward the latter's opinion. The amoraim, however, decided that he be followed only in those cases where the marriage has not yet taken place. If a female proselyte is already married to a kohen, she is not bound to leave him (Kid. 4:7; TB, Kid. 78b; Yad, Issurei Bi'ah 19:12). A proselyte may also marry a mamzer ("bastard"). According to some opinions, the permission may extend over ten generations, while others claim it should be only until his heathen origin is forgotten (Kid. 72b, 75a).

A proselyte cannot be appointed to any public office. The rabbis based their decision on the verse: "Thou shalt appoint over thee a king from among thy brothers—appointments shall be only from among thy brothers." This injunction does not apply to a proselyte whose mother or father are of Jewish origin (Yev. 45b; Kid. 76b; Tos. Sot. 41b, Yad, Melakhim 1:4). A proselyte may not hold the office of judge in a criminal court; he may act as such in a civil court (Sanh. 36b) and also judge a fellow proselyte, even in a criminal law case (Rashi to Yev. 102a). Unless one of his parents was born Jewish, most authorities bar a proselyte from acting as judge even in a civil court (Alfasi on Sanh. 4:2, Yad, Sanh. 2:9, 11:11). Others are of the opinion that even in a civil court he can only judge a fellow proselyte (Tos. Yev. 45b; Ra-Sh-BA on Yev. 102a).



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BY PRACTICING RIGHTEOUSNESS....CAN A GENTILE MAKE HIMSELF ACCEPTABLE TO GOD? TAKE CORNELIUS FOR EXAMPLE...

We pick up our thought process by relating "obedience to the Law/Commandments particular to our Covenant....ie., Covenant of Noah and it's relationship to becoming righteous and acceptable to God."

I know that this concept is foreign to Gentile Christianity yet it finds itself smack dab in the middle of the New Testament buried in the original language of the text which is never noticed if one only studies or reads the New Testament in English. What we must be conscious of in our study is that the following concepts are not only found in the New Testament but agree totally with the Laws of Noah and Biblical Judaism as well.

Paul continues to reveal the hidden mysteries of God to the Gentiles whom believe in Yeshua (Jesus) in the Book of Ephesians 2:3-5, KJV:

- 3 Among whom also we all had our conversation in times past in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind, and were by nature the CHILDREN OF WRATH, even as others.
- 4 But YHWH, Who is rich in mercy, for His great love wherewith He loved us,
- 5 Even when we were dead in SINS, hath quickened us together with MESSIAH (by UNDESERVED PARDON ye are saved;),

Before the CONVERSION of these GENTILE EPHESIANS, they lived in SIN.

Answer for yourself: What did we discover in the last teaching as to what "sin" was in the New Testament? It was ignorance toward, violation of, and transgression of the Laws of Moses, especially for Gentiles.

As Gentiles, who were born as aliens to the commonwealth of Israel, strangers from covenant promises, without hope and without God, the Death Penalty for transgression of the Law...which is exactly "what" one earns for committing SIN, as Romans 6:23 says (THE WAGES OF SIN IS DEATH)-hung over Gentiles, just as it does for anyone who PRACTICES SIN (remember transgression of the LAW is defined as "sin" in the New Testament). Only those who turn FROM sin, and turn TO YHWH in OBEDIENCE to Yahweh's Every Word" will be given the Gift only Yahweh can give...Eternal Life! We will be given access to the Tree of Life!

As we have read in Isaiah 59: 1-2, it is OUR INIQUITIES and SINS (as seen in the breaking Yahweh's Laws) that cuts us off from Yahweh. These same Scriptures tell us that the REASON Yahweh will NOT listen to someone, is BECAUSE they are a SINNER...they practice sin.

Before the Word of Yahweh was given to the Gentile People as a whole, they were cut off from Yahweh. Before this, ONLY the Tribes of the Children of Israel (JEWS) were given Yahweh's Laws, which GUIDED one to Yahweh's SALVATION. Israel has ceased being a "light" to the nations and there was not hope for the Gentile people unless they could come to the saving knowledge of God.

Yahweh's Message of Repentance, Conversion, and Salvation was not being preached to the Gentiles on a large scale until **after** Yeshua's death where his followers, convinced he was the promised Messiah, finally were driven by persecution from Jerusalem into all the world where they took with them the message of Yahweh's salvation to the "lost sheep of Israel" whom were scattered all over the world.

SALVATION GOES TO THE NON-JEWS.....

In Acts 10:18,34-35, KJV:

- 18 When they heard these things, they held their peace and glorified YAHWEH, saying, Then hath YAHWEH also to the **NATIONS (GENTILES)** granted **REPENTANCE UNTO LIFE.**
- 34 Then Peter opened his mouth, and said, Of a truth I perceive that YAHWEH is no respecter of persons:
- 35 But <235> in <1722> every <3956> nation <1484> he that feareth <5399> (5740) Him <846>, and <2532> worketh <2038> (5740) righteousness <1343>, is <2076> (5748) accepted <1184> with Him <846>.

Let us set the stage. Peter had, against his will, been sent to the home of an "unclean" Gentile. However this particular Gentile was a "Godfearer" who had accepted the God of Israel and was living by the Laws of Noah which were part of the faith of the Godfearer. However, since he remained "uncircumcised" he was not accepted by the Jews since lacking this he was not eligible for conversion. So he remained "apart" from the Israel of God in the Jew's eyes but not in God's eyes as we are about to see. Paramount for our understanding is that such a one who turned from idols to serve the living God was "saved". Notice also that he was "saved" after Yeshua's death; in fact he knew nothing about Yeshua or adhering to any established doctrine concerning "Yeshua" for salvation. He was just a Godfearer as pictured all the way through the Jewish Scriptures as an example of non-Jews who had faith in the Only True God and who was "saved" accordingly. Understand as we go on that this condition of "salvation" was no longer accepted by bigoted Jews who considered Gentiles "dogs" and wished no social or religious contact with them. Only if the non-Jew was circumcised was he considered "born" again and acceptable to the Jew. This is the whole issue of Paul and Galatians which is overlooked by most who fail to realize that Paul was talking only about "one" law..the law of circumcision which the "non-Jew" was not under!

While Peter was in Cornelius' home, before he even talked with him about Yeshua, the Holy Spirit fell upon Cornelius has He had the Jews years before. This will be very problematic for Christian theology because not knowing to be "saved" by belief in Yeshua or his death or his blood as Christians teach, here is Cornelius "accepted" by God and "filled with the Spirit of God" and he does not yet know or accept any of the Christian theology you and I are told are necessary for salvation.

Answer for yourself: According to Peter, are those who practice and work righteousness accepted with God? Yes.

Before we can go on verse 35 bears our investigation. Let us see who the "nation" refers to in that verse.

Lexicon Greek 1484 1484 ethnos {eth'-nos} probably from 1486; TDNT - 2:364,201; n n AV - Gentiles 93, nation 64, heathen 5, people 2; 164

- 1) a multitude (whether of men or of beasts) associated or living together
- 1a) a company, troop, swarm
- 2) a multitude of individuals of the same nature or genus
- 2a) the human race
- 3) a race, nation, people group
- 4) in the OT, foreign nations not worshipping the true God, pagans, Gentiles
- 5) Paul uses the term for Gentile Christians

Answer for yourself: Does not Peter say that in referring to "ethnos" that those of a race, or nation who worketh righteousness (who like Cornelius had not yet learned of Yeshua or the theology connected with his death which would be developed later) find eternal life through obedience to righteous acts? It sure does. Again this negates totally Christianity's salvation message through the death and blood of Yeshua if the account of Cornelius is to be believed. I personally believe it is to be believed because it lines up with Biblical history and Biblical Judaism correctly.

HOW THE NON-JEW BECOMES ACCEPTABLE TO GOD

Now let us reaffirm what these multitude of Gentiles and heathens who were without the knowledge of the True God and who were not worshipping the true God were **to DO** (accomplish righteous works) to become acceptable to God.

We are told they must **WORK RIGHTEOUSNESS to be accepted with God. Notice that ACCEPTANCE WITH GOD is not belief alone but involves the WORKING OUT OF TANGIBLE DEEDS THAT AFFIRM ONE'S FAITH!**

Answer for yourself: Can we be assured of acceptance with God if we have faith and no righteous works? No because faith without "works" is dead.

Answer for yourself: Is it possible that this "working out" of practical deeds and manifestation of practical righteousness is nothing more than the accurate and correct response of one's faith in obedience to Laws and Commandments? It sure is.

Lexicon Greek 2038

2038 ergazomai {er-gad'-zom-ahee} middle voice from 2041; TDNT - 2:635,251; v AV - work 22, wrought 7, do 3, minister about 1, forbear working + 3361 1, labour for 1, labour 1, commit 1, trade by 1, trade 1; 39

- 1) to work, labour, do work
- 2) to trade, to make gains by trading, "do business"
- 3) to do, work out (as in "working out one's salvation by fear and trembling)
- 3a) exercise, perform, commit
- 3b) to cause to exist, produce
- 4) to work for, earn by working, to acquire

Answer for yourself: Do you not recognize that Peter is saying that those Gentiles who perform acts of righteousness, thereby causing righteous works to exist, are accepted with Yahweh? I hope so.

Answer for yourself: Does this verse not say that being accepted with God is based upon EARNING and WORKING and ACQUIRING acceptance with God through righteous acts? It sure does.

Lexicon Greek 2041 2041 ergon {er'-gon} from a primary (but obsolete) ergo (to work); TDNT - 2:635,251; n n AV - work 152, deed 22, doing 1, labour 1; 176

- 1) business, employment, that which any one is occupied
- 1a) that which one undertakes to do, enterprise, undertaking
- 2) any product whatever, any thing accomplished by hand, art, industry, or mind
- 3) an act, deed, thing done: the idea of working is emphasized in opp. to that which is less than work

Answer for yourself: Is a "work" a deed? Yes.

Answer for yourself: Is not the emphasis upon the "doing" of a deed instead of "believing" only? It sure is.

Answer for yourself: Did not Jesus say that by their fruits (not their faith) you shall know them? Yes he sure did.

Answer for yourself: And what is it that we as Gentiles are to work toward? Biblical Righteousness.

WORKING RIGHTEOUSNESS....BEING ACCEPTED BY HIM (GOD)...ACTS 10:35

The Greek word for "righteousness" is as follows:

Lexicon Greek 1343 1343 dikaiosune {dik-ah-yos-oo'-nay} from 1342; TDNT - 2:192,168; n f AV - righteousness 92; 92

- 1) in a broad sense: state of him who is as he ought to be, righteousness, **the condition acceptable to God**
- 1a) **the doctrine concerning the way in which man may attain a state approved of God**
- 1b) **integrity, virtue, purity of life, rightness, correctness of thinking feeling, and acting**
- 2) in a narrower sense, justice or the virtue which gives each his due

Answer for yourself: Does "righteousness" describe a condition that brings a state of acceptance with God? Yes.

Answer for yourself: Does not true Biblical righteousness relate to "doing" more than just "believing?" I hope you said "yes."

Answer for yourself: Since "working righteousness" relates to the way one can attain an approved state with God, then does it not stand to reason we must respond in obedience to commandments (like keeping the Commandments of the Seven Biblical Festivals, the Sabbath, and the correct use of the Tithe...all of which most of Christianity violates)? Yes.

Answer for yourself: Since Acts 10:34-35 is written after the cross of Yeshua and teaches us that a condition of "acceptance" with God MAY BE ATTAINED by working righteousness and practicing righteous deeds, then are we to trust SOLELY in our faith in Jesus for "acceptance with God" if this verse connects such "condition of acceptance" with righteous works, acts, and deeds? No, and if you have the courage to check out our other web site we will demonstrate beyond any doubt how such false ideas got connected to the death of Yeshua)!

Answer for yourself: Is not "working and doing righteous acts" the correct way to feel and act according to the Greek word used by the Holy Spirit in this Scripture? It sure is.

INVESTIGATING THE "ROOT" WORD FOR RIGHTEOUSNESS

Now let us focus on what God says we are to "work" toward. We are to work toward righteousness. Let us now investigate the "root" word for righteousness.

Lexicon Greek 1342 dikaios {dik'-ah-yos} from 1349; TDNT - 2:182,168; adj AV - righteous 41, just 33, right 5, meet 2; 81

1) **righteous, observing divine laws**

- 1a) in a wide sense, upright, righteous, virtuous, keeping the commands of God
- 1a1) of those who seem to themselves to be righteous, who pride themselves to be righteous, who pride themselves in their virtues, whether real or imagined
- 1a2) innocent, faultless, guiltless
- 1a3) used of him whose way of thinking, feeling, and acting is wholly conformed to the will of God, and who therefore needs no rectification in the heart or life
- 1a3a) only Christ truly
- 1a4) approved of or acceptable of God
- 1b) in a narrower sense, rendering to each his due and that in a judicial sense, passing just judgment on others, whether expressed in words or shown by the manner of dealing with them

Answer for yourself: Did we see the word for "righteous" in the Bible means OBSERVING DIVINE LAWS? We sure did.

Answer for yourself: Did we not see that "righteous" in the Bible means KEEPING THE COMMANDS AND LAWS OF GOD? We sure did.

Answer for yourself: Does "worketh righteousness" that leads to being accepted by God mean (according to the Greek word "diakaios") observing divine Laws and Commandments? It sure does.

Answer for yourself: Does "worketh righteousness" that leads to being accepted by God mean (according to the Greek word "diakaios") keeping the commandments of God? It sure does!

Answer for yourself: Can we be considered "righteous by God" if we have a DIFFERENT way of thinking, feeling, and acting that is not totally or wholly conformed to the will of God? No we cannot be considered "righteous" by God.

Answer for yourself: Can we be "righteous" by faith alone and be confident of our acceptance with God since this verse directly says that those who practice righteous acts and deeds (and not just have faith or believe) are accepted with God? You better not bet on it.

Answer for yourself: If we act contrary to the Laws and Commandments of God which are the expressed manifestations of "righteousness" then can we be certain that we are approved and acceptable of God? No. We can be certain that we have displeased Him and are not approved and accepted by Him.

THE EXAMPLE OF CORNELIUS....IT COMPLETELY REFUTES WHAT CHRISTIANITY TEACHES ABOUT SALVATION

Yahweh is NO "Respector of persons". ONLY those who REVERE Him (by OBEYING His word, and who WORK RIGHTEOUSNESS) by practicing Yahweh's Commandments, Laws, Statutes, and Judgments in their daily

lives, are accepted BY YAHWEH.

Before Yahweh opened the "Way of Salvation" to the Gentiles, it was considered UNLAWFUL, even to the Believers (who were then all Hebrews, by the way), to rub elbows with the Gentiles. However, this was not an Ordinance from Yahweh or part of the Written Law, but from the oral teachings of Shammai who hated Gentiles and was the leading Torah scholar of his day. This ordinance was stated by Peter in Acts 10:28, KJV:...it is an unlawful thing for a man who is a Jew to keep company, or come unto, one of another nation...

According to THESE ordinances by a Rabbi named Shammai, it made NO DIFFERENCE that any Gentile might be practicing RIGHTEOUSNESS...as Cornelius the GENTILE centurion was doing in Acts 10:1-4, KJV. **Cornelius, a DEVOUT man and one that FEARED YAHWEH with all his heart...was accepted by God because his prayers and alms (works) had come up to God as acceptable sacrifices. Let us understand that his prayers and alms were manifestations of Commandments and Laws, thus they were "works of righteousness." Thus he was accepted. Notice also that his prayers and alms had come to God and God had declared him accepted BEFORE PETER ARRIVED AND PREACHED JESUS TO HIM!**

Answer for yourself: Can a Gentile be "accepted by God" by DOING and WORKING RIGHTEOUSNESS before he hears about Jesus? Yes.

Answer for yourself: Can a person be "accepted with God" by living a life of "active faith and practical righteousness" and be damned to Hell because he has not heard about Jesus yet? NO, not according to what you just saw in Acts 10 concerning Cornelius! **Acts 10 shows us that although one has NOT learned or heard of Jesus, his righteous acts (not his theology about Jesus) brings ACCEPTANCE WITH GOD!**

Answer for yourself: Should we not follow the teachings of the Bible concerning what true salvation is regardless of what we have heard others say since childhood about what the church has taught about salvation? Yes.

The word translated 'devout' in Acts 10:2 is as follows:

[A] devout <2152> [man], and <2532> one that feared <5399> (5740) God <2316> with <4862> all <3956> his <848> house <3624>, which <5037> gave <4160> (5723) much <4183> alms <1654> to the people <2992>, and <2532> prayed <1189> (5740) to God <2316> always <1275>.

Lexicon Greek 2152 2152 eusebes {yoo-seb-ace'} from 2095 and 4576; TDNT - 7:175,1010; adj AV - devout 3, godly 1; 4

- 1) pious, dutiful

Root Word...Lexicon Greek 4576 4576 sebomai {seb'-om-ahee} middle voice of an apparently primary verb; TDNT - 7:169,1010; v AV - worship 6, devout 3, religious 1; 10

- 1) to revere, to worship

Just a note about "middle voice" of the adverb "devout". Whenever "middle voice" is used it means....**SOMETHING ONE DOES HIMSELF**.....the action is done to him by himself...

In other words, Cornelius was making himself HOLY by KEEPING the Laws of Yahweh (Laws of Noah) and practicing as a life-style righteous works!

Answer for yourself: Did Cornelius' faith come before God as a memorial or his works? His works.

Answer for yourself: Would Cornelius' works have been considered "righteous" by God if they had been works and deeds that violated the Commandments and Laws, yet still being "religious works?" No. Obedience is better than any sacrifice WE can give God. We must give God what He asks and not try to improve on it or go beyond what He asks.

Only "living by" the HOLY Laws and Commandments of Yahweh makes one "holy" because it separates the obedient person from the majority of mankind who do not obey the LORD but lean on their own understanding. If one lives any other "way," then he lives in sin...and Yahweh then, correctly, considers that person to be a SINNER. Yahweh, assuredly, is no "Respector of persons", so even **IF a GENTILE OBEYS HIM, then that Gentile is ACCEPTED BY HIM.** Yahweh has proven this through the instructions He gave through Moses, saying previously in Exodus 12:48-49, KJV: And when a STRANGER shall sojourn with thee...**ONE LAW shall be to him that is homeborn, and unto the STRANGER (Gentile) that sojourneth among you.**

The word translated 'stranger' in this verse is word # 1616 in Strong's Hebrew Dictionary: the word "ger", and means: *foreigner, alien*. This is the Gentile like you and me!

Answer for yourself: Did the Text say that there is ONLY ONE LAW for both Jews and Gentiles? Sure did!

Answer for yourself: Are the Gentiles to yield to the Law given to the Jews because salvation is of the Jews or Jews to decide which of the 2,000 different Christian denominations and their "various and conflicting laws" to obey? I think the answer is obvious! The Gentile is to yield to the law given to the Jews which is the Torah!

Answer for yourself: Is salvation of the Gentiles or the Jews? Jews.

Answer for yourself: How can the Jew possibly submit to the Law given the Gentile (understand that he is not supposed to) if the Gentile Christian is taught that the Law has passed away? He can't!

Now the Apostle Paul was speaking to the Ephesians, who WERE *strangers* before Yahweh's Word was delivered to them. When they received Yahweh, they were **no longer "strangers" to the covenant promises made to Israel (in thy Seed Abraham all NATIONS (Gentiles) will be blessed)!** Along with Yeshua and his message, they had accepted Yahweh's Holy Laws, which they had broken in times past, and they were given the OPPORTUNITY to be JUSTIFIED through repentance to Yeshua's message (which results in works of righteousness). **In Ephesians 2:19, KJV: Now therefore you are no more strangers and foreigners, but FELLOW CITIZENS with the saints, and of the household of GOD. The Gentile who comes to faith in God through the ministry of Yeshua and his legacy becomes a fellow-citizen WITH THE JEWS IN THE ISRAEL OF GOD!**

Answer for yourself: As a Christian, are you standing alone in your identification with God as "The Church" opposite and opposed to the Jew/Israel, or are you, as Ephesians tells us, part of Israel and considered as FELLOW CITIZENS with the people of God in Israel because you have been grafted into Israel by faith in her Messiah? You are "the Israel of God" which is a more true identification and designation than calling yourself a Christian which was a derogatory term used by the enemies of Way and the sect of the Nazarene (Yeshua). I hope you are beginning to see that you are engrafted into Israel and do not stand apart from the root and fatness of the Olive Tree which supports you.

Answer for yourself: Are fellow citizens of the SAME NATION (both Jew and Gentile) under the same LAWS? Sure are!

Answer for yourself: For example, in America do the laws of murder apply to everyone or just a certain class of people? To everyone. Get the picture?

Shalom.

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THOUGHTS ON THE DEATH OF JESUS AS RELATED TO THE SACRIFICIAL SYSTEM

FORGIVENESS WAS NOT THE THEME OF SACRIFICES BEFORE MOSES AND THE GOLDEN CALF - BUT REPRESENTING FELLOWSHIP OF ONE'S SOUL WITH GOD

Before the fall man lived in blessed unity with God. This unity was destroyed by sin, and the fellowship between God and man was disturbed, **thought not entirely abolished**. In the punishment which God inflicted upon the sinners, He did not withdraw His mercy from men; and before driving them out of paradise, He gave them clothes to cover the nakedness of their shame, by which they had first of all become conscious of their sin. Even after the expulsion He still manifest Himself to them, so that they were **able once more** to draw near to Him and enter into fellowship with Him. **This fellowship (NOT forgiveness) they sought through the medium of sacrifices**, in which they gave a visible expression not only to their gratitude towards God for His blessing and His grace, but also to their supplication for the further **continuance of His divine favor**. It was in this sense that both Cain and Abel offered sacrifices [burnt offerings and NOT sin offerings...remember?], thought not with the same motives or in the same state of heart toward God. In this sense of fellowship and not forgiveness Noah also offered sacrifice [burnt offerings and NOT sin offerings...remember?]. After Noah's deliverance from the flood; something changed in the offering of sacrifices. Whereas the sons of Adam offered their sacrifices to God from the fruit of their labor, in the tilling of the ground and the keeping of sheep, Noah presented his burnt offering from the clean cattle and birds that had been shut up with him in the ark (those animals would from that time forward be assigned to man as food...Gen. 9:3). Noah was probably led to make this selection by the command of God to take with him into the ark not one or more pairs, but 7 of every kind of clean beasts. Noah may have discerned in this an indication of the divine will, that the 7th animal of every description of clean beast and bird should be offered in sacrifice to the Lord, for His gracious protection from destruction by the flood. Also notice the distinction of "clean and unclean" foods long before the Sinai experience. Moses, in Leviticus revelation, also received a still further intimation as to the meaning of the animal sacrifices. We see this in the prohibition which God appended to the permission to make use of animals as well as green herbs for food: **"flesh with the life thereof, which is the blood thereof, shall ye not eat "** (Gen. 9:4-5). **This prohibition is because the flesh still contained the blood as the animal's soul (the soul lives in the blood of the animal).** In this there was already an intimation, **that in the bleeding sacrifice the soul of the animal was given up to God with the blood**; and therefore; that by virtue of its **blood as the vehicle of the soul, animal sacrifice was the most fitting means of representing the surrender of the human soul to God. THIS IS VERY IMPORTANT!** You will quickly come to see that the "blood" accomplished nothing; rather it was a picture of the soul of the person who brought the animal to the altar.

THE SOUL OF THE ANIMAL AS FOUND IN IT'S BLOOD REPRESENTED, WHEN PRESENTED ON THE ALTAR, THE

SURRENDER OF THE HUMAN SOUL TO GOD

It is not the "blood" but the "soul" in the blood which demonstrates surrender to God and it is later to be understood as seen as placed on the altar where we see the "soul of the offerer of sacrifices" on the altar in lieu of the animal which is but a substitute for the person bringing the animal for sacrifice. The animal was literally the extension of the person bringing the sacrifice. God would not have a human sacrifice his life and blood and place it upon the altar as a demonstration of "communion" and "fellowship" with God; instead the animal was the extension of the person's life. The person bringing the animal had fed, groomed, and cared for the animal usually. It was part of his life and his life and energy had been invested into the care of the animal. So when the "soul" of the animal was taken and offered upon the altar in the release and placing of the animal's blood on the altar, **then the person by proxy was represented on the altar in communion with God as well.** Understand the animal was innocent having never sinned. This was supposed to be a picture of the spiritual position of the person bringing the sacrifice. **The person bringing the sacrifice was ALREADY to have repented of his sin, confessed his sin, prayed, and made restitution to his fellowman if needed BEFORE he ever brought the animal to the altar.** Then when he had done these spiritual necessities **PRIOR** to bringing the animal to the altar, then the person's soul was **AT-THAT-MOMENT** (atonement) right with God. He was forgiven and his repentance, confession, prayer, and restitution had accomplished for him atonement **PRIOR** to the animal being offered. "At that moment" his soul was again in right standing and relationship with God. In order to make such a declaration to the world and his fellowman, as well as to God, then he would take an animal and it would be slain and its blood placed on the altar. **In so doing, the animal was a CORRECT PICTURE of the spiritual state of the person making the sacrifice for the animal's soul (in his blood) was on the altar in communion with God and was NOW a true picture of the sacrificer's soul in communion with God.** Besides this, if anyone wanted to eat meat, the animal's soul had to be given back to God before the flesh could be consumed. So you see in the sacrificial system there were two dynamics at work: atonement and the conditions necessary to eat meat which also contained the Divine image which had to be given by to God.

Answer for yourself: Did you notice we have not mentioned "sin offerings" yet?

HOW IS JESUS RELATED TO ALL THIS?

What I just described in the sacrificial system is an aspect of the death of Yeshua that most likely you have never even considered. This truth may possibly have been only dimly surmised by Noah and his sons; but it must have been clearly revealed to the patriarch Abraham when God demanded the sacrifice of his only son, with whom his whole heart was bound up, as a proof of his obedience of faith, and after he had attested his faith in his readiness to offer this sacrifice, supplied him with a ram to offer as a burnt-offering [burnt offerings and NOT sin offerings...remember?], instead of his own (Gen. 22). In this the truth was practically revealed to him, that the **true God did not require human sacrifice from His worshipers, but the surrender of heart/soul and the denial of the natural life, even thought it should amount to a submission to death itself.** This act of surrender was to be perfected in the animal's sacrifice; and that it was **only when presented with these motives that sacrifice would be pleasing to God.** Yeshua was willing to die if need be for the kingdom to come. The problem was that Israel did not merit the kingdom; even during the 40 years following his death. Simply said: no kingdom, no King! That means the true Messianic Prophecies were not fulfilled. So we wait!

PURPOSE OF OFFERINGS

The word "korban" is commonly translated either "sacrifice" or "offering", but the truth is that the English language does not possess a word that accurately expresses the concept contained in the word. The word "sacrifice" implies that the person bringing it is required to deprive himself of something in order to satisfy someone else's need, but God finds no satisfaction in inflicting pain or deprivation upon His children. The word "offering" is closer to the mark but it too fails to convey the true meaning of a "korban". "Offering" implies that the Recipient of the gift must be appeased, that He requires a tribute that will somehow appease His wrath or make Him receptive to the entreaties of a supplicant, or that He has a need that can only be satisfied by

someone other than Himself. As if God required our gifts! "If you have acted righteously, what will you have given Him! (Job 35:7); God does not become enriched by man's accomplishments.

The Hebrew word itself provides the answer. The root of the meaning is "to come near." Again the idea carries the concept of fellowship. The person bringing an offering does so in order to come closer to God, to elevate his level of spirituality thereby approaching God in the Spirit.

Now remember the person brought the animal as a picture that through his repentance, confession, prayer, and restitution he was "coming near" to God and the sacrifice of the animal and the placing of the animal's soul on the altar was a demonstration that he, the person bringing the sacrifice, had ALREADY "drawn near to God". The offering was a picture of that fact to all the world as well as to God to see!

When Adam was deposited in the Garden of Eden, his first responsibility was to work it and guard it (Gen. 2:15). That means that Adam was commanded to plant, work, cultivate; everything that was necessary to keep the Garden as a Paradise. Before Adam's sin, man had no need to be a peasant; everything grew for him at God's command, with no need for him to exert himself in any way. It was only after his sin that he was expelled from Eden and required to earn his bread through the sweat of his brow.

How then was he to *work and guard* Eden? Through the study of Torah and the performance of positive and negative commandments. His livelihood would come in return for his obedience to God's will. **God will always respond to man's righteousness by blessing his material efforts.**

Adam's mission was to make himself an offering in his lifetime, by dedicating himself unreservedly to God. On God's Throne of Glory, there is an image of a man (Ez. 1:10). Every human being has his own image above, his ideal spiritual self, which represents his goal and his potential. Man's soul is placed in an earthly body so that he can surmount the challenges of material life and raise himself up to his personal, heavenly self; to unite his earthly self with his higher self. Just as everyone has a body and a soul, and his mission is to triumph in the eternal struggle of body versus soul, so, too, many must struggle to live up to the summons of his higher self.

Man is religious yet he sins! How can he defy the Creator he believe in? He is kind and generous, yet he is sometimes mean and stingy. He is moral, but has lapses in conduct. Whatever man is, he is often inconsistent, and if he is honest with himself, he knows that he is far from living up to his inner image. He wants his body to come closer to his soul; on a yet higher level, he should also want his soul to live up to its counterpart on high.

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OFFERINGS AS A SUBSTITUTE FOR MAN...BUT WE ALREADY SAID THAT

The offerings were seen to elevate three parts of every human deed: **thought, speech, and action**. When a person sins and then brings an offering, all three of those elements are used to take the sinful use to which he had previously put them, and transform it into the instrument of doing God's will. The person bringing the offering performs the commandment of *leaning, by placing his hands on its head and leaning on it, thereby dedicating his strength and activity to God. He purifies his thought and intentions, by confessing his sin*, pronouncing the spiritual goal that he hopes to attain, or uttering praises to God. As a further way of *purging his sinful thoughts, the innards of the animal*; representing the human organs that are the seat of desire and through, are *burned on God's Altar*. In the case of an elevation-offering, which is completely burned, the animal's feet symbolize the hands and feet with which man ran and acted to defy his Creator. **The animal's blood (containing its soul), representing man's soul, was placed on the Altar (notice it is the soul that is placed upon the Altar; just not the blood).**

Let's look at Leviticus 17:11 in context in order to make sure we understand the "central" idea of the passage.

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Answer for yourself: Did you know that "blood" was not the subject of the sentence? Did you notice what was? Did you understand that it was the "life" that was placed on the altar for atonement and not the blood?

In other words it is not the blood that atones, but the "soul" [LIFE] that atones.

Answer for yourself: Are you aware that as a Christian you whole understanding of the sacrificial system in the Bible is wrong because you have focused on "blood" for atonement instead of the "life" in the blood which is the real atoning agent?

BUT ISAIAH 53 SAYS....OR DOES IT?

Well not it does not say what you think it says. Why? You are reading most likely from your Christian Bible which is a very poor translation, or should I say, a very good mistranslation of Isaiah 53. This is why I spend so much time on the text. The Bible Jesus used and read did not read anything like our Christian Old Testament in hundreds of places. Isaiah is a good instance. Below is what the Palestinian Jewish Scriptures, called the Tanakh, reads for verse 10 of Isaiah 53:

Isa. 53:10 states “ HaShem desired to oppress him and He afflicted him; if his soul would acknowledge guilt...”

WOW!

That sure is different from what your Christian Bible says:

Isa 53:10

10 Yet it pleased the LORD to bruise him; he hath put him to grief: when thou shalt make his **soul an offering for sin**, he shall see his seed, he shall prolong his days, and the pleasure of the LORD shall prosper in his hand. (KJV)

Simply said, this Christian translation has been “Jesusized” by having the concept of guilt removed, for in Christian “theology” Jesus can have no guilt! Back to the subject at hand.

In one of the greatest passages in the Bible, we are told by Isaiah the prophet that if the “soul” of the “suffering servant” would acknowledge guilt...

Answer for yourself: What do you do when you acknowledge guilt?

You confess and then repent. This is the subject of the verse. You literally turn around your “life”. Your life changes direction; from sin to righteousness. You no longer continue your sinister ways. Now you can see how such a life, after repentance and confession of sin, was understood, even as the Christian Bibles say: “soul/life an offering for sin”! **One’s life, when turned to God and away from sin, was the atonement that Leviticus 17 speaks about.**

Answer for yourself: Could we have missed this understanding when looking at the death of Jesus or, as Isaiah said, the martyrdoms of millions of Israelites (remember Jesus is paradigm of all Jews)?

While this procedure (**placing the animal’s soul on the altar in substitute for yours**) is being accomplished with one’s offering, the sacrificer meditates upon his sin, for the offering service teaches him graphically that he has sinned against God with body and soul. He contemplates that justice would have dictated that *his* human body be burned on the altar as a penalty for sin and *his* soul required by God in lieu of the animal’s blood be placed upon it. It is only God’s graciousness that permits the animal to become his substitute. Then, parts of the offering are given to the Kohanim (priests/teachers), so that those who dedicate their lives to study and teach the Torah are sustained through him and so that they will pray for him. It is an act of supreme graciousness that God is prepared to accept an offering from us instead of punishing us directly for our misdeeds. This is why the offerings are described throughout Leviticus as a satisfying aroma to God, because God is pleased when His children repent and seek to change their lives for the better.

When one brings an offering with such noble thoughts he has truly made *himself* an offering. The Sages have said of one who brings a humble meal-offering, it is as if he had offered his own life upon the altar. He thereby raised his mundane desires and makes them worthy of being placed on the heavenly altar.

Shalom.



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COMING TO THE CORRECT UNDERSTANDING OF ATONEMENT AS JESUS UNDERSTOOD IT

Jesus was a Jew. He lived and practiced Judaism. His Bible was the Torah, the Prophets, and the Writings. Jesus was not a "Christian" and he did not hold to many religious beliefs held by Christians today. There is no greater divergence in religious beliefs between Jesus and Christians today than those connected with atonement. I will explain below.

FORGIVENESS WAS NOT THE THEME OF SACRIFICES BEFORE MOSES AND THE GOLDEN CALF - BUT REPRESENTING FELLOWSHIP OF ONE'S SOUL WITH GOD

Before the fall man lived in blessed unity with God. This unity was destroyed by sin, and the fellowship between God and man was disturbed, thought not entirely abolished. In the punishment which God inflicted upon the sinners, He did not withdraw His mercy from men; and before driving them out of paradise, He gave them clothes to cover the nakedness of their shame, by which they had first of all become conscious of their sin. Even after the expulsion He still manifest Himself to them, so that they were able once more to draw near to Him and enter into fellowship with Him. This fellowship (NOT forgiveness) they sought through the medium of sacrifices, in which they gave a visible expression not only to their gratitude towards God for His blessing and His grace, but also to their supplication for the further continuance of His divine favor. It was in this sense that both Cain and Abel offered sacrifices [burnt offerings and NOT sin offerings...remember?], thought not with the same motives or in the same state of heart toward God. In this sense of fellowship and not forgiveness Noah also offered sacrifice [burnt offerings and NOT sin offerings...remember?]. After Noah's deliverance from the flood; something changed in the offering of sacrifices. Whereas the sons of Adam offered their sacrifices to God from the fruit of their labor, in the tilling of the ground and the keeping of sheep, Noah presented his burnt offering from the clean cattle and birds that had been shut up with him in the ark (those animals would from that time forward be assigned to man as food...Gen. 9:3). Noah was probably led to make this selection by the command of God to take with him into the ark not one or more pairs, but 7 of every kind of clean beasts. Noah may have discerned in this an indication of the divine will, that the 7th animal of every description of clean beast and bird should be offered in sacrifice to the Lord, for His gracious protection from destruction by the flood. Also notice the distinction of "clean and unclean" foods long before the Sinai experience. Moses, in Leviticus revelation, also received a still further intimation as to the meaning of the animal sacrifices. We see this in the prohibition which God appended to the permission to make use of animals as well as green herbs for food: **"flesh with the life thereof, which is the blood thereof, shall ye not eat "** (Gen. 9:4-5).

This prohibition is because the flesh still contained the blood as the animal's soul (the soul lives in the blood of the animal). In this there was already an intimation, that in the bleeding sacrifice the SOUL of the animal was given up to God with the blood; and therefore; that by virtue of its blood as

the vehicle of the soul, animal sacrifice was the most fitting means of representing the surrender of the human soul to God. THIS IS VERY IMPORTANT! You will quickly come to see that the "blood" accomplished nothing; rather it was a picture of the soul of the person who brought the animal to the altar.

THE SOUL OF THE ANIMAL AS FOUND IN IT'S BLOOD REPRESENTED, WHEN PRESENTED ON THE ALTAR, THE SURRENDER OF THE HUMAN SOUL TO GOD

Lev 17:11 11 For the life of the flesh is in the blood: and I have given it to you upon the altar to make an atonement for your souls: for it is the blood [IN THAT IT CARRIES THE SOUL/LIFE] that maketh an atonement for the soul. (KJV)

Let me say right up front that the soul/life is in our blood so when we talk about blood and atonement let us understand we are not speaking of red blood corpuscles but the life or the soul which inhabits our blood. More on that later.

I remember not liking English when I was in school but thank goodness that they taught me the difference between the subject and the predicate of a sentence and the difference between a preposition and the object of the preposition. Did I lose you? I hope not for this is very important. To be a sentence and not a clause a phrase has to have a subject, very, and predicate. Above in Lev. 17:11 the subject of the sentence is "LIFE" and the verb is seen clearly to be "IS." So the "life" "is" something. We next find the word "IN" which is the preposition and the object of the preposition is the word "BLOOD."

Answer for yourself: Since when does the object of the preposition become the subject of the sentence? It never does. We clearly see that from the construction of the sentence above it is the "LIFE" that makes atonement and not the "BLOOD." The life just happens to be in the blood. One's life brings atonement or it does not. One's blood or red blood cells has nothing to do with it but what we do with our lives does! Ok...set down and catch your breath.

Answer for yourself: But Moses says it twice. I have given "it"what is "it"?

"It" refers to the life as stated in the above sentence which modifies the word "life" which is the subject and not the word "blood" which is the object of the preposition.

Now it is beginning to dawn upon you a little and you are beginning to see maybe for the first time in your life that the whole of Christianity's teachings on atonement are WRONG! What you will find when you have studied this out in depth is that when the "blood of Jesus" is mentioned in the NT it is referring to his death that accomplished the taking of the revelation of God and His Covenants and Torah to the Gentile nations that saves people which hopefully they accept and begin to live out and not something that was involved in Jesus' actual blood that dripped from his body. Such bloody concepts and false atonements as taught by Gentile Christianity for 1900 year come right out of astro-theology and sun worship and the real meaning of atonement as taught below you never hear. It is time you do. Let us remember Lev. 17:11 above as we read the next paragraphs.

It is not the "blood" but the "soul" in the blood which demonstrates surrender to God and it is later to be understood as seen as placed on the altar where we see the "soul of the offerer of sacrifices" on the altar in lieu of the animal which is but a substitute for the person bringing the animal for sacrifice.

The animal was literally the extension of the person bringing the sacrifice.

God would not have a human sacrifice his own life and blood and place it upon the altar as a demonstration of “communion” and “fellowship” with God; instead the animal was the extension of the person’s life. The person bringing the animal had fed, groomed, and cared for the animal usually. It was part of his life and his life and energy had been invested into the care of the animal. So when the “soul” of the animal was taken and offered upon the altar [in the form of his blood] in the release and placing of the animal’s blood on the altar, then the person by proxy was represented on the altar in communion with God as well. Understand the animal was innocent having never sinned. This was supposed to be a picture of the spiritual position of the person bringing the sacrifice. What we as Christians fail to understand because we have not been taught correctly is that the person bringing the sacrifice or offering HAD TO DO CERTAIN THINGS BEFORE HE COULD BRING THE SACRIFICE! The person bringing the sacrifice was ALREADY to have repented of his sin, confessed his sin, prayed, and made restitution to his fellowman if needed BEFORE he ever brought the animal to the altar.

Amazingly the message of repentance and forgiveness is almost absent within the teachings of Christianity but yet it fills the pages of the Jewish Scriptures....which just happens to be the Bible Yeshua/Jesus used. The Jews knew this and lived it. Then when the sinner repented of his sin, confessed his sin, prayed for forgiveness and make restitution if necessary and had completed these spiritual necessities PRIOR to bringing the animal to the altar, then the person’s soul was AT-THAT-MOMENT (atonement) right with God long before he took the animal for the sacrifice. He was forgiven and his repentance, confession, prayer, and restitution had accomplished for him atonement PRIOR to the animal being offered. According the Genesis through Malachi “at that moment” his soul was again in right standing and relationship with God. In order to make such a declaration to the world and his fellowman, as well as to God, then he would take an animal and it would be slain and its blood [the life of the animal in the blood of the animal which represented the sinner AFTER his repentance, confession, prayer, etc.] would be placed on the altar. In so doing, the animal was a CORRECT PICTURE of the spiritual state of the person making the sacrifice who had previously repented for now the animal’s soul (in the animal’s blood) was on the altar in communion with God and was NOW a true picture of the sacrificer’s soul in communion with God.

Besides this, if anyone wanted to eat meat, the animal’s soul had to be given back to God before the flesh could be consumed. The blood or it’s very life had to be drained before the meat could be eaten. So you see in the sacrificial system there were two dynamics at work: atonement and the conditions necessary to eat meat which also contained the Divine image which had to be given by to God.

Answer for yourself: Did you ever notice that animal sacrifices were brought to God since Noah but there is NO mention of sin offerings until the Golden calf.....so how was man to be in right relationship with God without sin offerings? I just told you!

HOW IS JESUS RELATED TO ALL THIS?

What I just described in the sacrificial system is the truth concerning the death of Yeshua that most likely you have never even considered.

The truth concerning atonement may possibly have been only dimly surmised by Noah and his sons; but it must have been clearly revealed to the patriarch Abraham when God demanded the sacrifice of his only son, with whom his whole heart was bound up, as a proof of his obedience of faith, and after he had attested his faith in his readiness to offer this sacrifice, supplied him with a ram to offer as a burnt-offering [burnt offerings and NOT sin offerings...remember?], instead of his own (Gen. 22). In this the truth was practically revealed to him, that the *true God did not require human sacrifice from His worshipers, but the surrender of heart/soul and the denial of the natural life, even though it should amount to a submission to death*

itself. This act of surrender was to be perfected in the animal's sacrifice; and that it was only when the sinner presented the animal and it's blood (a picture of himself) with these motives that sacrifice would be pleasing to God. This explains Isaiah chapter one which so many fail to understand when God says He is weary of sacrifices. We fail to realize that just killing animals and bringing sacrifices without a repentant heart and soul by the sinner accomplished nothing and God knows this. It is a tragic waste of the animal's life and this is what is hidden from the Christian when he reads Isaiah chapter one and mistakenly thinks God is annulling the sacrificial system when the reverse is truth; namely God is upset because it is not being performed correctly.

Please read this next paragraph slowly and think. When we look to Jesus/Yeshua with this understanding then his death takes on a whole new perspective once the sacrificial system is understood correctly. To apply to Jesus' death such pagan concepts and fail to understand the sacrificial system and how it operated guarantees that you fall into the trap of believing the Gentile's sun worship and their false atonements as later applied to Jesus' life. The Jewish Bibles was corrupted in its translation to reflect this sun worship and later such doctrines were applied to many; Jesus was the latest in a long line of Gentile sun-godmen. This truth concerning the Jewish sacrificial system and how it operated had to be kept from the Gentile followers of Jesus and cleverly the texts were changed in key places in order to make sure the Gentile followers of Jesus did not turn to Judaism. This might sound like something unbelievable; that the texts were changed. But they were. There are hundreds of alterations, additions, purposeful mistranslations and corruptions in our Christian bibles. Let me give you just one example: Isa. 53:10 from the KJV and the Jewish Tanakh. Let us remember that we as Christians and followers of Jesus expect an accurate as possible translation if we are to learn the truths of God. I will let you be the judge of this:

Isa. 53:10 from the KJV

Isa 53:10 10 Yet it pleased the LORD to bruise him; he hath put him to grief: when thou shalt make his soul an offering for sin, he shall see his seed, he shall prolong his days, and the pleasure of the LORD shall prosper in his hand. (KJV)

Isa. 53:10 from the Tanakh of 1917

10 ¶ Yet it pleased the LORD to crush him by disease; to see if his soul would offer itself in restitution, that he might see his seed, prolong his days, and that the purpose of the LORD might prosper by his hand:

Isa. 53:10 from the Stone Edition of the Jewish Bible

10 HaShem desired to oppress him and He afflicted him; if his soul would acknowledge guilt, he would see offspring and live long days and the desire of HaShem would succeed in his hand

If you read closely the Christian bible has one's soul as an offering for sin. As Christians we are taught to think "blood" and never realize what is being said on a deeper level. We are pre-conditioned to read such passages as "sacrificial atonement" or "vicarious atonement" never realizing that the very "soul" [translated as life in the Hebrew] that was offered for atonement was not blood but the very "life" of the person who had repented of his sin, confessed his sin, prayed, given alms, made restitution, etc. One's life that was full of repentance, restitution, admission of guilt in confession which culminated in repentance brought forgiveness and atonement at-that-moment with God. No animal sacrifice has been brought in the passage but also notice the result of such repentance: blessings in the form of many children, long life, etc. Repentance always brings God's blessings. Clearly you see in the Hebrew texts above the idea of "restitution" and "acknowledging of guilt."

Answer for yourself: What guilt does Jesus have to confess since he is taught by Christianity to be without spot

and blemish? You are beginning to see the purposeful deceptions in the Christian Bible and it's translation that has gone on since the early second century to keep these truths from you.

PURPOSE OF OFFERINGS

The word "korban" is commonly translated either "sacrifice" or "offering", but the truth is that the English language does not possess a word that accurately expresses the concept contained in the word. The word "sacrifice" implies that the person bringing it is required to deprive himself of something in order to satisfy someone else's need, but God finds no satisfaction in inflicting pain or deprivation upon His children. The word "offering" is closer to the mark but it too fails to convey the true meaning of a "korban". "Offering" implies that the Recipient of the gift must be appeased, that He requires a tribute that will somehow appease His wrath or make Him receptive to the entreaties of a supplicant, or that He has a need that can only be satisfied by someone other than Himself. As if God required our gifts! "If you have acted righteously, what will you have given Him! (Job 35:7); God does not become enriched by man's accomplishments.

The Hebrew word itself provides the answer. The root of the meaning is "to come near." Again the idea carries the concept of fellowship. The person bringing an offering does so in order to come closer to God, to elevate his level of spirituality thereby approaching God in the Spirit.

Now remember the person brought the animal as a picture of himself who had previously repented, confessed his sin, admitted his guilt, turned from his sin, prayed, asked for forgiveness; etc. We see that through his repentance, confession, prayer, and restitution he was "coming near" to God and the sacrifice of the animal and the placing of the animal's soul on the altar was a demonstration that he, the person bringing the sacrifice, had ALREADY "drawn near to God". The offering was a picture of that fact to all the world as well as to God to see!

IT ALL BEGAN WITH ADAM...DRAWING CLOSE TO GOD AFTER WE SIN

When Adam was deposited in the Garden of Eden, his first responsibility was to work it and guard it (Gen. 2:15). That means that Adam was commanded to plant, work, cultivate; everything that was necessary to keep the Garden as a Paradise. Before Adam's sin, man had no need to be a peasant; everything grew for him at God's command, with no need for him to exert himself in any way. It was only after his sin that he was expelled from Eden and required to earn his bread through the sweat of his brow.

How then was he to *work and guard* Eden? Through the study of Torah and the performance of positive and negative commandments. His livelihood would come in return for his obedience to God's will. God will always respond to man's righteousness by blessing his material efforts.

Adam's mission was to make himself an offering in his lifetime, by dedicating himself unreservedly to God. On God's Throne of Glory, there is an image of a man (Ez. 1:10). Every human being has his own image above, his ideal spiritual self, which represents his goal and his potential. Man's soul is placed in an earthly body so that he can surmount the challenges of material life and raise himself up to his personal, heavenly self; to unite his earthly self with his higher self. Just as everyone has a body and a soul, and his mission is to triumph in the eternal struggle of body versus soul, so, too, many must struggle to live up to the summons of his higher self.

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organs that are the seat of desire and through, are burned on God's Altar. In the case of an elevation-offering, which is completely burned, the animal's feet symbolize the hands and feet with which man ran and acted to defy his Creator. The animal's blood (containing its soul), representing man's soul, was placed on the Altar (notice it is the soul that is placed upon the Altar; just not the blood).

ONE MORE LOOK AT IT

In closing let us refresh what we learned above. Let's look at Leviticus 17:11 in context in order to make sure we understand the “central” idea of the passage.

"And whatever man of the house of Israel, or of the strangers who sojourn among you, who consumes any blood, I will set My face against that person who consumes blood, and will cut him off from among his people. For the **life [SUBJECT OF THE SENTENCE]** of the flesh is **in the blood [DIRECT OBJECT OF THE SENTENCE]**, and I have given **it** to you upon the altar to make atonement for your souls; for it is the blood that makes an atonement for the soul. Therefore, I say to the children of Israel, 'No one among you shall consume blood, nor shall any stranger who sojourns among you consume blood.'"

Answer for yourself: Did you know that “blood” was not the subject of the sentence? Did you notice what was? Did you understand that it was the “life” that was placed on the altar for atonement and not the blood?

In other words it is not the blood that atones, but the “soul” [LIFE] that atones.

Answer for yourself: Are you aware that as a Christian your whole understanding of the sacrificial system in the Bible is wrong because you have focused on “blood” for atonement instead of the “life” in the blood which is the real atoning agent?

ISAIAH 53....IS ABOUT A NATION'S CONFESSION OF THEIR GUILT AND THEIR REPENTANCE...NOT JUST ONE MAN

Israel is heading for captivity due to idolatry. She desperately needs to repent. From Isa. chapter 40 through 66 the write consistently interchanges pronouns from singular to plural to describe the nation of Israel. We must not be confused when reading "he" as if the writer is speaking about one man when it is the whole nation that was guilty of sin; especially idolatry which will bring about her soon captivity.

Answer for yourself: Did you notice I said "her" when describing a nation? This is perfectly permissible to speak of the many as represented by one and that is exactly what Isaiah the Prophet is doing from chapter 40-66. If you doubt me then read the chapters for context and notice the continual interchanging of singular and plural pronouns when describing the nation.

You have seen some powerful things in this article. You saw that your Christian Bible is a deliberate covering up of the true text of Isaiah. You are reading most likely from your Christian Bible which is a very poor translation, or should I say, a very good mistranslation of Isaiah 53. This is why I spend so much time on the text. The Bible Jesus used and read did not read anything like our Christian Old Testament in hundreds of places. Isaiah is a good instance.

Simply said, this Christian translation has been “Jesusized” by having the concept of guilt removed, for in Christian “theology” Jesus can have no guilt!

In one of the greatest passages in the Bible, we are told by Isaiah the prophet that if the “soul” of the “suffering servant” would acknowledge guilt...Israel being the suffering servant and not just one man; but a nation of people comprising many "ones."

Answer for yourself: What do you do when you acknowledge guilt?

You confess and then repent. This is the subject of the verse. You literally turn around your "life". Your life changes direction; from sin to righteousness. You no longer continue your sinister ways. Now you can see how such a life, after repentance and confession of sin, was understood, even as the Christian Bibles say: "soul/life an offering for sin"! **One's life, when turned to God and away from sin, was the atonement that Leviticus 17 speaks about.**

Answer for yourself: Could we have missed this understanding when looking at the death of Jesus or, as Isaiah said, the martyrdoms of millions of Israelites (remember Jesus is paradigm of all Jews)?

While this procedure (placing the animal's soul on the altar in substitute for yours) is being accomplished with one's offering, the sacrificer meditates upon his sin, for the offering service teaches him graphically that he has sinned against God with body and soul. He contemplates that justice would have dictated that *his* human body be burned on the altar as a penalty for sin and *his* soul required by God in lieu of the animal's blood be placed upon it. It is only God's graciousness that permits the animal to become his substitute. Then, parts of the offering are given to the Kohanim (priests/teachers), so that those who dedicate their lives to study and teach the Torah are sustained through him and so that they will pray for him. It is an act of supreme graciousness that God is prepared to accept an offering from us instead of punishing us directly for our misdeeds. This is why the offerings are described throughout Leviticus as a satisfying aroma to God, because God is pleased when His children repent and seek to change their lives for the better.

When one brings an offering with such noble thoughts he has truly made himself an offering. The Sages have said of one who brings a humble meal-offering, it is as if he had offered his own life upon the altar. He thereby raised his mundane desires and makes them worthy of being placed on the heavenly altar.

Now...you have been blessed I pray to know the truth about God's atonement for all mankind.



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THE HISTORICAL MEANING OF “BEING BORN AGAIN” AS CONTRASTED WITH WHAT CHRISTIANITY TEACHES TODAY: WHAT ARE WE TO BELIEVE? #1

- **Answer for yourself:** Are you “born again” according to what a Jew like Jesus taught or according to what your Gentile Pastor teaches?
- **Answer for yourself:** Is there the remotest possibility that you might not be “born again” according to the Hebrew Scriptures and what it meant to a Jew like Jesus, but “born” again according to Gentile theology?

Before you say “no way” you better get seated and read the whole of these two article for I promise you an eye opening experience if you do.

- **Answer for yourself:** Do you know the difference alluded to in the above two questions when the concept of “born again” is viewed in its Jewish context and later in its Gentile context?
- **Answer for yourself:** If we today in the Christian Church attach a different meaning to the Hebrew concept of “being born again” which is all together foreign and different from what it meant to a Jew like Jesus when he spoke about it to Nicodemus, then what does a Jew like Jesus think about our misinterpretation of such an important concept, or even more, what is the result of such a misunderstanding when we are judged in the world to come (Heaven)?

2 Cor 5:17 Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new. (KJV)

- **Answer for yourself:** Are you a “new creation” as taught by Paul, or are you just “another creature”?
- **Answer for yourself:** If you call yourself a “new creation” and your Pastor or those on TV call you a “new creature,” does calling yourself a “new creature” make you one, and do you know what being “one” actually entails?
- **Answer for yourself:** Have you fulfilled the requirements in the Bible to actually be a “new creature” according to Paul in II Cor. 5:17, and do you know what they are?
- **Answer for yourself:** What are you to do when most of you find out that you have not been taught correctly about what is required to be a “new creation in Messiah?”

Those are thought-provoking questions to say the least. I know most of you who are reading this article are tempted to put it down and consider what I have asked you to consider as absolute folly. I can only plead with you to read these two articles in full, and understand for yourself what I discovered over fifteen years of in-depth Bible study which was never taught to me by the Christian Church or even Seminary.

In order to peak you curiosity to read this article in full, I will expose at this time the real meaning Paul intended his Gentile hearers to have when he taught them about being a “new creation in Christ.” Let us examine the passage in II Cor. in detail from resources like a Christian Greek Lexicon.

2 Cor 5:17

*Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new **creature**: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new. (KJV)*

First of all it is mandatory we understand correctly what the word “creature” means in the original language in which Paul spoke and later was recorded in Greek.

The Thayer’s Greek Lexicon [a Christian book no less] defines “creature” in II Cor. 5:17 as follows: 2937 Strong’s Numbers: ktisis- the act of founding, establishing, building, etc.

- a) the act of creating, creation
- b) creation, that is, a thing created; used of individual things, beings, a creature, a creation
 - 1) anything created
 - **2) after a rabbinical usage (by which a man converted from idolatry to Judaism was called)**
 - 3) the sum or aggregate of things created
 - 4) an institution, an ordinance
- **Answer for yourself:** Don’t you find it almost startling that the concept accompanying the idea of being “new creature” carries with the intended meaning of turning from idols and idolatry to Judaism and not a religion like Christianity which is full of idolatry and considers itself a replacement for Judaism?
- **Answer for yourself:** Don’t you find it almost startling that the concept accompanying the idea of being “new creature” carries with the intended meaning of turning from idols and idolatry to Judaism where Biblical Feasts and Festivals are observed instead on pagan holidays to which the early Catholic Church attached the name of Jesus centuries ago?
- **Answer for yourself:** Don’t you find it almost startling that the concept accompanying the idea of being “new creature” carries with the intended meaning of turning from idols and idolatry to Judaism where the Sabbath is both observed and remembered instead of replacing it with the day already set aside by the pagans for sun worship?
- **Answer for yourself:** If your church does not teach and model for you the correct interpretation of the Bible by promoting the interpretation of these Hebrew Scriptures from a Jewish perspective since it is a Hebrew document, then how comfortable should you feel considering your faith and the practice of your faith since it probably contains very little that is Jewish; especially in light that you most likely have been taught to reject the Sabbath and the Seven Biblical Festivals?
- **Answer for yourself:** If your church does not teach and model for you the correct interpretation of the Bible by promoting the correct interpretation of the Hebrew Scriptures from a Jewish perspective [especially since it is a Jewish book] then how comfortable should you feel considering your Gentile Christian faith and the practice of your faith when it finally dawns upon you that you have been following a religious belief system that deviates drastically from what a Jew like Jesus believed?

WHERE WE MUST BEGIN TO UNDERSTAND CORRECTLY “BEING BORN AGAIN”

I guess I could just dive right in and tell you that we as Christians and followers of Jesus has completely misunderstood the Jewish concept of being "born again" but it would serve us well to first understand the historical context of such passages in order to fully appreciate the Jewish concept of being "born again" and the discourse between Nicodemus and Jesus as found in John chapter 3.

The **Noahide Commandments** are the Commandments given by the Torah (the Old Testament) to the Gentiles of the world (first given to Adam and later given to Noah), which according to Rabbinic tradition and the **First Church Council in Acts 15:17-19 and Acts 15:28-29 (which was headed up by James, the Lord's brother and head of the Jerusalem church)** were given by God to Gentiles like Adam and Noah. It is these commandments which **if obeyed by the non-Jews of the world will be rewarded with eternal life!** **According to Rabbinic teaching & Acts 15 (which a Jew like Jesus believed and taught himself along**

with his followers), those Gentiles who observe these precepts are assured their share in the World to Come, regardless of what fanciful interpretations were later to be invented by both the Catholic & Protestant churches and most probably heard in your modern churches today. The Jesus of the New Testament was a Jew. He never ascribed to Baptist, Methodist, Catholic, Assembly of God, Church of Christ, or Mormon church doctrine. He believed and taught the truth as received from his Father in Heaven. The Christian must come to an understanding that the religion of a Jew like Jesus (Biblical Judaism and not Rabbinic Judaism) has always recognized two different religious codes:

- 1) the 613 Laws and precepts given to the Jews following their liberation from Egypt [the Laws of Moses were added upon the existing Noahide revelation and commandments]
- 2) the earlier Noahide system of legislation for all mankind predated the Laws of Moses

DID JESUS INTEND TO REPLACE OR ABOLISH HIS RELIGION?

The eighteenth century Talmudist Rabbi Jacob Emden wrote a letter that has been discovered by archeologists which states: *"Jesus (Yeshua) never intended to abolish Judaism, but only to establish a new religion for the Gentiles based upon the ancient Noahide Commandments transmitted by Moses on Mount Sinai."* Let me say that Emden more correctly should have said **"RE-ESTABLISH"** for the Gentiles the religious foundations that had previously been given by God to the Gentiles since the Garden of Eden and later renewed at Sinai. Emden stressed in his letter that Jesus brought about a "double blessing" to the world, by strengthening the Torah of Moses and at the same time removing idolatry from the midst of the Gentiles. Unfortunately, Emden's thesis in the letter never gained a substantial following by fellow Jews. The most obvious reason would seem to be the frequent harsh statements made by Jesus against the rabbis and Jews of his time (Matt. 23). This chapter has seldom been correctly interpreted by the Christian Church because the church, for the most part, lacks the facts & information concerning the historical, religious, and political background surrounding Yeshua's statements which are necessary to correctly understand such a chastisement of a **particular "sect" within the Pharisees, and not the Pharisees as a whole!** Yeshua was not condemning the Pharisee movement, for he was proud to be one, especially a Pharisee belonging to the School of Hillel. **Yeshua was not replacing Judaism with Christianity!**

Emden helps us understand the original intentions of Yeshua and Paul as he analyzes the beginnings of Christianity. According to the Jewish rabbi, Yeshua and his Apostles, which were later sent by Yeshua to the Gentiles of the world, acted entirely within the Halakhah (correct and accepted Jewish law) in **re-creating and re-establishing the religion God had previously given to the Gentiles which was based on the Noahide Commandments (the basic seven Noahide Laws consist of prohibitions against idolatry, blasphemy, killing, stealing, sexual sins, eating the limb of a living animal (cruelty to animals), and the imperative to establish courts of justice).** According to the Jewish Talmud and Tosefta, those **Gentiles who observe these statutes are considered to be of the Hasidim (pious ones) of the Nations and merit a share in the World to Come.** Even within the *Alenu* prayer which is prayed by Jews and "God-Fearers" every Sabbath, it states **"May all inhabitants of the earth recognize and know...."** **This means the Gentiles.** This prayer for Gentiles is another proof that the will of God is for Gentiles not to perish but have everlasting life. In the Mishnah (the Oral Law), in Pirke Avot 4.1 it states: *"Every assembly that is for the sake of Heaven will in the end be established."* Christian assemblies are for the sake of Heaven, yet I must sadly inform you that they have accepted "IN PART" the Noahide Commandments, **but not totally! God had given them all to the Gentiles and we are not told today about them in our Christian Churches!**

THE FIRST GREAT COMMISSION...20 BC? YOU HAVE GOT TO BE KIDDING? NO; I AM NOT!

Yeshua and Paul were acquainted with the Essene authors and their Scrolls. Many passages in the New Testament bear striking similarity to the Scrolls (see my previous newsletter about Yeshua and the Secret of the Dead Sea Scrolls). A comprehensive overview of the writings and materials available to us today reveal the Essenes to have been extremely pious Jews who scrupulously followed the Torah (the instruction and teaching of God, more commonly called the "Law"), whereas Yeshua and Paul are by many portrayed incorrectly as having forsaken their Jewish origins and replaced the Torah with a new religion-Christianity. Such a study also reveals many problems with Essene theology but this is a study done elsewhere and is too extensive for this article. **This portrayal of Yeshua forsaking his Jewish faith never happened; sadly I cannot say that for Paul [see Acts 21 where Paul was known to forsake Moses {commandments} and teach Jews to quit circumcising their children]!** At least this is the general picture one is presented with in the majority of churches today; and one will not be able to see through it without diligent study. But this premise goes against Emden's letter. A Christian should know that the Talmud records for us that **Moses commanded the Jews to spread the knowledge of the Noahide commandments to all mankind!**

Answer for yourself: Did you hear that?

God commanded Moses to spread the knowledge of the Covenant with Noah and its requirements to all Gentiles in the world. **Judaism acknowledges this "Gentile Covenant for Salvation"** as from God since the time of Mount at Sinai. The questions we have to ask ourselves is this:

- **Answer for yourself:** Does history record for us such an ambitious attempt to bring the Noahide Laws to Gentiles, and if so, who was behind it and when did it occur?"
- **Answer for yourself:** Were the pious Essenes the ones who attempted such a mission to the Gentiles in the generation preceding Yeshua's birth?
- **Answer for yourself:** Did Yeshua and Paul, through their ministries, follow in the Essene's footsteps and try to bring to fruition what the Essenes began in the generation before their birth?
- **Answer for yourself:** Where do the Gentiles correctly fit into the teachings of Jesus and Paul?

As Christians and followers of Yeshua, we must constantly search for the correct interpretations of such an event if we are to correctly understand the Bible and its message to the Gentile and his salvation.

LET US LEARN FROM HISTORY

A passage in the Jerusalem Talmud records for us: **"Menahem the Essene and 160 Essene disciples left the Jewish community"** (remember not all Essenes lived in & around the Dead Sea) **"about 20 B.C. on a mission to the Gentiles to take the "world" the Noahide Covenant, thus assuring obedient and observant Gentiles a place in the World to Come."** This Menahem served as a vice-president of the Sanhedrin under the sage Hillel who was the Nassi (President of the Sanhedrin) some **thirty years before Jesus' birth**. The Mishnah makes quite clear that Menahem subjected himself totally to Hillel's authority (who loved the Gentiles), thus establishing a link between the Essenes and Hillel (who was a conservative Pharisee). Also of importance is the link between the two camps (Essenes & Pharisees) in that they were both known as "Hasidim." Menahem the Essene left Hillel's Sanhedrin for his mission to the world and was then replaced by the sage **Shammai (who did not like the Gentiles). Shammai succeeded him as vice-president, probably about 20 B.C., and the influences of Hillel began to be replaced with those of Shammai [who was strongly anti-Gentile and deemed no Gentile worthy that the message of God's salvation be taken to them].**

QUESTIONS NEEDING ANSWERS

- **Answer for yourself:** Was Menahem forced out by Shammai and his followers? Yes.
- **Answer for yourself:** Did Hillel's disciples join Menahem in his mission to the Gentiles? Yes.
- **Answer for yourself:** Did later rabbis approve of Menahem's mission to the Gentiles? Yes and No,

depending on the particular school of Pharisees to which we refer.

- **Answer for yourself:** Did Shammai lend his support to the Gentile mission or did he discourage the Jews from being a light to Gentiles? He strongly discouraged it.
- **Answer for yourself:** In the time of Yeshua did the teachings of Hillel or Shammai have influence over the people of Israel and direct the course of the nation? Shammai was in ascendancy.
- **Answer for yourself:** Which of these two Pharisee schools supported Yeshua and which did Yeshua rebuke in Matt. 23? The School of Hillel supported Yeshua and the School of Shammai was rebuked by Yeshua.
- **Answer for yourself:** Was Yeshua against all the Pharisees? No, not at all, for he would say only two days before his death that the Pharisees (no longer the Sadducees) are the religious leaders of Israel, for from now on they sit in Moses' seat!

THE STORMY RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN HILLEL AND SHAMMAI

The first disputes regarding the Oral law (that was passed down for some 1700 years from Moses at Sinai) took place at this time between the sages and students of Hillel and Shammai (beginning about 20 years prior to Yeshua's birth). Their respective schools (Bet Hillel and Bet Shammai) were to clash over 350 times on issues of the Oral Law during the next hundred years. Nor were these always minor disputes for even once the Zealots connected with Shammai massacred and killed many of the Pharisees. **The issues between Bet Hillel and Bet Shammai went to the very core of what Judaism stood for (and what a Jew like Jesus stood for). One of the major areas of contention was Judaism's attitude toward salvation of the Gentiles.**

Answer for yourself: What side would Yeshua agree with?

The Schools of Shammai and Hillel both accepted all of the commandments contained in the five "written" books of the Torah (Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, and Deuteronomy). But the written law of Moses is too brief to be applied to practical issues of everyday life, and it was accepted that God also gave an oral and more detailed tradition was originally given to Adam, then to Noah, and finally handed down to Moses at Sinai. **The debates of Bet Hillel and Bet Shammai centered on this oral tradition.**

This oral tradition was passed down by Moses and it was forbidden to be set to writing. It was this Oral Law that later caused controversy among the rabbis; especially Bet Shammai and Bet Hillel. Finally, out of fear it would be forgotten due to all the persecution of Judaism and the deaths of its leaders at the hands of Gentiles, the sages permitted it to be committed to writing. The first major works were the Mishnah (200 A.D.) and the Tosefta (4th century), followed by two Talmuds; the Babylonian Talmud and the Jerusalem Talmud (5th century). The Babylonian version is more popular than the Jerusalem Talmud. Also at this time, books of homilies known as Midrash began to appear. The two major commentaries to the Babylonian Talmud are those of Rashi and the Tosefta. Why did I mention these works? The Mishnah, Talmud and Tosefta are the works of primary interest and authority when researching the Jewish law and tradition that surrounded Jesus and the teachings from the school of Judaism which is reflected in his teachings in the first century.

GOD CHOSE HILLEL'S INTERPRETATION FOR ALL TIME..IT CAME THROUGH A VOICE FROM HEAVEN

The School of Shammai [anti-Gentiles] came upon the Jewish scene 20 years before Jesus' birth, and flourished for around 100 years. After the destruction of the Temple in 70 A.D., the seat of the Sanhedrin was relocated to Yavneh, where the Halakhah (accepted interpretation of Jewish Law) of the School of Bet Hillel became once again the established Halakhah (accepted interpretation for all issues of Jewish law). Also at this time, **God spoke from Heaven and a Heavenly Voice was heard declaring the Law was to be from that time forward decided in favor of the interpretations of the School of Bet Hillel.** Since that time all Jewry has accepted the teachings of Bet Hillel. But this was too late to save Israel from the judgment of God for violating the commandments of the Second Tablet of the Law....the Commandments affecting relationships between man and men [Jew/Jew; Jew/Gentile].

HOW COULD YESHUA REPLACE WHAT HIS FATHER APPROVED?

Now listen closely. The "Jesus" debates with the Pharisees recorded in the New Testament were actually disputes with the Pharisees representing the School of Shammai and NOT the School of Hillel. Every Christian needs to set down and think hard upon what I just said; especially in light of the teaching of anti-Semitic Gentile Christianity that all Pharisees opposed Jesus. Such a teaching is simply not true and a tragic misrepresentation of history. The Jesus of the New Testament adopts the views of Hillel and the School of Hillel on "all" matters of Halakhah (interpretation) except on the matter of divorce, where he sides with the School of Shammai (which held a more strict interpretation). At the time of the Jesus of the New Testament the interpretations and teachings Bet Shammai were influencing Jewish life and institutions more than Hillel's, and it was this way for almost 100 years. Through Shammai's teachings Israel was "loosing her way." It would be primarily the influence of Shammai and his hatred of the non-Jew by which Israel will fail to "merit" the Kingdom of Heaven and her King and thwart the day of her visitation. The prophecies would not be fulfilled and the Messiah would not be revealed to a nation of Priests which hated those to whom she was called to go. Hillel had died when the Jesus of the New Testament was 13-14 years old, and Hillel's influence in Israel was rapidly being replaced with the contemporary teachings of Shammai. The Jesus of the New Testament (who accepted and agreed with Hillel) is shown to clash with Shammai (and Shammai's many students) and this clash was rather continually! The Shammai Pharisees (and not the Hillel Pharisees) were responsible for handing over Jesus to the Chief Priest, and Sadducees and Romans for crucifixion, and this was a violation of Jewish Law. Couple this with the relationship the Shammaites had with the Sadducean Zealots in the priesthood, little wonder that the Chief Priests (Sadducees) capture Jesus and hand him over to the Romans to be crucified. Notice that the Hillel Pharisees (whom the majority of the people supported and followed) had nothing to do with Yeshua's crucifixion (it was they who warned Jesus to flee for his life in Luke 13:31). When you read Matt. 23 you cannot help but see Yeshua chastising the Pharisees; but what we fail to notice is that there were many sects under the umbrella of the Pharisees and Jesus says "Pharisees who"....indicating that many were not to be included in his rebuke of the insincere Pharisees. Yeshua took odds with the Shammaite Pharisees, not the Hillel Pharisees!

The Christian Church's failure to understand this has led them to erroneously believe that the Jesus of the New Testament was rejecting his own religion by chastising the pharisees rather than calling for repentance within it by whose "who" had departed from God's will!

WE MUST UNDERSTAND THE TIMES AND THE TEXTS

Now let us learn something that Christianity has never taught you.

The Jewish people knew from ancient prophecy that their Temple in Jerusalem would be destroyed by the Gentiles (Dan. 9 describes 490 yrs that are allotted to the Jewish people to either usher in the Messianic Kingdom or else suffer destruction). Bet Hillel believed that reaching out to the Gentiles (since historically Israel had failed to be "a light unto the Gentiles") was the correct approach to possibly avoiding the coming destruction. I cannot stress the importance of the above consideration in the minds of the Jews like Hillel in the times of the Jesus of the New Testament. Hillel and his students [School of Hillel Pharisees] maintained that righteous Gentiles merit salvation just as Jews do (Hillel, like Yeshua, accepted the teachings connected with the Laws of Noah), and it was their hope that a mission to the Gentiles could avert the destruction of their land and win God's approval, thus influencing God to repent of the

destruction prophesied. Bet Shammai however looked down upon the Gentile world, holding that NOT even the most righteous Gentile could merit a share in the World to Come. Shammai believed the Gentiles deserved "hell" and no attempts should be made to alter their destiny. The Jewish people and their teachers have since declared Bet Shammai's views to be null and void, as did the Heavenly Voice toward the close of the first century (just the way God spoke at Jesus' immersion). **Shammai and the Bet Shammai were indeed the Pharisees and priests that Jesus of Nazareth and Paul of Tarsus had to contend with within the pages of our Bibles, and not the Hillel Pharisees.** Paul the Apostle's insistence that Gentiles be admitted into the early Messianic Jewish Church was based on Bet Hillel's position that righteous Gentiles merit salvation. Let us not forget that Paul had studied under Rabban Gamaliel the Elder, a grandson of Hillel where he received such instruction! Now you can better understand that **the anti-Jewish passages contained in the New Testament were directed against the Shammaites, and not the Judaism which followed Bet Hillel, or even today which follows the instruction and interpretations of Hillel.**

UNDERSTANDING YESHUA'S MESSAGE

Yeshua and his disciples warned all men everywhere not to "destroy" the Torah of Israel. Understand that is Paul's theology early in his life; sadly we have letters later in his life that teach the opposite. It is not my wish to get into the "Paul Problem" in this article but let it suffice that the truth about Paul has not often found the light day; especially in light of Gentile tradition that as overtaken historical truth.

Answer for yourself: Did Paul change his religious beliefs during his life or did the Gentile church create theology and put it in Paul's mouth? You might be surprised at the answer to that question.

A Jew is not permitted to leave his Torah, for Paul wrote in his letter to the Galatians Chapter 5 (**remember Galatians was written to Gentiles**) **"I, Paul, say to you that if you (writing to Gentiles) receive circumcision (along with immersion that makes you a Jew...ie., conversion), the Messiah will do you no good at all."**

Answer for yourself: What did Paul mean by the above comment?

I will deal with the meaning of that last phrase in a future newsletter but the core of truth related to this statement by Paul is that the death of Yeshua caused a movement within a Gentile hating Judaism taking God and the Gentile's Covenant to the nations to the world; no longer was forced circumcision of the Gentile and full conversion the only option for the non-Jew to be taken the salvation of the Jews and fellowship with other Jews. Enforced circumcision was the tactic of the Shammai Pharisees to keep Gentiles apart from them. This is not love but rather hatred of the Gentiles. Acts 15 is the turning point on this. Paul goes on to say "You can take it from me that every man (Gentile) who receives circumcision **[prior to Acts 15 circumcision was understood as necessary for the Gentile coming to God thereby converting to Judaism]**. It was the belief of the early church that Yeshua was the Messiah and because of this belief and his death and expected return that James and the Jerusalem church repented of their bigotry toward the non-Jew and no longer could enforce circumcision upon the non-Jew as had been done previously. This major step by Jews occurs in Acts 15 and letters were written to strengthen the Gentile churches thereby enforcing this decision for all Gentiles (Acts 15 and 16). A Jew by birth of course was circumcised and is obligated to keep the "entire Torah" but a converted Gentile was also expected to be circumcised and immersed and likewise under obligation to keep the 'entire' Torah " (613). But this was to change with Acts 15 and the repentance of James and the Jerusalem Church in regards to enforced circumcision of the non-Jew. A "converted" Gentile was considered "Jewish" and obligated to keep the 613 mitzvot as were other natural born Jews. Paul is teaching us that a Gentile (like you and me) who is immersed [traditional way of receiving non-Jews into faith with God] and who is circumcised [again part of the conversion process] is obligated to keep the entire Torah as if we were born a Jew! **But since Yeshua's death lead to a movement within Judaism that repented of their stance toward non-Jews and no longer required circumcision of the non-Jew then to not take advantage of this nullifies the benefit of Yeshua's death and the movement that it produced. If one did not**

recognize this blessings [no longer required of a non-Jew to be converted to be accepted by God] that comes from the death of Yeshua then we better understand Paul's statement that Yeshua [believed to be the Messiah] profited them not at all.

- **Answer for yourself:** Did you hear that?
- **Answer for yourself:** What about Paul and his teaching that the Law is passed away?

It must now be obvious that Paul never intended for that to be your understanding; he never said that! Our problem is that we misinterpret the teachings of Paul not having a proper background necessary to understand correctly what he is saying. Let us begin with what happens when we are "Born-Again". Understand that Judaism was becoming divided in how to handle the non-Jew. The Jewish hatred for the Jews had enforced full conversion and circumcision on the male in hopes of it being a deterrent from having to deal with them since the Jews looked down on the non-Jew. But not all Jews did; as we just saw in Yeshua and the Pharisee School of Hillel. Judaism was torn within on what to do with the non-Jew. Previously being circumcised and then immersed meant full conversion. This was called "Being Born Again" in a Jewish context. This is not a Christian term; only stolen by them and given a new definition much later. **But being "Born Again" has been wrenched from its Jewish context and given a meaning completely different from what it meant to the Jesus of the New Testament/Yeshua.** Now the question of enforcing circumcision as part of this process was being rethought by Jews who were repenting of their bigotry toward the Gentiles. Acts 15 again will be the pivotal point in this theological diversity and the Messianic branch of Hillel Phariseism will change their ways. Yet at the same time the Shammai School will continue their repressive measures toward the non-Jew and sadly this will be the dominant stance for Israel and will ultimately lead to its destruction in 70 C.E.

More to follow in the concluding article where we will tackle the intricate meanings of being "Born Again." Shalom.

[See the 2nd and concluding article of this series](#)

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KIDDUSH ON THE EVE OF SABBATH

On the sixth day, heaven and the earth were finished, and all their host. And on the seventh day the Lord perfected the work which He had made; and on the seventh day, He ceased from the work which He had made. And the Lord blessed the seventh day and He sanctified it, because thereon He ceased from the work of creation which He had made.

Praised be Thou, O Lord our God, King of the universe, Creator of the fruit of the vine.

Praised be Thou, Lord our God, who has hallowed us with Thy commandments, and hast favored us with the gracious gift of the Sabbath as our loving inheritance, in remembrance of the work of creation. The Sabbath is also first among the days of holy assembly, which recall our freedom from the bondage of Egypt. From among the nations Thou hast selected us for a service of holiness, and in love Thou hast given us Thy holy Sabbath as our heritage. Praised be Thou, O Lord, who hallowest the Sabbath.



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THE FAMILY BLESSINGS ON THE SABBATH

A beautiful Shabbat tradition is the parental blessing. The father places both hands on each child as he says a blessing over them. Examples:

A traditional Jewish blessing for a son is: May God make you like Ephraim and Manasseh.

A traditional Jewish blessing for a daughter is: May God make you like Sarah, Rebekah, Rachel and Leah. Or a personal blessing is said for each child using a format similar to this: “May God bless you with _____ and _____. May you be (like) _____ and _____. May this Sabbath fill you with _____ and _____.

Some families say a husband and wife blessing. Husbands read Proverbs 31:10-31 to their wives and wives read Psalm 112 to their husbands. Then everyone joins hands and sings or recites a phrase similar to the following: May Adonai bless you and guard you. May Adonai shine Divine light upon you and be good to you. May Adonai face you and give you peace.”



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THOUGHTS ON THE DEATH OF JESUS AS RELATED TO THE SACRIFICIAL SYSTEM #1

If you are a Christian this is the most important piece of information you will have ever read. I behoove you to read the whole article if you want to understand the death of Yeshua as God intended. The facts presented speak for themselves. I pray you will quietly and prayerfully speak to the Father as you read this most enlightening articles. My prayers and blessings to you.

As a Christian you have been told your whole life that two great objectives were accomplished by Jesus in his mission to this world.

- **The removal of the curse under which mankind labored as a result of the disobedience and fall**
- **The restoration of men to the image and fellowship of God.**

Both of these were essential to salvation as taught by Gentile Christianity. Christianity teaches that the work of Christ in reconciling God and men is called "the" Atonement; and this doctrine lies at the very heart of the Christian system. Sadly few understand correctly this very important doctrine, the origin of Christianity's claims, nor can the Biblical teaching on Atonement be understood correctly without a proper understanding of the Hebraic roots from which it came.

We are altogether dependent on Old Testament Scripture and Jewish writings for our knowledge concerning the doctrine of the Atonement and can know only what God has seen fit to reveal concerning it.

What most don't know is that when one encounters teachings on Atonement in the New Testament, which was collected and altered repeatedly by the Gentile Church, one is reading the "Gentile pagan accounts of Atonements from mystery religions" and and not "fulfillments" of Old Testament Scripture!

Our present purpose in this series of articles is to give a systematized account of what the Jewish Scriptures, the Bible Yeshua used. the Palestinian Masoretic Text, the Tanakh, teach concerning Atonement, and to show that this fits in perfectly with the longings and aspirations of an enlightened spiritual nature.

A CHRISTIAN'S UNDERSTANDING OF THE NEW TESTAMENT IS IMPOSSIBLE WITHOUT A THOUGH UNDERSTANDING OF THE OLD TESTAMENT

First of all you have to have the correct text. The Christian's Old Testament is different from the Jewish Masoretic text in over 2000 places. This should concern you immensely! If you want the facts check out: <http://geocities.com/faithofyeshua>. You should demand a translation and not a free creationism as

doctored by non-Jews, who over the centuries, conformed the faith and writings of the Jews to suit their pagan backgrounds. Enough said. If you have been reading our materials we have made this most plain over the years. Now to the purpose at hand.

In one of Paul's most condensed and fundamental statements of Christian teaching we read: "For I delivered unto you first of all that which also I received: that Christ (Messiah) died for our sins according to the Scriptures; and that He was buried; and that He hath been raised on the third day according to the Scriptures," I Cor. 15:3.

Answer for yourself: Even in the corrupt Old Testaments in the Christian Bibles, can you find where the Old Testament prophecies that Yeshua was to die for sin and that he was to be buried and raised on the 3rd day?

What? You cannot? No wonder; it is not there anywhere! And please don't read into Isa. 53 the concept of an "individual" when the author from chapter 40 on through chapter 66 deals with a "corporate, collective, and national" Suffering Servant and never one individual. If you do so, then understand that you invalidate completely what Isaiah intended we learn from the passage. Such is reading into the text your pre-formed theology. Let us not do that. We are supposed to believe what we can draw out of the text. The text must determine our beliefs. Such is exegesis. I recommend exegesis as you can see and because of my Christian background I must fight daily to limit my eisegesis as much as possible because so much error is yet burned into my subconscious. We must struggle and fight for the truth. Such makes one Israel.

IF YOU HAD A GOOD KNOWLEDGE OF THE OLD TESTAMENT THEN YOU WOULD NOT BE MISLED SO EASILY BY THE NEW TESTAMENT

First of all understand that the word "Christ" means Messiah in Hebrew. So according to Paul, in the New Testament, his "gospel" is saying that the Messiah died for our sins.

Answer for yourself: Does the Old Testament and Jewish Scriptures teach and prepare Israel to prepare for and accept a Messiah who comes to die for their sins? No it does not in fact; it teaches just the opposite and this is where the problem lies.

You might not be able to answer with Old Testament Scripture the above question but you will be able soon enough if you continue to study our articles. The Gospel of John in the New Testament states that the "Word became flesh," meaning by most accounts that Jesus, the Messiah, came from Heaven in the form of flesh. Christianity answers the above dilemma two ways: one, there was a time the flesh was "not the Word" and a time when the "Word became flesh" in the Virgin Birth. Without going into detail, the idea which was understood and believed by the first Jewish followers concerning Yeshua; that of him "becoming" Messiah at his immersion is just another proof that the Virgin Birth teaching is incorrect. If you would like to have the detailed teachings exposing the errors in the Virgin Birth teaching request them from Bet Emet Ministries and we will be glad to see you get them. So, important for your understanding as we study atonement is that Jesus became "the" Messiah (Messiah means anointed and we have record of his anointing "without measure" when he was 30 years old at the Jordan). You and I dear one are anointed with measure, but Yeshua was anointed "without measure". You would expect one to fulfill the Messianic hope of Israel to be so equipped. Incidentally, this is exactly what the earliest Jewish followers of Yeshua/Jesus believed; namely that Jesus is the Messiah, and became the Messiah from anointing without measure at the Jordan. Such were called the Ebionites and their writings are available today as well as the records of the early Church historians which reveal to us what the earliest beliefs were concerning Jesus before being changed by the Roman Church in the fourth century and following. It is not my intention to explain in this article why the prophecies of the Jewish Scriptures were not fulfilled in Yeshua nor deal with the fictional creations of "false-fulfilled" passages in the New Testament in this article. We have that

information available to those who would desire it at: <http://www.faithofyeshua.faithweb.com>.

NOW LETS THINK ...

Now let me ask you a question that goes to the very foundation of the core of our beliefs about salvation.

Answer for yourself: Should we not rather try to understand Paul to say that “Christ died because of our sins” instead of “for our sins?”

Critical for our understanding is if Christ's death:

- Was the result of our sins or if his death atoned for sins?
- If Christ's death atoned for ALL our sins or if his death atoned only for PART of our sins (Yom Kippur/The Day of Atonement teaches us the truth in this regard), or did his death NOT atone for any of our sins?
- If Christ's death or rather his life (life is in the blood which ended at his death and the shedding of his blood) atoned for sins, then what implication does one's "life" have for personal atonement of sin?

Before we get to the very heart of the issue we must come to a better understanding of the sacrificial system in order to correctly consider if Jesus' death can be understood as a proper sacrifice within the Law and the dynamics within it that affects the forgiveness of sin.

LAWS OF THE SACRIFICE

The terminology used with regard to the patriarchal age is that of the Torah as a whole; it is unlikely that the same words in Genesis mean something different in the other Books of Moses. Thus, Cain and Abel each brought a "gift" (*minhah*; Gen. 4:4f.), which was usually of a cereal nature as brought by Cain (Lev. 2). Notice this is not a sin offering! Noah offered up a burnt offering (“olah”; Gen. 8:20ff.) and the pleasing odor of the sacrifice is stressed. Job is also depicted as making burnt offerings periodically (Job 1:5) and for specific purposes (Job 42:7–9). The burnt offerings, signifying complete surrender to God, were by far the most frequent sacrifices at the Israelite sanctuary. Again these offerings by Noah and Job were not "sin" offerings and only showed the complete devotion and surrender of the "offerer's" heart to God as he demonstrated and testified to his relationship with God through such "gifts".

I need to repeat the last statement as it will have major significance as you continue to read.

These burnt offerings [olahs] as seen in Cain, Able, Noah, and Job only showed the complete devotion and surrender of the "offerer's" heart to God as he demonstrated and testified to his relationship with God through such "gifts".

The Patriarchs normally are said to have "called on the name of the Lord," e.g., Abraham (Gen. 12:8, 13–4; 21:33) and Isaac (Gen. 26:25). The association of this phrase with the building of an altar shows that it refers to the approach to God through sacrifice. With Jacob the naming of the specific altar is stressed (Gen. 33:20; 35:7). Once Abraham is said to have offered an “olah” (Gen. 22:13) but Jacob (Gen. 31:54; 46:1) offered “zevachim”. Again these were NOT "sin" offerings NOR were they intended for Atonement.

Now let us look at "offerings" and "sacrifices" from Moses to Samuel. The covenant sacrifice inaugurating the relationship between the Lord and His people (Ex. 24:3–8) is not paralleled by specific rituals in the Mosaic liturgy. Burnt and peace offerings were first offered and then the blood from them (not from a sin offering) was thrown half against the altar and half upon the people. In the land of Canaan the Israelites made sacrifices at various places, e.g., at Bochim (Judg. 2:1–5) and Ophrah (Judg. 6:24–26). The human sacrifice of Jephthah's

daughter (Judg. 11:30–40) was hardly normative; instead it is pointed out as evidence of Israel's sad spiritual state at that time. The main center for sacrificial ritual was at Shiloh (I Sam 1:3ff.), where faithful Israelites came for an annual festive offering. That the ritual there was highly developed and detailed is proven by the explicit description of malpractice on the part of Eli's sons (I Sam 2:13–17) in taking their portion of the meat before the entrails were burned. However, Shiloh was not the only legitimate place of sacrifice; others included Beth-Shemesh (I Sam 6:14–15), Mizpah (I Sam 7:9), Ramah (I Sam. 7:17; 9:11–24), and Gilgal (I Sam. 10:8; 11:15; 13:9). Family and clan sacrifices were commonplace (I Sam. 16:2–5).

*Common to all these instances was "sacrifice" for other reasons than "sin offerings"! This is so very important. What you need to know is that in the Old Testament the first mention of animal sacrifices for "sin offerings" was **AFTER** the Golden Calf and the sin of idolatry by a people already possessing relational knowledge of the True God*

Answer for yourself: Then how did mankind obtain forgiveness of sin up until the Golden Calf and the idolatry associated with it? Surely man sinned and must have been given a way of obtaining atonement prior to the Exodus. Well stay tuned!



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THOUGHTS ON THE DEATH OF JESUS AS RELATED TO THE SACRIFICIAL SYSTEM #2

HOW WERE THE SACRIFICES OF THE OLD TESTAMENT TO BE UNDERSTOOD AND INTERPRETED?

Throughout the ages attempts have been made to explain the dynamics involved in the sacrificial system of Israel. Without such an understanding of the Old Testament Sacrificial System the typical Christian is literally "crippled" in his understanding of Atonement. The proposed explanations can be divided into three categories: the symbolic, juridical, and rational.

SYMBOLIC

Philo devoted a treatise to the subject (De Victimis; see Spec. 1:112–256). He pointed out that only domesticated animals and the most gentle birds were suitable for sacrifice and that they had to be free of blemish, which he took as a symbol that the offerers must also be wholesome in body and soul. The Jew had to approach the altar with his soul purged of its passions and viciousness if the sacrifice was to be acceptable (Spec. 1:166/167, 257).

Take notice of the spiritual condition necessary **BEFORE** the sacrifice was to be presented at the altar...his soul had to be purged of sin IF the sacrifice was to be acceptable to God.

The reader needs to understand NOW that there were prior conditions that needed to be met by the sacrificer of the animal BEFORE the sacrifice was to be brought to the altar. Now lets pick up with Philo.

The wicked would be rejected, even if they offered hundreds of sacrifices (Spec. 1:271). The rabbis stated that the sacrificial statutes indicated that God is with the persecuted. The ox is pursued by the lion, the goat by the leopard, and the lamb by the wolf. Therefore God commanded, "Do not offer those that persecute, but rather those that are persecuted" (Lev. R. 27:5). The requirement that fowl be offered with their feathers symbolized that a poor man was not to be despised. Therefore his offering was placed on the altar in its full adornment, despite the nauseating odor normally arising from the burning of feathers (Lev. R. 3:5). Salt, an indispensable ingredient of sacrifice, was symbolic of the moral effect of suffering, which purifies man and causes sins to be forgiven (Ber. 5a). Judah Halevi declared that the fire on the altar was kindled by the will of God as a sign that the people found favor in His sight and that He was accepting their hospitality and offerings (Kuzari 2:26). Samson Raphael Hirsch explained that the Pentateuch required the person to lay his hands upon the head of the sacrifice to indicate that the "hands" that have become morally weakened "support" themselves on the resolution of the future betterment that is expressed by the offering (his commentary to Lev. 1:4). David Hoffmann declared that sacrifices are symbols of man's gratitude to God and his dependence on Him, of the absolute devotion man owes to God, as well as of man's confidence in Him (Introd. to commentary on Lev.

(Heb. ed.), 64–67).

JUDICIAL

The juridical approach is put forward by Ibn Ezra (commentary to Lev. 1:1) and to some extent by Nahmanides (commentary to Lev. 1:9). According to them, the sinner's life is forfeit to God, but by a gracious provision he is permitted to substitute a faultless victim. His guilt (not his sin) is transferred to the offering by the symbolic act of placing his hands on the victim.

The reader should understand RIGHT NOW that this is something new he has never heard in his Christian Church. It was the guilt and not the sin that was transferred to the innocent animal. Now back to Ibn Ezra.

When observing the pouring out of the blood and the burning of the sacrifice, the person should acknowledge that were it not for divine grace he should be the victim, expiating his sin with his own blood and limbs (Nahmanides to Lev. 1:9). Many Christian exegetes adopted this explanation and on it built the whole theological foundation of their Church.

RATIONAL

Quite different is the rational view of sacrifice advocated by Maimonides. He rejected the symbolist position which discovered reasons for the details of the various sacrifices. Those who trouble themselves to discover why one offering should be a lamb, while another is a ram, are "void of sense; they do not remove any difficulties, but rather increase them" (Guide, 3:26). Maimonides held that the sacrificial service was not really of Jewish origin. It was the universal custom among all peoples at the time of Moses to worship by means of sacrifices. Since the Israelites had been brought up in this atmosphere, God realized that they could not immediately completely abandon sacrifice. He therefore limited its application by confining it to one place in the world, with the ultimate intention of weaning them from the debased religious rituals of their idolatrous neighbors.

Answer for yourself: Dear one, did you hear that? God was in time to wean His people from the pagan idolatrous forms of worship that contained animals sacrifice that His people had been influenced by the example of pagan nations? This means that Atonement was to be obtained in other than "blood" and the Old Testament is full of ways by which one can obtain Atonement without "blood"! Please keep reading!

The new service of "confined sacrifice" in one place in the world stressed the existence and unity of God, "without deterring or confusing the minds of the people by the abolition of the service to which they were accustomed and which alone was familiar to them." Maimonides cited the experience of Israel, led not by the shorter way, but by the circuitous route through the land of the Philistines (Ex. 13:17). Likewise, through a circuitous road, Israel was to be led gradually and slowly to a deeper perception of religion and divine worship (Guide, 3:32). He gives the added remarkable parallel that it would be equally incomprehensible for anyone in his generation to suggest that prayer could be offered in thought alone, without the recitation of words.

Abrabanel strengthened the arguments for Maimonides' viewpoint. He explained that only within this framework can it be understood why the Torah limited the sacrificial service to one locality while prayers may be recited in all places (Introd. to his commentary on Lev., 2d). Abrabanel cites a Midrash which stated that the Hebrews had become accustomed to idolatrous sacrifices while in Egypt. To wean them from these idolatrous practices, God commanded, while tolerating the sacrifices that had been practiced by His people as influenced by pagans, that they be offered in one central sanctuary. This was illustrated by the parable of a king who observed that his son loved to eat forbidden foods. The king then decided to serve him these foods daily so that he would ultimately lose his desire for them and forego his evil habits (Lev. R. 22:8). D. Hoffmann later proposed a different explanation for this Midrash, declaring that the king insisted that the son was to eat exclusively at his table so that he would only be served proper food and thus curb his appetite

for forbidden foodstuffs (Introd. to commentary on Lev., p. 61).

The reader should understand that God was going to do a new thing. He was to allow the continuation of these “pagan sacrifices” but He will instill new meaning to them. This will be seen in the development of a unique relationship between the sacrificer and God Himself. You will see how this works when we look deeper into the concept in Leviticus that “the life is in the blood”. God is not concerned about blood, but the life...the soul contained within the blood!

With the destruction of the Temple and the automatic cessation of the sacrificial system, it was laid down that prayer took the place of the sacrifices because such ideas are also taught in the Old Testament. The Shaharit service was regarded as taking the place of the morning tamid and the Minhah service, the afternoon tamid. On all occasions when an additional offering was brought, the Musaf prayer was introduced (Ber. 4:1, 7; 26b). One of the rabbis later declared that prayer was even more efficacious than offerings (Ber. 32b) [remember God was progressively weaning them from animal sacrifices (the physical) with the intent of spiritual sacrifices such as prayer, repentance, almsgiving, etc.]. This is the message of the Prophets!

THE SPIRITUAL DYNAMICS OF SACRIFICE THAT WE JUST DISCUSSED ...SEEN IN DETAIL

When the glory of the Lord had entered the tabernacle in a cloud, God revealed Himself to Moses from this place where He would put His Name, according to His promise in Ex. 25:22 to make known His will through him to the people. The first of these revelations related to the sacrifices, in which the Israelites were to draw near (korban) to God, that they might become partakers of His grace.

The patriarchs, when sojourning in Canaan, had already worshipped the God who revealed Himself to them, with both **burnt offerings and slain offerings** (we saw this above in the form of “burnt offerings”). Whether their descendants, the children of Israel, had offered sacrifices to the God of their Fathers during their stay in Egypt, we cannot tell as there is no Biblical allusion whatever to the subject in the short account of these 430 years. Yet we know from archeology that such was the case. What is certain is that they had not forgotten to regard the sacrifices as a leading part of the worship of God, and were ready to follow Moses into the desert, to serve the God of their Fathers there by a solemn act of sacrificial worship (Ex. 5:1-3; 4:31; 8:4); and also, that after the exodus from Egypt, not only did **Jethro offer burnt offerings and slain offerings** to God in the camp of the Israelites, and prepare a sacrificial meal in which the elders of Israel took part along with Moses and Aaron (Ex. 18:12), but **young men offered burnt offerings and slain offerings** by the command of Moses at the conclusion of the covenant (Ex. 24:5). Consequently sacrificial laws of these chapters presuppose the presentation of **burnt offerings, meat-offerings, and slain offerings** as a custom well known to the people and a necessity demanded by their religious feelings. They were not introduced among the Israelites for the first time by Moses by what he learned at Sinai, because animal sacrifices date from the earliest period of mankind.

Answer for yourself: Are you curious why we have not found “sin offering” yet and we are up to Moses in our time-line?

The subject of sacrificial laws in the book of Leviticus was not to enforce sacrificial worship upon the Israelites, nor to apply some sort of a theory concerning the Hebrew sacrifices, but simply to organize and expand the already existing sacrificial worship of the Israelites into an institution in harmony with the covenant between the Lord and His people, and adapt and promote the end for which it was established... communion and fellowship with God. You need to fully understand what was just said. Read it again please.

But although sacrifice in general reaches up to the earliest times of man's history, and is met with in every nation, it was **NOT** enjoined upon the human race by any positive commandment of God, but sprang out of a religious necessity for fellowship with God. These sacrifices assumed very different forms in different tribes and nations, in consequence of their estrangement from God, and their growing loss of all true knowledge of Him.

Their ideas of the Divine Being were regulated by the nature, object, and significance of the sacrifices they offered, and they were quite as subservient to the worship of idols as to that of the one true God. To discover the fundamental idea, which was common to all the sacrifices, we must remember, that the first sacrifices were presented after the fall.

Also interesting by its absence is any mention of SIN OFFERINGS, PRIESTHOOD, EXPIATION or FORGIVENESS in the PRE-Mosaic sacrifices of the Old Testament....in other words NOT before the Golden Calf incident....more on that soon.

This is very important and you need to let this fact sink deeply into your Christian theology!

There are very important reasons for the omission of “sin offerings” as you will soon discover. Shalom.



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THOUGHTS ON THE DEATH OF JESUS AS RELATED TO THE SACRIFICIAL SYSTEM #3

FORGIVENESS WAS NOT THE THEME OF SACRIFICES BEFORE MOSES AND THE GOLDEN CALF - BUT REPRESENTING FELLOWSHIP OF ONE'S SOUL WITH GOD

Before the fall man lived in blessed unity with God. This unity was destroyed by sin, and the fellowship between God and man was disturbed, thought not entirely abolished. In the punishment which God inflicted upon the sinners, He did not withdraw His mercy from men; and before driving them out of paradise, He gave them clothes to cover the nakedness of their shame, by which they had first of all become conscious of their sin. Even after the expulsion He still manifest Himself to them, so that they were able once more to draw near to Him and enter into fellowship with Him. This fellowship (NOT forgiveness) they sought through the medium of sacrifices, in which they gave a visible expression not only to their gratitude towards God for His blessing and His grace, but also to their supplication for the further continuance of His divine favor. It was in this sense that both Cain and Abel offered sacrifices [burnt offerings and NOT sin offerings...remember?], thought not with the same motives or in the same state of heart toward God. In this sense of fellowship and not forgiveness Noah also offered sacrifice [burnt offerings and NOT sin offerings...remember?]. After Noah's deliverance from the flood; something changed in the offering of sacrifices. Whereas the sons of Adam offered their sacrifices to God from the fruit of their labor, in the tilling of the ground and the keeping of sheep, Noah presented his burnt offering from the clean cattle and birds that had been shut up with him in the ark (those animals would from that time forward be assigned to man as food...Gen. 9:3). Noah was probably led to make this selection by the command of God to take with him into the ark not one or more pairs, but 7 of every kind of clean beasts. Noah may have discerned in this an indication of the divine will, that the 7th animal of every description of clean beast and bird should be offered in sacrifice to the Lord, for His gracious protection from destruction by the flood. Also notice the distinction of "clean and unclean" foods long before the Sinai experience. Moses, in Leviticus revelation, also received a still further intimation as to the meaning of the animal sacrifices. We see this in the prohibition which God appended to the permission to make use of animals as well as green herbs for food: "flesh with the life thereof, which is the blood thereof, shall ye not eat" (Gen. 9:4-5). This prohibition is because the flesh still contained the blood as the animal's soul (the soul lives in the blood of the animal). In this there was already an intimation, that in the bleeding sacrifice the soul/life of the animal was given up to God with the blood; and therefore; that by virtue of its blood as the vehicle of the soul, animal sacrifice was the most fitting means of representing the surrender of the human soul to God. THIS IS VERY IMPORTANT! You will quickly come to see that the "blood" accomplished nothing; rather it was a picture of the soul of the person who brought the animal to the altar.

THE SOUL OF THE ANIMAL AS FOUND IN IT'S BLOOD REPRESENTED, WHEN PRESENTED ON THE ALTAR, THE SURRENDER OF THE HUMAN SOUL TO GOD

It is not the "blood" but the "soul" in the blood which demonstrates surrender to God and it is later to be understood as seen as placed on the altar where we see the "soul of the offerer of sacrifices" on the altar in lieu of the animal which is but a substitute for the person bringing the animal for sacrifice. The animal was literally the extension of the person bringing the sacrifice. God would not have a human sacrifice his life and blood and place it upon the altar as a demonstration of "communion" and "fellowship" with God; instead the animal was the extension of the person's life. The person bringing the animal had fed, groomed, and cared for the animal usually. It was part of his life and his life and energy had been invested into the care of the animal. So when the "soul" of the animal was taken and offered upon the altar in the release and placing of the animal's blood on the altar, then the person by proxy was represented on the altar in communion with God as well. Understand the animal was innocent having never sinned. This was supposed to be a picture of the spiritual position of the person bringing the sacrifice. The person bringing the sacrifice was ALREADY to have repented of his sin, confessed his sin, prayed, and made restitution to his fellowman if needed BEFORE he ever brought the animal to the altar. Then when he had done these spiritual necessities PRIOR to bringing the animal to the altar, then the person's soul was AT-THAT-MOMENT (atonement) right with God. He was forgiven and his repentance, confession, prayer, and restitution had accomplished for him atonement PRIOR to the animal being offered. "At that moment" his soul was again in right standing and relationship with God. In order to make such a declaration to the world and his fellowman, as well as to God, then he would take an animal and it would be slain and its blood placed on the altar. In so doing, the animal was a CORRECT PICTURE of the spiritual state of the person {if he had previously before bringing the animal repented, confessed, prayed, made restitution if possible, given alms, etc.} making the sacrifice for the animal's soul (in the animal's blood) was on the altar in communion with God and was NOW a true picture of the sacrificer's soul in communion with God if had repented as stated above before he came to the altar!

Besides this, if anyone wanted to eat meat, the animal's soul had to be given back to God before the flesh could be consumed. So you see in the sacrificial system there were two dynamics at work: atonement and the conditions necessary to eat meat which also contained the Divine image which had to be given by to God.

Answer for yourself: Did you notice we have not mentioned "sin offerings" yet?

HOW IS JESUS RELATED TO ALL THIS?

What I just described in the sacrificial system is an aspect of the death of Yeshua that most likely you have never even considered. This truth may possibly have been only dimly surmised by Noah and his sons; but it must have been clearly revealed to the patriarch Abraham when God demanded the sacrifice of his only son, with whom his whole heart was bound up, as a proof of his obedience of faith, and after he had attested his faith in his readiness to offer this sacrifice, supplied him with a ram to offer as a burnt-offering [burnt offerings and NOT sin offerings...remember?], instead of his own (Gen. 22). In this the truth was practically revealed to him, that the *true God did not require human sacrifice from His worshipers, but the surrender of heart/soul and the denial of the natural life, even thought it should amount to a submission to death itself.* This act of surrender was to be perfected in the animal's sacrifice; and that it was only when presented with these motives that sacrifice would be pleasing to God. Yeshua was willing to die if need be for the kingdom to come. The problem was that Israel did not merit the kingdom; even during the 40 years following his death. Simply said: no kingdom, no King!

That means prophecies not fulfilled. So we wait!

PURPOSE OF OFFERINGS

The word "korban" is commonly translated either "sacrifice" or "offering", but the truth is that the English language does not possess a word that accurately expresses the concept contained in the word. The word "sacrifice" implies that the person bringing it is required to deprive himself of something in order to satisfy someone else's need, but God finds no satisfaction in inflicting pain or deprivation upon His children. The word "offering" is closer to the mark but it too fails to convey the true meaning of a "korban". "Offering" implies that the Recipient of the gift must be appeased, that He requires a tribute that will somehow appease His wrath or make Him receptive to the entreaties of a supplicant, or that He has a need that can only be satisfied by someone other than Himself. As if God required our gifts! "If you have acted righteously, what will you have given Him! (Job 35:7); God does not become enriched by man's accomplishments.

The Hebrew word itself provides the answer. The root of the meaning is **"to come near."** Again the idea **carries the concept of fellowship. The person bringing an offering does so in order to come closer to God, to elevate his level of spirituality thereby approaching God in the Spirit.**

Now remember the person brought the animal as a picture of himself in that through his repentance, confession, prayer, and restitution he was "coming near" to God and the sacrifice of the animal and the placing of the animal's soul on the altar was a demonstration that he, the person bringing the sacrifice, had ALREADY "drawn near to God" and the soul of the animals was a true picture of himself NOW since repenting previously before coming to the altar. The offering was a picture of that spiritual fact to all the world as well as for God to see!

When Adam was deposited in the Garden of Eden, his first responsibility was to work it and guard it (Gen. 2:15). That means that Adam was commanded to plant, work, cultivate; everything that was necessary to keep the Garden as a Paradise. Before Adam's sin, man had no need to be a peasant; everything grew for him at God's command, with no need for him to exert himself in any way. It was only after his sin that he was expelled from Eden and required to earn his bread through the sweat of his brow.

How then was he to *work and guard* Eden? Through the study of Torah and the performance of positive and negative commandments. His livelihood would come in return for his obedience to God's will. **God will always respond to man's righteousness by blessing his material efforts.**

Adam's mission was to make himself an offering in his lifetime, by dedicating himself unreservedly to God. On God's Throne of Glory, there is an image of a man (Ez. 1:10). Every human being has his own image above, his ideal spiritual self, which represents his goal and his potential. Man's soul is placed in an earthly body so that he can surmount the challenges of material life and raise himself up to his personal, heavenly self; to unite his earthly self with his higher self. Just as everyone has a body and a soul, and his mission is to triumph in the eternal struggle of body versus soul, so, too, many must struggle to live up to the summons of his higher self.

Man is religious yet he sins! How can he defy the Creator he believe in? He is kind and generous, yet he is sometimes mean and stingy. He is moral, but has lapses in conduct. Whatever man is, he is often inconsistent, and if he is honest with himself, he knows that he is far from living up to his inner image. He wants his body to come closer to his soul; on a yet higher level, he should also want his soul to live up to its counterpart on high.

Similarly, there is a Temple in heaven that corresponds to the Temple on earth. The masters of Kabbalah teach that the good deeds of the people of God accumulate to build a spiritual replica of that heavenly Temple, and when there are enough such good deeds, the heavenly Temple will come down to the Temple Mount, signaling the end of the exile and the beginning of the perfect world foretold by the prophets. This is similar to the striving of the individual soul. There is a higher ideal we must see to capture in our mundane lives. Possibly it is best expressed by the Psalmist: "the heavens are the Lord's, but the earth He has given to mankind (Psm.

115:16). The heavens are already heavenly; God does not need man to improve upon them. But He has given us the earth that we might **make it heavenly**, as well. **God gave mankind the Torah as instruction to bring heaven to earth through obedience of God's will as expressed in His living Word.** This is best expressed through acts of Loving Kindness (Gemilut Hasadim) and Repairing of the World (Tikkun Olam). Adam was the offering, and for him to devote anything less than his maximum to God would have been to steal his Divinely conferred potential and misappropriate it for himself. The sin of eating from the Tree of Knowledge was such a misappropriation because he would be flouting the will of God. **The truest offering is when the owner brings "himself" to God, making himself and his desires subservient to the teachings and guidelines of the Torah.** The symbolism of the offerings is based on this concept; that the animal is secondary; that is but an indication of what its owner feels and toward what he strives.

REASONS FOR THE OFFERINGS

The function and purpose of the offerings are not concepts that man can grasp rationally. Especially in modern times when anything not measurable, observable, or replicable is questioned and denied, the idea of offerings is not an easy one to understand. It is necessary, therefore, to understand that they and their efficacy are manifestations of God's plan and wisdom. They are reality, even though we have never seen them and have no personal experience through which to know their potency.

We cannot understand why the slaughter of a sanctified animal, the placing of its blood and the burning of its flesh on the Altar; why these acts should bring God's Presence down to earth (accomplishes fellowship). Had the Jewish people been asked about the possibility of this happening before they had seen it, perhaps even they would have been skeptical. **But they saw it happen!** They saw the cloud of God's glory descend upon the Tent of Meeting. They saw a heavenly fire descend to their Altar and remain there for hundreds of years. They saw a Divine glow on Moses' face. To them, these were demonstrable, visible, tangible facts.

This is incomprehensible to our rational, scientific minds. But so was the splitting of the atom to rational minds a hundred years ago.

Various reasons for the offerings are given by classic commentators. The reason for the offerings is so profound that it is beyond human comprehension and the best efforts of the greatest of Jewish thinkers can yield only a drop in the ocean of God's intent.

OFFERINGS AS A SUBSTITUTE FOR MAN...BUT WE ALREADY SAID THAT

The offerings were seen to elevate three parts of every human deed: **thought, speech, and action.** When a person sins and then brings an offering, all three of those elements are used to take the sinful use to which he had previously put them, and transform it into the instrument of doing God's will. The person bringing the offering performs the commandment of **leaning, by placing his hands on its head and leaning on it, thereby dedicating his strength and activity to God. He purifies his thought and intentions, by confessing his sin,** pronouncing the spiritual goal that he hopes to attain, or uttering praises to God. As a further way of **purging his sinful thoughts, the innards of the animal;** representing the human organs that are the seat of desire and through, are **burned on God's Altar.** In the case of an elevation-offering, which is completely burned, the animal's feet symbolize the hands and feet with which man ran and acted to defy his Creator. **The animal's blood (containing its soul), representing man's soul, was placed on the Altar (notice it is the soul that is placed upon the Altar; just not the blood).**

Let's look at Leviticus 17:11 in context in order to make sure we understand the "central" idea of the passage.

"And whatever man of the house of Israel, or of the strangers who sojourn among you, who

consumes any blood, I will set My face against that person who consumes blood, and will cut him off from among his people. For the **life** [SUBJECT OF THE SENTENCE] of the flesh is in the blood [DIRECT OBJECT OF THE SENTENCE], and I have **given it** [THE LIFE] to you upon the altar to make atonement for your souls; for it is **the blood** [LIFE IN THE BLOOD REMEMBER?] *that makes an atonement for the soul.* Therefore, I say to the children of Israel, 'No one among you shall consume blood, nor shall any stranger who sojourns among you consume blood.'"

Answer for yourself: Did you know that "blood" was not the subject of the sentence? Did you notice what was? Did you understand that it was the "life" that was placed on the altar for atonement and not the blood?

In other words it is not the blood that atones, but the "soul" [LIFE] that atones..a life that repents, prays, confesses sin, makes restitution, gives alms, etc....!!!

Answer for yourself: Are you aware that as a Christian you whole understanding of the sacrificial system in the Bible is wrong because you have focused on "blood" for atonement instead of the "life" in the blood which is the real atoning agent?

BUT ISAIAH 53 SAYS...OR DOES IT?

Well not it does not say what you think it says. Why? You are reading most likely from your Christian Bible which is a very poor translation, or should I say, a very good mistranslation of Isaiah 53. This is why I spend so much time on the text. The Bible Jesus used and read did not read anything like our Christian Old Testament in hundreds of places. Isaiah is a good instance. Below is what the Palestinian Jewish Scriptures, called the Tanakh, reads for verse 10 of Isaiah 53:

Isa. 53:10 states " HaShem desired to oppress him and He afflicted him; **if his soul would acknowledge guilt...**"

WOW!

That sure is different from what your Christian Bible says:

Isa 53:10...IN THE KJV CHRISTIAN BIBLE...WHY IS IT DIFFERENT FROM THE HEBREW?

10 Yet it pleased the LORD to bruise him; he hath put him to grief: when thou shalt make his **soul an offering for sin**, he shall see his seed, he shall prolong his days, and the pleasure of the LORD shall prosper in his hand. (KJV)

Simply said, this Christian translation has been “Jesusized” by having the concept of guilt removed, for in Christian “theology” Jesus can have no guilt and many try to make him the subject of the passage when the real uncorrupted Hebrew Scripture define the suffering servant as the corporate nation of Israel and not one individual

Back to the subject at hand.

In one of the greatest passages in the Bible, we are told by Isaiah the prophet that if the “soul” of the “suffering servant” would acknowledge guilt...confess sin, pray, repent...

Answer for yourself: What do you do when you acknowledge guilt?

You confess and then repent. This is the subject of the verse. You literally turn around your “life”. Your life changes direction; from sin to righteousness. You no longer continue your sinister ways. Now you can see how such a life, after repentance and confession of sin, was understood, even as the Christian Bibles say: “soul/life an offering for sin”! One’s life, when turned to God and away from sin, was the atonement that Leviticus 17 speaks about.

Answer for yourself: Could we have missed this understanding when looking at the death of Jesus or, as Isaiah said, the martyrdoms of millions of Israelites (remember Jesus is paradigm of all Jews)?

While this procedure (placing the animal’s soul on the alter in substitute for yours) is being accomplished with one’s offering, the sacrificer meditates upon his sin, for the offering service teaches him graphically that he has sinned against God with body and soul. He contemplates that justice would have dictated that *his* human body be burned on the altar as a penalty for sin and his soul required by God in lieu of the animal’s blood be placed upon it. It is only God’s graciousness that permits the animal to become his substitute. Then, parts of the offering are given to the Kohanim (priests/teachers), so that those who dedicate their lives to study and teach the Torah are sustained through him and so that they will pray for him. It is an act of supreme graciousness that God is prepared to accept an offering from us instead of punishing us directly for our misdeeds. This is why the offerings are described throughout Leviticus as a satisfying aroma to God, because God is pleased when His children repent and seek to change their lives for the better.

When one brings an offering with such noble thoughts he has truly made himself an offering. The Sages have said of one who brings a humble meal-offering, it is as if he had offered his own life upon the altar. He thereby raised his mundane desires and makes them worthy of being placed on the heavenly altar.

More to follow. Shalom.



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THOUGHTS ON THE DEATH OF JESUS AS RELATED TO THE SACRIFICIAL SYSTEM #4

WHAT PICTURES CAN WE NOW SEE MORE CLEARLY AS CONTAINED IN THE SACRIFICIAL SYSTEM OF ISRAEL?

Let us not forget what we just have learned. It was the soul of the animal as found in it's blood, which when presented in a sacrifice AFTER the prior repentance, confession, and prayer of the sinner, was understood by God as the surrender of that person's soul toward Him. This is what it is all about, and will always be about.

A SHORT REVIEW

It is not the "blood" but the "soul" in the blood which demonstrates surrender to God and it is later to be understood as seen as placed on the altar where we see the "soul of the offerer of sacrifices" on the altar in lieu of the animal which is but a substitute for the person bringing the animal for sacrifice. The animal was literally the extension of the person bringing the sacrifice. God would not have a human sacrifice his life and blood and place it upon the altar as a demonstration of "communion" and "fellowship" with God; instead the animal was the extension of the person's life. The person bringing the animal had fed, groomed, and cared for the animal usually. It was part of his life and his life and energy had been invested into the care of the animal. So when the "soul" of the animal was taken and offered upon the altar in the release and placing of the animal's blood on the altar, then the person by proxy was represented on the altar in communion with God as well. Understand the animal was innocent having never sinned. This was supposed to be a picture of the spiritual position of the person bringing the sacrifice. The person bringing the sacrifice was ALREADY to have repented of his sin, confessed his sin, prayed, and made restitution to his fellowman if needed BEFORE he ever brought the animal to the altar. Then when he had done these spiritual necessities PRIOR to bringing the animal to the altar, then the person's soul was AT-THAT-MOMENT (atonement) right with God. He was forgiven and his repentance, confession, prayer, and restitution had accomplished for him atonement PRIOR to the animal being offered. "At that moment" his soul was again in right standing and relationship with God. In order to make such a declaration to the world and his fellowman, as well as to God, then he would take an animal and it would be slain and its blood placed on the altar. In so doing, the animal was a CORRECT PICTURE of the spiritual state of the person making the sacrifice for the animal's soul (in his blood) was on the altar in communion with God and was NOW a true picture of the sacrificer's soul in communion with God. Besides this, if anyone wanted to eat meat, the animal's soul had to be given back to God before the flesh could be consumed. So you see in the sacrificial system there were two dynamics at work: atonement and the conditions necessary to eat meat which also contained the Divine image which had to be given by to God.

WHAT DID BOTH GOD AND THE SACRIFICER KNOW THEN THAT

WE DON'T TODAY?

When, when making sacrifice properly, knew that he had attained something special with God. Christian teaching today is completely devoid of this knowledge and I thank I over the years in my studies He allowed me to find and recover this most needed part of instruction. This knowledge, when properly understood, will go a long way in helping the Christian separate error from truth as he hears taught in his churches.

UNION WITH GOD AND FELLOWSHIP WITH GOD RESULTED

Whenever the Torah commands that offerings be brought, these commandments use only God's Four-letter Name (yod-hey-vah-hey); the "Tetragrammaton" (I AM). If other names were used, some might err, thinking that there are many Gods or forces, one demanding this offering and another demanding some other offering. Since the Name *Elokim* represents God as the One Who controls nature, that Name might be taken to imply that there is an angel or a power who has dominion over a particular land or aspect of existence, and that that power requires the offering. The Four-Letter Name is formed of the letters that spell, *was, is and will be*, meaning that God is eternal. This is not God as He appears in a particular manifestation (Judge, Provider, Life-giver) but God as He *is*.

This is His Name as the God of Mercy. No one should think that God requires offerings to feed or appease Him. The Eternal One has no needs that man can satisfy for everything is His and nothing is beyond His power!

Answer for yourself: What then is the purpose of the offerings?

You should have seen by now that these offerings provided man an opportunity to unite himself to God to whatever extent it is possible for mortal man to do so through repentance, confession, and restitution.

Similarly, there is a humanly created fire below on the altar and there is the Heavenly fire from above, which God has placed upon Israel's altar. Both of these flames are fed by the offerings of the Jewish people, symbolizing the union of man's spiritual aspirations with God's goals for him. Thus the offerings provide Israel a means for spiritual elevation [drawing closer to God].

THE SACRIFICER HAD AN ACCURATE UNDERSTANDING OF HIMSELF BEFORE GOD....ACKNOWLEDGING "ONE'S OWN" NOTHINGNESS

All creatures emanate from God and have no independent existence on their own. Man has freedom of choice and his intellect puts great achievements within his reach, but all of this is possible only because God gives him the power to do so. Man could not function or even exist without God. The goal of creation is for man to acknowledge this basic fact; to recognize and proclaim that everything exists because of God and nothing can survive without Him. There are many ways for God's glory to be revealed and recognized. The highest recognition of all is for man to know The Oneness of God, meaning that there is nothing aside from Him. He achieves his ultimate greatness when he recognizes that *there is none beside Him* (Deut. 4:35). An offering is a demonstration of this concept. It says that its owner is surrendering his possessions to their Source (God). Theoretically, one might expect him to be ready to give even his very life in acknowledgment of God's sovereignty, but that is not His will. God wants man to live, to grow, to thrive, to serve; and God ordains the offerings as man's way to recognize His Oneness. Thus, by offering his possessions [as seen in the animal presented to God in sacrifice], one symbolizes that he has no existence but for God's will.

UNITING BODY AND SOUL...BEING ONE WITH GOD

The efficacy of offerings in obtaining God's favor is comparable to the way food makes it possible for the soul to maintain its attachment to the body. Material food cannot provide nourishment to the soul, which is not a physical entity. It is this nourishment of the body that enables it to remain healthy enough to play host to the

soul. Likewise, the "food of the Altar's fire" somehow effects the process that enables the Shechinah to remain among Israel.

The food of the soul is not measured in calories, vitamins, and minerals. Only intellectual and spiritual pursuits can nourish the soul. Torah study, prayer, even meals in celebration of such events as Sabbath and Festivals all have a sacred content that is capable of nourishing the soul. Only in this sense do the offerings constitute food for God. Man's dedication to Him and His commandments provides the nourishment that enables the Shechinah to attach itself to human beings and their handiwork. We think of food in terms of nutritive value, but that is not what sustains life. Man does not live merely because of the bread (material component). He lives through the bread's spiritual component; *what emanates from the mouth of God*. This is what holds together body and soul and what holds together Godliness and Israel through the agency of the offerings.

PUTTING IT ALL TOGETHER

Having now come to the understanding that it was a life lived above sin that was so pleasing to God that He accepted such a life as an offering and atonement for one's sin, it should behoove you to rethink what you believe about atonement as a Christian. If you were to do some comparative religious study you will see the preponderance of evidence of how pagan concepts of salvation are woven into Pauline theology. I have shown you the Biblical teachings of atonement and have not mentioned Paul's theology once. The reason I have not is that nowhere in the Jewish Masoretic Palestinian text are such Pauline concepts of atonement found. Only when you read the fraudulent and mistranslated Greek Scriptures, which the Rabbis did not translate, do you begin to find such ideas surfacing in the text (<http://geocities.com/faithofyeshua>). But never fail to understand that such concepts cannot be found in the Jewish Scriptures from which the Greek translation emanated. Somebody "fixed" the Greek translation to read differently. And sadly for you, these altered and paganized Greek mistranslation became the foundation for your Christian Old Testament. To make matters worse, your New Testament quotes from the fraudulent Old Testament (<http://www.faithofyeshua.faithweb.com>). Over and over as you read your Christian Bible you only reinforce and rehearse error! You need to know that. But that happened over 2000 years ago and who knows? Well I do, and others do who have studied enough to see it! The Jews have always known. It is the secularized Jews of today who don't. It is time someone told you! The righteous Jews know this and have known this since 200 BC when the Greek translation was understood by them to be a corruption of the Jewish Scriptures. History records 3 attempts of the Jews to correct such a forged Greek translation but sadly their efforts were not to overtake the popularity of the already translated LXX (Septuagint).

Understand an animal's soul represented the soul of one making the sacrifice, and we, as non-Jews, today are beneficiaries of having the Jew's soul (Jesus) given in place of ours along with their prayers for our sin. Jesus is the archetype for all of Israel. He is the greatest of all the "Suffering Servants" of the God of Israel. But in this lesson we must no longer overlook the importance of a life lived above sin which procures one's redemption and not the inert blood of the animal or of Jesus. Lives lived honoring God through faith and obedience atones. Your Covenant requires it! Such is the message of Bet Emet as we are called to live like Jesus and not just "believe in Jesus." It has been my experience as a Pastor over the years to encounter multitudes of Christians who trust in Christ's blood instead of understanding the importance of his life, symbolized by his soul in his blood, as lived in obedience to God as a form of atonement, or even their own lives, as lived pleasing to God for their OWN atonement. We must walk out our salvation with fear and trembling. We are co-laborers with God in our own salvation through faith and repentance. Such a mistaken understanding of our redemption since not being taught the truth from a Hebraic perspective has caused multitudes of Christians to trust in the acclaimed miraculous powers of the blood of Jesus instead of focusing of the miraculousness of a life lived above sin. Such a false sense of security in "blood" instead of "lives lived holy before God and man" unconsciously causes the believer to not regard sin with revulsion as he should. We tend to view sin as less harmful than it is, and compromise with sin lies at the door.

The bottom line for all Christians to understand is that we have heard way too much preached about

Jesus and far too little studied from the texts of the Jewish Bible which tell us exactly and accurately who he is as well as his original mission. If we had studied the original sources available to us, we would not be so mixed up theologically in Christianity today which boasts over 2000 different denominations all maintaining they have the truth about Jesus while at the same time being the most violent and crime ridden nation in the world.

SOMETHING IS WRONG WITH THE MESSAGE OF THE CHRISTIAN CHURCH...LOOK AT THE FRUIT OF THIS MESSAGE IN OUR COUNTRY WITH A CHURCH ON EVERY CORNER AND TELEVISIONS FILLED WITH THE CHRISTIAN MESSAGE OF GRACE WITHOUT ACCOUNTABILITY FOR ONE'S OWN SIN! JUST LOOK OUT YOUR DOOR AND ASK IF THAT IS THE BEST THE HOLY SPIRIT CAN DO????????

I don't plan to get into why the Christian message at this time but suffice to say that the Christian message is corrupted due to it's pagan content over Jewish content as we see for example in the alteration of Jewish texts in the real Hebrew Isaiah for example but let it suffice to say as shown beyond question on many of our other sites that we are in this sad state today because instead of being a true follower of Jesus and his Jewish faith we are camped at the feet of pagan Rome and Paul's antinomianism (anti-Law). May God forgive our laziness of letting others tell us what to believe instead of us studying to show ourselves approved unto God. I just showed you part of the problem. Implicitly we are led to not revere the Laws and Commandments of God because of the solar teaching that "Jesus died for me" and my get out of jail card saves me. This comes straight out of sun worship as you have seen on this site and others. As a Pastor I saw such falsehoods lived out in the lives of the congregation year after year. When there is no Law, no Commandments, no requirements, no accountability, then there is no righteous fruit and we have our newspapers filled with horror story after horror story. And sadly few can count on their lives being a sufficient atonement for their sin because they have been taught a pagan sun-godman story which allows his followers to get away with anything. Emotionalism is a sorry substitute for knowledge.

Answer for yourself: For after all if saved by the blood of Jesus, what need do I have to live like Jesus and not disobey the commandments of God? Isn't Jesus my "grace card"?

Answer for yourself: If saved by the blood of another, what does a little sin mean...what can it hurt?

Answer for yourself: See the tragic thinking involved in focusing upon the blood of Jesus instead of the life of Jesus lived above sin? Now look out your window to the world and see what the fruit of 1700 years of erroneous teaching has grown!

THINK!

Shalom.



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THOUGHTS ON THE DEATH OF JESUS AS RELATED TO THE SACRIFICIAL SYSTEM #5

LOOKING AT PAUL'S THEOLOGY....WHAT IS TRUTH?

We must not forget what we just learned. As the reader you must understand that what you learned is the "theology" of sacrifice and any other "sacrifice" must fit this mode of understanding. This means when viewing the death of Yeshua one must be equipped with this understanding before trying to evaluate the meanings that might be attached to his death. Along with this one must equally be equipped with sufficient information concerning comparative religions and the death of their "gods". Only if one comes to the "Jesus materials" possessing this information can he be guaranteed to be able to discern the true meaning of his death or at least see if concepts from "pagan mystery religions" have been attached to his death. **This is especially important when reading Paul's writings.** With what we have just learned as a background let us return to Paul's statement that "Christ died for our sins" which was the fundamental fact of the early Gentile Christian message, the corner-stone of early Gentile Christianity (but not Jewish Christianity or Messianism). But as soon as this simple fact is stated a number of vital questions are bound to arise. In order that we may have an intelligent and correct understanding of this important doctrine it is necessary that we know precisely what occurred and did not occur when Jesus died on the cross. We cannot rest content with teaching that leaves the central doctrine of the Christian faith shrouded in mystery and uncertainty. This does not mean that all mystery can be removed. But the Scriptures do supply the interpretation of the death of Christ that the inquiring mind legitimately asks for, and the salient factors concerning it should be known by all Christian people. Believing that the Hebrew Scriptures (the Palestinian Masoretic Text and not the corrupted LXX from which your Christian Old Testament originates) is God's word to man, and that the statements of Scripture regarding the death of Jesus in the Greek New Testament are often **mistranslated on purpose** (<http://geocities.com/faithofyeshua>), then if you, ordinary Christian men and women, are to even find the truth concerning the death of Jesus, then we must deal with some rather difficult information at times. It is not my wish to destroy anyone's faith, only to expose the changes made to the text as well as the lies that have been passed down about the death of Jesus which his original follower never "believed". We hold it to be our task and privilege under the promised guidance of the Holy Spirit to "search the Scriptures", the Jewish Scriptures that Yeshua himself accepted, until we reach that understanding which satisfies the mind and heart and conscience, and leads to certainty and finality.

According to the New Testament, especially the writings of Paul, we are told, for instance, in broad terms that we are members of a fallen race, that God has given His only-begotten Son for our atonement, and that salvation is through Him (Messiah) and not through any works which we ourselves are able to do.

Answer for yourself: How correct is this statement when compared with the teachings of the Hebrew Scriptures concerning atonement and forgiveness?

Let us not forget what we just learned in the prior articles.

Certainly anyone who accepts these facts and acts upon them will be “saved” because the fruit of the Christian message leads to Godliness. Yet, accepting these facts and acting upon them would appear to represent only a minimum of faith, and God has made it possible for us greatly to enrich and expand our knowledge of the way of salvation if we will but give careful attention to His word. But the problem is great; you first have to know if you, the Christian, even has His Word, or if your Old Testament is corrupted in special places. For example, the Isaiah translations in the Old Testament of your Christian Bible read completely different in many “messianic” passages as opposed to the Jewish Tanakh. You should ask yourself “why” your Christian Old Testament reads so much different from the Jewish Scriptures from which it was supposedly taken! Most likely you never knew this. It is time to awaken to such sad facts, for it is these alterations which have led to false beliefs concerning Yeshua, his life, and his death.

ANOTHER LOOK AT LEVITICUS 17:11 ...POSSIBLY THE MOST IMPORTANT THING YOU CAN EVER LEARN

Christians generally insist that the absolute need for a vicarious blood sacrifice is rooted in the Torah (first five books of the Old Testament), and cite as proof Leviticus 17:11 "For the life of the flesh is in the blood, and I have given it to you upon the altar to make an atonement for your souls; for it is the blood that makes an atonement for the soul." The sad fact of the matter is that most Christians and Pastors don't understand the verse at all.

As a Christian, you have probably heard many sermons on the topic of atonement, and have undoubtedly read many studies which support the contention that there is “no atonement without blood.” But the truth of the matter is that neither the Book of Hebrews [it says “**almost all things**”..**not “all things**”] or the Old Testament says that. Of course you are also aware that this is a teaching which is not shared by traditional Jews and for a very good reason which has escaped the Gentile Christian church because of their mistranslation, alteration, and therefore misinterpretation of the passages in their Bibles as well as because of superficial reading of the whole Bible.

Answer for yourself: Have you ever wondered how the Jewish people could reject what to you seems so clear? Why would anyone reject a “free” salvation? It does not make sense to the rational mind.

You might remember that in junior high school, we were often given an assignment to write the title for a story; what is the central idea of a passage. Let's look at Leviticus 17:11 in context in order to make sure we understand the “central” idea of the passage.

"And whatever man of the house of Israel, or of the strangers who sojourn among you, who consumes any blood, I will set My face against that person who consumes blood, and will cut him off from among his people. For the life of the flesh is in the blood, and I have given it to you upon the altar to make atonement for your souls; for it is the blood that makes an atonement for the soul. Therefore, I say to the children of Israel, 'No one among you shall consume blood, nor shall any stranger who sojourns among you consume blood.'"

What should immediately be apparent is that the topic of this passage is **NOT how to secure atonement from sins**, but the prohibition against consuming blood. We are told parenthetically that the reason for this prohibition is that the **blood contains the vitality (soul) of the animal** (Genesis 9:4, Deuteronomy 12:23) and consequently, when we bring an animal sacrifice, its soul (life) which is in its blood serves as the atoning agent,

and not another part of its body [the blood]. The writer of Leviticus informs us that it is the soul, one's life, which is in the blood [blood is the object of the preposition "in"] which was offered to God daily and even in death which was pleasing to God and which God accepted as an "atonement" and as an "offering for sin". Notice that it is not the "blood" which was accepted for an offering for sin, but rather the "life/soul" which was "in" the blood. "Blood" is not the subject of the sentence. This might be a shock to you but "life" is the subject of the sentence. Or better said, it is the "life" which is the subject of the sentence. That means **it is not the "death" or "the blood" which accomplished anything, but rather the life of one which provided atonement. Such a life is one lived in repentance, confession, prayer, and restitution as shown earlier in these articles and as attested by the Jewish Bible.** Even your Christian Old Testament will teach you the same things if you are aware of it. It just so happens that the "life of the one bringing the sacrifice" is "pictured" in the life of the animal as the animal's blood is placed on the altar.

The Hebrew word for "life" which is in the blood is the word for "soul". Such a life, if it was to be accepted as an atonement, was one which was lived completely obediently to God's Commandments [by which he never sinned]. Such a life that turned from sin was so pleasing to God that He accepted such a life as an offering for one's own sin. Such a life was lived in a constant intent to live the commandments of God and when one fell short through sin one was preoccupied to **repent and then recapture one's right standing with God. After repentance, "at that moment", one was restored into right standing and relationship with God and the placing of the blood of the animal was representative of the sacrificer's soul before God since he had ALREADY repented. The animal was a picture of him at that time. The soul of the animal was a picture of the sacrificer's soul, but only if he had repented PRIOR to bringing the sacrifice. Now you can understand why God at times tells us that He is wearied by the sacrifices of the people. They were just killing the animals and there was no repentance in their hearts!**

Isa 1:10-17

- 10 Hear the word of the LORD, ye rulers of Sodom; give ear unto the law of our God, ye people of Gomorrah.
- 11 To what purpose is the multitude of your sacrifices unto me? saith the LORD: I am full of the burnt offerings of rams, and the fat of fed beasts; and I delight not in the blood of bullocks, or of lambs, or of he goats.
- 12 When ye come to appear before me, who hath required this at your hand, to tread my courts?
- 13 Bring no more vain oblations; incense is an abomination unto me; the new moons and sabbaths, the calling of assemblies, I cannot away with; it is iniquity, even the solemn meeting.
- 14 Your new moons and your appointed feasts my soul hateth: they are a trouble unto me; I am weary to bear them.
- 15 And when ye spread forth your hands, I will hide mine eyes from you: yea, when ye make many prayers, I will not hear: your hands are full of blood.

Notice that God is tired of ritual without repentance.

Notice what God says next and the remedy to this sad state of spiritual affairs He finds in His people. Notice what God tells them what they must do!

- 16 Wash you, make you clean; put away the evil of your doings from before mine eyes; cease to do evil;
- 17 Learn to do well; seek judgment, relieve the oppressed, judge the fatherless, plead for the widow.

There you have it. Through repentance, confession, and a return to obedience to the Laws and Commandments of God the people could again be

received by Him. Nowhere did God say He did not want the people to continue bringing the sacrifices if their hearts were contrite and repentant. Only then, as you have learned, was their hearts to be represented by the animal's blood and soul on the altar. Anything else was a lie. Such was a waste of life; not only theirs but the animal's as well.

LET US LOOK A LITTLE MORE CLOSELY

The Hebrew word for "soul" is as follows as seen in Strong's Concordance:

5315 nephesh (neh'-fesh);

from 5314; properly, a breathing creature, i.e. animal of (abstractly) vitality; used very widely in a literal, accommodated or figurative sense (bodily or mental):

KJV-- any, appetite, beast, body, breath, creature, X dead (-ly), desire, X [dis-] contented, X fish, ghost, + greedy, he, heart (-y), (hath, X jeopardy of) life (X in jeopardy), lust, man, me, mind, mortally, one, own, person, pleasure, (her-, him-, my-, thyself-), them (your)- selves, + slay, soul, + tablet, they, thing, (X she) will, X would have it.

The Hebrew word for "soul" is as follows as seen in Brown-Drivers-Briggs Hebrew Lexicon:

5315 nephesh-

- soul-self,, life, a creature, a person, an appetite, a mind, a living being, a desire, an emotion, a passion
- what breathes, the breathing substance or being, a soul, the inner being of man
- a living being
- a living being (with life in the blood)
- the man himself, a-self, a person or an individual
- the seat of the appetites
- the seat of emotions and passions
- the activity of mind
- the activity of the will
- the activity of the character

My whole life I was told that I was "saved" by the blood of Jesus, yet Leviticus tells me that atonement which brings salvation is accomplished by my life before God!

Looking at the definition above, one quickly sees that the activity of one's will, mind, and character [one's soul] was said to be accepted in Leviticus 17 as an atonement for one's sin [life and not blood remember?].

Jesus, like all Jewish people who came before him who were devoted to God and His Torah, as well as those who lived after him, comprise the "suffering servant Israel". Let us remember that Isa. 53 speaks of the nation and corporate Israel as the Suffering Servant and not an individual even if singular pronouns are often used among plural pronouns. It is this "Suffering Servant" who is "the" light for the non-Jewish nations. With this perspective, we now can come to understand that the blood of Jesus carried the life force of Jesus (his soul). Jesus was totally committed and surrendered to the will of God and His Torah. That instead of Jesus' death, in reality it was his life, a life lived pleasing to God as part of the Israel of God which God accepted as atonement

for sin. In particular Israel is the priest for the Gentile world, and they bring sacrifices for the sins of the Gentile world. **THINK!** Israel's "soul", not only Yeshua's, but all of righteous Israel, past and future, "atones" for sin. These righteous lives are accepted by Hashem on the altar, according to Leviticus 17, as atonement for sin, the sin of the Gentile nations who know not God. Such in reality "atones and saves". When I as a non-Jew comes to the knowledge of God and His commandments, then when lived before Him I identify with Israel and join Israel in making atonement with my life.

Remembering what we have already learned...that singular pronouns in the Servant Songs of Isaiah refer to the nation of Israel and not to only one person like Jesus. In so doing we can find the following verses even the more astonishing.

Isaiah 53:6

6 We all went astray like sheep, we have turned, each one on his own way, and **the Lord accepted his [the corporate nation of Israel] prayers for the iniquity of all of us.**

Now let us never again under estimate the importance of the prayer service in the Jewish synagogues of the world for by it atonement came for Gentile sins.

Now it become a little more clear. When one looks at Jesus, or other righteous Jews as the Suffering Servant of the LORD, then we see their lives and understand them as "lights to the nations". Then it is easy to understand such righteous lives and deaths as lives lived as examples which were in complete submission to the Commandments of God as demonstrated by one's complete submission of the mind, will, and emotions to God and His desires for his people. **Such examples when followed by me, literally "saves"! Such lives atoned for sins of the Gentile world and serve as an example to me and you...by which if we follow such examples....provides atonement for our sins.** Literally the "corporate" example of Israel is to be individualize in each believer's life when one comes into personal relationship with God. **This is explained when one reads Isaiah 53 from the Jewish Scriptures and not the corrupted Christian Old Testament.**

Jesus lived a God-honoring life to such a degree that God accepted his life, as he had all Jews devoted to Him. In Jesus' life God could tabernacle in a way He never had before with any man and the "Word/Messiah became flesh" at the immersion and anointing of Jesus. Let us never forget that Israel has had many "anointed" (messiahs) messengers of God as was Jesus. Then subsequently his God-honoring life (soul) was later accepted as an offering for sin in behalf of mankind as had others of Israel before him (and those of Israel who would follow him). His soul was pure and could be accepted upon the altar of God in lieu of us. God accepted his prayers for the iniquity of us .

Luke 23:34

34 Then said Jesus, Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do... (KJV)

So it was not Jesus' death so much as his God-honoring life-style which was lived in complete submission to the Father and His Commandments which not only brought Jesus to tabernacle within God "without measure", but shows us the way to both live and die in a way which honors both man and God and procures for us our atonement when we live our lives by his example. The death of Yeshua was not so much a sacrifice for us but an example for us.

BUT IN A WAY THE "BLOOD" OF JESUS DID SAVE US....IF WE CAN SEE THE TRUTH OF WHAT HE TAUGHT?

Had Jesus not died then there most likely would not have been a movement catalyzed from within a Gentile

hating Judaism of the 2nd Temple period which would reach out to the nations with the Torah and the Laws of Noah. The death, where the blood of Jesus was shed, was the catalyst that caused a mission into all the world where the Covenant of Noah was extended to the Gentile World. We call this the Great Commission today. Now understand which is said next. For in the wake of Yeshua's death would come a movement into all the world which aimed at taking the Torah to the nations whereby non-Jews could learn how to live lives pleasing to God as had Israel through faith and acceptance of the commands of God respective of their Covenant. Messianic Israel took to the non-Jews and the Lost Sheep of the House of Israel God's Covenant made with the non-Jews since before Noah. Faith and obedience to the Covenant stipulations brought salvation to the non-Jewish world. In others words Jesus traded his life for ours as previous Suffering Servants of God had done in preserving the truths of God for all mankind, and God accepted the bargain. This understanding is what Isaiah understood about the sacrifice of the Suffering Servant. Because of the death of Jesus, and I believe his resurrection, the teachings by which non-Jews could enter Covenant with God and live by the Commandments of God was to be taken into all the world. Along with these teachings would come the understanding that repentance from sin and a return to God provides a life pleasing to God which He then accepts as atonement for sin. Through the ages of the Christian Gentile Church this teaching was lost! Your example of being a Christian today which does not understand the sacrificial system of the Bible is proof.

Now you are ready to read our articles on Isaiah to fully understand [Isa. 53](#) correctly

The vast majority of Christians in the world today have not been told this and wander in fables because they lack the correct understanding which only can come from in-depth Bible study. And you have to have the right text before you start. Sadly Christians for the most part cannot find the truth because they are working from a corrupted text. They only reinforce error. Buy yourself a Stone Edition Tanakh. Then you will have the Bible Yeshua used.

So it was the Suffering Servant, Israel, composed of many Israelites, whose lives lived daily in complete obedience to their God which was so pleasing to God that they could be accepted by God as an offering for sin and not their red corpuscles (blood) which Christianity sadly focuses. **And the Lord accepted his [the corporate nation of Israel] prayers for the iniquity of all of us. What makes this even more remarkable is that in this very passage from Isa. 53 it is the GENTILE KINGS OF THE WORLD SPEAKING & NOT THE JEWISH PEOPLE OR THE JEWISH PROPHETS!** The Gentiles will one day understand the role played by the righteous Jewish people in expiation of their sin! **This is prophetic** but you can fulfill it today if you open your heart and head to the facts presented in this article.

Such is the teaching of Isaiah and Leviticus.

Because of the proliferation of bloody rites in Gentile paganism, the Gentile converts to Jewish Christianity would in the first centuries, inherently revert back to pagan backgrounds. Thus the emphasis today on blood instead of a God-honoring life as the offering for sin has been inherited by the Gentile Church. Such falsehoods as taught by Paul was a "bridge" to the non-Jewish nations as he attempted to "be all things to all that he might win some". Paul gave the non-Jew nothing more than what they already had; for in the pagan mystery religions, of which Troas was the capital of Mithraism, Paul's home town, the old pagan concepts were rolled into Jesus by Paul for Gentile acceptance. They did not have to accept Judaism per se, he would simply remold Jesus into a neo-pagan to which they could relate. Such is the reckless acts of one desperately trying to be received and accepted because of his rejection by the Jerusalem Church. When Jerusalem would be notified of what Paul was teaching, he would be repeatedly summoned to answer charges. Finally, in Acts 21 he was arrested, but his submission to the Jerusalem church was never in question. They just never accepted "Paul's" gospel. Neither should you! Paul's gospel could not "preach" in Israel, only 1500 miles away when few knew little of a Jewish Jesus or the Torah. Such a clever tactic by Paul only made Yeshua the head of the non-Jewish pantheon which were already filled with pagan gods which gave their body and blood for their followers for salvation. SUCH A TEACHING AS SHARED BY PAUL

IS NOT JEWISH NOR IS SUCH A TEACHING BIBLICAL! IT IS PAGAN TO ITS CORE AND YOU NEED TO KNOW THAT! JAMES AND THE JERUSALEM CHURCH DID! The whole sorry affair can be seen as I have detailed it in this web-site if you read it thoroughly.

I just gave you the Biblical teaching on atonement.

Answer for yourself: Have you noticed we have not discussed “sin offerings” yet but have covered the gamut of atonement? Sin offerings only began after the terrible sin of idolatry and blasphemy of the Name of the LORD when Israel rejected YHVH at Sinai. Now God would add a new law that had not existed prior to that time. Request our article on “The Law That Was Added” to further your understanding in this area.

NOW...WHAT ABOUT SIN OFFERINGS?

Really I don't have much to say except they were instituted after the golden calf incident. Then a whole priesthood and tabernacle was required. But even looking at sin offerings, the same spiritual dynamics that we have learned are applied; namely, the soul or life of the sacrificer is placed on the altar as a picture of his renewed relationship with God and the accuracy of such a demonstration was determined if he had repented, confessed, and made restitution PRIOR to bringing the sacrifice.

CONCLUSION

Having now come to the understanding that it was a life lived above sin that was so pleasing to God that God accepted such a life as an offering and atonement for one's sin, it should behoove you to rethink what you believe about atonement as a Christian. If you were to do some comparative religious study you will see the preponderance of evidence of how pagan concepts of salvation are woven into Pauline theology. I have shown you the Biblical teachings of atonement and have not mentioned Paul's theology once. **The reason I have not is that nowhere in the Jewish Masoretic Palestinian text are such Pauline concepts of atonement found.**

Only when you read the fraudulent and mistranslated Greek Scriptures, which the Rabbis did not translate, do you begin to find such ideas surfacing in the text. But never fail to understand that such concepts cannot be found in the Jewish Scriptures from which the Greek translation emanated. Somebody “fixed” the Greek translation to read differently. **And sadly for you, these altered and paganized Greek mistranslation became the foundation for your Christian Old Testament. To make matters worse, your New Testament quotes from the fraudulent Old Testament.** Over and over as you read your Christian Bible you only reinforce and rehearse error! You need to know that. But that happened over 2000 years ago and who knows? Well I do, and others do who have studied enough to see it! The Jews have always known. It is the secularized Jews of today who don't. It is time someone told you! The righteous Jews know this and have known this since 200 BC when the Greek translation was understood by them to be a corruption of the Jewish Scriptures. History records 3 attempts of the Jews to correct such a forged Greek translation but sadly their efforts were not to overtake the popularity of the already translated LXX (Septuagint).

Understand an animal's soul represented the soul of one making the sacrifice, and we, as non-Jews, today are beneficiaries of having the Jew's prayers for our sin on Yom Kippur. Jesus is the archetype for all of Israel. But in this lesson we must no longer overlook the importance of a life lived above sin which procures one's redemption and not the inert blood of the animal or of Jesus. **Lives lived honoring God through faith and obedience atones. Your Covenant requires it!** Such is the message of Bet Emet as we are called to live like Jesus and not just “believe in Jesus.” It has been my experience as a Pastor over the years to encounter multitudes of Christians who trust in Christ's blood instead of understanding the importance of his life, symbolized by his soul in his blood, as lived in obedience to God as a form of atonement, or even their own lives, as lived pleasing to God for their OWN atonement. **We must walk out our salvation with fear and**

trembling. We are co-laborers with God in our own salvation through faith and repentance. Such a mistaken understanding of our redemption as seen from Paul, since not being taught the truth from a Hebraic perspective, has caused multitudes of Christians to trust in the acclaimed miraculous powers of the blood of Jesus instead of focusing on the miraculousness of a life lived above sin. Such a false sense of security in "blood" instead of "lives lived holy before God and man" unconsciously causes the believer to not regard sin with revulsion as he should. We tend to view sin as less harmful than it is, and compromise with sin which lies at the door.

The bottom line for all Christians to understand is that we have heard way too much preached *about* Jesus and far too little studied from the texts of the Jewish Bible which tell us exactly and accurately who he is as well as his original mission. If we had studied the original sources available to us, we would not be so mixed up theologically in a Christianity today which boasts over 2000 different denominations all maintaining they have the truth about Jesus while at the same time being the most violent and crime ridden nation in the world.

SOMETHING IS WRONG WITH THE MESSAGE OF THE CHRISTIAN CHURCH...LOOK AT THE FRUIT OF THIS MESSAGE IN OUR COUNTRY WITH A CHURCH ON EVERY CORNER AND TELEVISIONS FILLED WITH THE CHRISTIAN MESSAGE. JUST LOOK OUT YOUR DOOR AND ASK IF THAT IS THE BEST THE HOLY SPIRIT CAN DO??
??????

May God forgive our laziness to let others tell us what to believe instead of us studying to show ourselves approved unto God. I just showed you part of the problem. Implicitly we are led to not revere the Laws and Commandments of God because "Jesus died for me" and my get out of jail card saves me. As a Pastor I saw such falsehoods lived out in the lives of the congregation year after year. When there is no Law, no Commandments, no requirements, no accountability, then there is no righteous fruit and we have our newspapers filled with horror story after horror story and many of these atrocities are being committed by clergy.

Answer for yourself: When was the last time you saw a Rabbi skip off with the funds of the synagogue or be caught with a prostitute? When was the last time a Rabbi was found molesting a child? Are they any different than non-Jews; or is it because they have a fear of God that is lacking in the Christian Church because we have "implicitly" been sold a bill of goods that we are "already" forgiven and can get away with it because "Jesus paid it all?"

And sadly few can count on their lives being a sufficient atonement for their sin when your whole life the Church has taught you to live without Law and the Commandments of God. This the legacy of Paul and his mystery religions superimposed upon a Rabbi named Yeshua/Jesus. You were taught these "laws and commandments" were a curse. Emotionalism is a sorry substitute for knowledge.

Answer for yourself: For after all if saved by the blood of Jesus, what need do I have to live like Jesus and not disobey the commandments of God? Isn't Jesus my "grace card" that allows me to live anyway I want to and not fear the end-result of such non-accountable behavior?

Answer for yourself: If saved by the blood of another, what does a little sin mean...what can it hurt; for after all, did not Jesus die for me as the Roman document ...the New Testament states?

Answer for yourself: See the tragic thinking involved in focusing upon the blood of Jesus instead of the life of Jesus lived above sin?

THINK!

Shalom.



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THOUGHTS ON THE DEATH OF JESUS AS RELATED TO THE SACRIFICIAL SYSTEM #6

IS BLOOD REQUIRED TO ATONE FOR SIN?

"...without the shedding of blood there is no forgiveness." (Hebrews 9:22)

Answer for yourself: Is this statement from the epistle to the Hebrews really true or is it a contradiction of the Eternal Word of God and the Bible Jesus used?

The central theme of Christianity and the New Testament (NT) is the sacrificial offering of the blood of 'Jesus Christ' as atonement for the sins of the entire world. "The blood of 'Jesus' was shed in our stead and is the **only means of atonement for sin.**"

Answer for yourself: Is this claim truly consistent with The Holy Scriptures (OT)?

Before you say "yes" you might possibly need to be honest with yourself by answering this question: "Just how well do I really know the Old Testament Scriptures and their meanings since I am a New Testament Christian?"

Christians claim that the absolute need for blood is rooted in the Law of Moses (the Torah). Traditionally they will often cite the book of Leviticus as proof:

"And whatever man of the house of Israel, or of the strangers who sojourn among you, who consumes any blood, I will set My face against that person who consumes blood, and will cut him off from among his people. For the life of the flesh is in the blood, and I have given it to you upon the altar to make atonement for your souls; **for it is the blood that makes an atonement for the soul.** Therefore, I say to the children of Israel, 'No one among you shall consume blood, nor shall any stranger who sojourns among you consume blood.'" (Leviticus 17:11)

What should immediately be apparent is that this passage is concerned first and foremost with the **prohibition against consuming blood. The subject of atonement here is secondary.** We are told that the reason for this prohibition is that the blood contains the life or vitality of the animal. Strong's number 3722 is the Hebrew word "Kaphar"; Gesenius' Hebrew-Chaldee Lexicon explains this to mean (1) to cover over, to over spread as with pitch. (2) to obtain forgiveness. (3) to make expiation for an offender, to free him from charge.

Another reason is that consuming blood was a very important part of the idolatrous religious practices of the people and nations surrounding Israel (Gen. 9:4 and Deut. 12:23).

Israel was clearly instructed by The Holy One of Israel through Moses not to imitate this abhorrent pagan practice **in any manner (and this has serious implications for Christian communion, both Catholic and Protestant).** Although the actual blood was later to be substituted with wine in many of the sacred banquets of pagan religions, there is ample evidence to support the claim that literal blood was consumed as part of the

ritual worship of pagan deities, and this as a form of atonement.

Please listen to this! **Since this passage from Lev. 17 is predominately concerned with the prohibition against consuming blood, we must look elsewhere in the Bible for instructions concerning atonement for sins.** This passage in Leviticus will become clearer later on. The passage does say that since blood symbolizes the life of the animal, it can be used as a means of atoning for our sins. **It does not say, however, that blood is the only means of atoning for sins.** Indeed, The Holy Scriptures tell us of several other things that can be used instead of the blood of a sacrificial ram or bullock.

OTHER MEANS OF ATONEMENT.....IS THIS NEWS TO YOU?

"And Moses said unto Aaron, 'Take a censer, and put fire therein from off the altar, and put on **incense**, and go quickly unto the congregation, and **make an atonement for them**: for there is wrath gone out from [YHVH]; the plague is begun.' And Aaron took as Moses commanded, and ran into the midst of the congregation; and, behold, the plague was begun among the people: **and he put on incense, and made an atonement for the people.**" (Numbers 16:46-47)

Here, incense can be used to atone for sins in the same manner as the blood sacrifices of animals.

Notice what else could be used in place of blood:

"The rich shall not give more, and the poor shall not give less than half a shekel (**offering of money**), when they give an offering unto [YHVH], to make an **atonement for your souls**. And thou shalt take the **atonement money** of the children of Israel, and shalt appoint it for the service of the tabernacle of the congregation; that it may be a memorial unto the children of Israel before [YHVH], **to make an atonement for your souls.**" (Exodus 30:15-16)

Here, one's offering to the LORD can be used to atone for sins in the same manner as the blood sacrifices of animals.

The phrase "to make atonement for your souls" in these verses is the same expression as in Leviticus 17:11:

"We have therefore brought an oblation **[again items of worth and money]** (Deut. 12:23-25, 30) for [YHVH], what every man hath gotten, of jewels of gold, chains, and bracelets, rings, earrings, and tablets, **to make an atonement for our souls** before [YHVH]." Numbers 31:50)

In these passages, money could be used to make atonement for the children of Israel. The principle here is **not that atonement can be bought** [this was the practice of the great universal church whose priests routinely sold forgiveness]. Rather, this is about doing charitable things with money. In this case, the money was to be used for the physical maintenance of the temple building.

DOES BLOOD COVER ALL SIN?

According to the Bible, blood sacrifices held only limited atonement capabilities. Foremost among it's limitations was that blood sacrifices were only brought for **unintentional sins**. If a person committed some sin out of ignorance, such as doing work on the Sabbath when perhaps they mistakenly thought it was Sunday, then atonement could be made through a sacrificial sin offering. **Sacrifices did**

not help to atone for sins that were done intentionally. Notice the instructions to the priests concerning this:

"And [YHVH] spake unto Moses, saying, Speak unto the children of Israel, saying, If a soul shall sin **through ignorance** against any of the commandments of [YHVH] concerning things which ought not to be done, and shall do against any of them: If the priest that is anointed do sin according to the sin of the people; then let him bring for his sin, which he hath sinned, a young bullock without blemish unto [YHVH] for a sin offering. And he shall bring the bullock unto the door of the tabernacle of the congregation before [YHVH]; and shall lay his hand upon the bullock's head, and kill the bullock before [YHVH]. And the priest that is anointed shall take of the bullock's blood, and bring it to the tabernacle of the congregation: And the priest shall dip his finger in the blood, and sprinkle of the blood seven times before [YHVH], before the veil of the sanctuary. **And the priest shall put some of the blood upon the horns of the altar** of sweet incense before [YHVH], which is in the tabernacle of the congregation; and shall pour all the blood of the bullock at the bottom of the altar of the burnt offering, which is at the door of the tabernacle of the congregation" Leviticus 4:1-7)

This claim that only blood could atone for sins raises many questions. What happens if someone could not afford to purchase a ram or bullock for his sin offering? Is it possible that a loving CREATOR would institute a system of atonement that could only be used by the wealthy?

"And if he be not able to bring a lamb, then he shall bring for his trespass, which he hath committed, **two turtledoves, or two young pigeons**, unto [YHVH]; one for a sin offering, and the other for a burnt offering." Leviticus 5:7)

Here, if a person could not afford the sacrificial ram or bullock for a sin offering, certain types of small birds could be used instead.

Answer for yourself: However, what if someone was so destitute, that he couldn't afford even these small birds?

"But if his means are insufficient for two turtledoves or two young pigeons, then for his offering for that which he has sinned, he shall bring the tenth of an ephah of **fine flour for a sin offering**; he shall not put oil on it or place incense on it, for it is a sin offering." (Leviticus 5:11)

This is very interesting, but seriously damaging to the Christian doctrine. If birds could not be afforded, some simple flour could be used instead and would be **just as effective** in the eyes of Israel's CREATOR. The scriptures are quite clear on this. Since **flour** could be used for a sin offering, **it is evident that blood was not the sole means of atonement.** The Christian position that only the shed blood of 'Jesus' could atone for sins is falling by the wayside in light of the Holy Scriptures. Actually, considering the beating and torture which 'Jesus' is said to have suffered at The hands of the Romans, **you have to wonder why he didn't just bring a sack of flour to the Romans and let them whip, beat, mock and crucify it instead!!!**

WHAT IF THERE WAS NO TEMPLE OR AARONIC PRIEST ...HOW WAS ATONEMENT ACHIEVED?

While the Temple stood, sacrifices without question served as part of the atonement process. If you read the first articles in this series then you understand the meaning of the presentation of the "blood" on the altar within the Temple.

Answer for yourself: What, though, was to be the fate of the people who did not have access to the Temple?

Answer for yourself: What were the Israelite people supposed to do after 586 B.C.E. when the first Temple was destroyed and they were exiled to Babylon?

Answer for yourself: What did the Jewish people do in the times of the Maccabees when the Syrian-Greeks were in control of the Temple and did not allow sacrifices?

After king Solomon completed the spectacular temple building in Jerusalem, he dedicated it with a very moving speech. This lengthy and very beautiful speech can be read in the books of 1 Kings 8 and II Chronicles 6. Notice, however, that Solomon **doesn't speak about sacrifices at all!** If sacrifices were the focal point of the temple, this omission would be very curious. Rather, the focus of the Temple was shown to be the Ark, containing the Laws which our CREATOR wanted us to live by. The Temple was first and foremost a symbol of the Shechinah, or presence of The Holy One of Israel.

"I have surely built thee an house to dwell in, a settled place for thee to abide in for ever. (I Kings 8:13)

"And let them make me a sanctuary; that I may dwell among them" (Exodus 25:8).

Toward the end of the speech, Solomon addresses the subject of the Israelite people being denied access to the temple:

"If they return to You with all their heart and with all their soul in the land of their enemies who have taken them captive, and **pray to You** toward their land which You have given to their fathers, the city which You have chosen, and the house which I have built for Your name; then hear their prayer and their supplication in heaven Your dwelling place, and maintain their cause, and **forgive Your people** who have sinned against You and all their transgressions which they have transgressed against You..." (I Kings 8:46-50)

This passage helps us understand Leviticus 17:11 properly. **The Bible clearly teaches that blood sacrifices were not necessary in order to atone for sins. Prayer and repentance are shown to be the effective means of atonement. Certainly, when the Temple stood, and if one could afford an animal, a sacrifice was brought as part of the atonement process for unintentional sins. What Leviticus 17:11 teaches us is that when we bring such an animal as a sacrifice, we are not allowed to consume its blood, because as the life force, it is the part of the animal that affects our atonement.** In addition, we were not to consume the blood because this was the practice of the pagan people who worshipped the sun-god 'baal.'

WAS YESHUA AN ACCEPTABLE SACRIFICE?

Another focal point of the NT is the Christian claim that the crucifixion of 'Jesus' served as the **final atoning sacrifice for the sins of the world**. However, if the sacrificial instructions set forth by the Law of Moses are examined closely, and you see the guidelines set forth for how sacrifices are to be brought, **it will be clear that 'Jesus' could never serve as an atoning sacrifice. Clearly, not just any blood shed in any manner would satisfy the biblical requirements for atonement. Notice the instructions set forth in the Torah concerning sacrifices:**

"For the life of the flesh is in the blood, and I have given it to you **upon the altar** to make an atonement for your souls..." (Lev. 17:11)

Notice that the blood of the acceptable sacrifice was to be shed **upon the holy alter of the temple**, and not on the pagan phallic symbol of the cross. Besides Yeshua died on a stake without a crossbar as was customary of the Romans. Clearly, not just any spilled blood is acceptable as a sacrifice. YHVH set forth very meticulous rules and laws governing acceptable sacrifices brought to Him. "Jesus'" crucifixion may qualify as an atonement according to the **Greek Testament of Mithraism** but since his blood was **not offered on the altar**, it is not in compliance with what The Holy Scriptures of Israel's CREATOR requires.

There are many other factors that would render the crucifixion of 'Jesus' an unacceptable sacrifice according to scriptural guidelines. According to the Biblical rules in Leviticus, all sacrifices had to be offered **by a Levite**

Priest, a descendant of Aaron. According to the "gospel" accounts, 'Jesus' was killed by pagan, gentile Roman soldiers.

Biblical law also prohibited any sacrifice that was blemished or maimed:

"Ye shall offer at your own will **a male without blemish,** of the beeves, of the sheep, or of the goats. **But whatsoever hath a blemish, that shall ye not offer:** for it shall **not** be acceptable for you. And whosoever offereth a sacrifice of peace offerings unto [YHVH] to accomplish his vow, or a freewill offering in beeves or sheep, **it shall be perfect to be accepted; there shall be no blemish therein.** Blind, or broken, or maimed, or having a wen [cyst], or scurvy, or scabbed, ye shall not offer these unto [YHVH], nor make an offering by fire of them upon the altar unto [YHVH]. (Leviticus 22:19-21).

Now we have a problem. The "gospels" of the NT clearly teach that 'Jesus' was beaten and whipped, which would have made him blemished and maimed and therefore an unfit sacrifice. Frequently, Christians react to this line of reasoning by protesting that it is improper to be so literal, and that "Jesus'" death was more of a symbolic or spiritual sacrifice. Christians will insist, indeed the NT itself makes the claim, that 'Jesus' was literally our Passover sacrifice. Remember in the book of John, when the Roman soldiers pierced 'Jesus' [after he was already dead, mind you]? Here we are told that they did not break his legs because this would violate the rules of the proper Passover sacrifice (Matthew 27:26, Mark 15:19, and John 19:3). The legs of the crucified were sometimes broken to hasten death. It was necessary that crucifixion victims must prop themselves up using their legs in order to facilitate breathing. This could prolong death for days at times. The legs were broken so that proper breathing could be prevented, and the lungs crushed the diaphragm and breathing was extremely difficult.:

"But coming to 'Jesus,' when they saw that he was already dead, they did not break his legs **...in order that the Scripture might be fulfilled:** Not a bone of him shall be broken." (John 19:33-36)

The gospel of John portrays 'Jesus' as the Passover lamb which was not supposed to have any of its bones broken (cf. Exodus 12:46, Numbers 9:12). If Christians insist that 'Jesus' was the **literal** Passover sacrifice, and his blood atoned for our sins, then 'Jesus,' as that sacrifice, was subject to the **literal guidelines** set by the Law of Moses given by CREATOR of Israel governing an acceptable sacrifice. Christians always seem to want to have it both ways. The NT itself proposes that 'Jesus' was a literal sacrifice. When confronted with the clear Biblical instructions on how acceptable sacrifices were to be offered, however, they will complain that this is just legalistic nit picking.

You may wonder why I present this material to you, our readers. Simply, knowing what I know and what I have uncovered which is not taught to the Christian Church but which Jews seem to have always known, behooves me to share it with my brothers and sisters in hopes that they might learn as well the truth behind the New Testament and repent thereby accepting the true faith of Yeshua. Such honors God and guarantees acceptance when we die. More to follow. Shalom.

Let us keep diligent in our study of Biblical Atonement.



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THOUGHTS ON THE DEATH OF JESUS AS RELATED TO THE SACRIFICIAL SYSTEM #7

WHY WAS YESHUA PATTERNED AFTER THE PASSOVER SACRIFICE...SHOULD IT NOT HAVE BEEN YOM KIPPUR?

It really does not make sense to type 'Jesus' as the Passover sacrifice anyway. We know from Exodus 12 that the Passover sacrifice did not serve as atonement for sins, it merely commemorates the exodus from Egypt. Even when the lamb was slaughtered in Egypt and its' blood smeared on the door-posts, the blood did not serve to atone for the sins of anyone. It was a sign for the angel of death to pass over Israelite homes during the plague of the first born. The only people in danger were first-born males. The blood wasn't a help to other people in the family, and didn't serve as an atonement for the first born or save the mothers or sisters of any family.

It would have made much more sense to type 'Jesus' after the Yom Kippur (Day of Atonement) sacrifice, which actually was an atonement for the sins of all the people. The problem here was that according to Leviticus 16:10, 21-22, the animal that atoned for the sins of the nation was not killed, but sent live out into the desert. (THINK)...it was not killed...it lived...as we saw earlier in the real Isaiah...."life" atones..not death!

Now the followers of 'Jesus' had another problem. According to the prophecies of ancient Israel, the Messiah was not supposed to die before completing His mission. The followers of 'Jesus,' who claimed that he was Israel's Messiah, now had to deal with 'Jesus'' embarrassing death at the hands of the Romans. So they correlated him with the slain Passover sacrifice. This tap dance around the scriptures to try and legitimize 'Jesus' as the Messiah cannot negate the clear lesson from Leviticus and the Day of Atonement that the shedding of blood is not a pre-requisite for atonement.

CAN YESHUA OR ANY OTHER PERSON ATONE FOR YOUR SINS?

Answer for yourself: Where did this idea originate that one man, or that anyone for that matter, could atone and pay for the sins of one or more people?

Maybe you don't know or have never read on the subject. Many don't and have not done adequate study to know the answer. Others have. It should be perfectly clear to you, if you have ever looked into the subject, that such notions stem from the Babylonian mystery religion of ancient Mesopotamia. The Greeks and Romans, as well as their ancestors, had multiple legends whereby heroes died for followers, cities, friends, for the law, for the truth, etc. Many such "deaths" were thought to bring atonement to those who believed in such sacrificial acts. This is fact when can be demonstrable to anyone who inquires.

What is certain is that the idea that an innocent person can be killed instead of those who are guilty is not consistent with what the Bible teaches. After the sin of the Golden Calf, YHVH was so outraged that His intentions were to totally annihilate and destroy the Israelite people. Moses offers to die in their place. Notice the response to Moses suggestion:

"Yet now, if thou wilt forgive their sin...; and if not, blot me, I pray thee, out of thy book which thou hast written. And [YHWH] said unto Moses, **Whosoever hath sinned against me, him will I blot out of my book.**" (Exodus 32:32-33)

Throughout the Bible, YHVH says that one person **cannot die for the sins of another:**

"Fathers shall not be put to death for their sons, nor shall sons be put to death for their fathers; everyone shall be put to death for his own sin"
(Deuteronomy 24:16)

"But everyone will die for his own sin; each man who eats sour grapes, his teeth will be set on edge" (Jeremiah 31:30)

"The person who sins will die. The son will not bear the punishment for the father's iniquity, nor will the father bear the punishment for the son's iniquity; the righteousness of the righteous will be upon himself, and the wickedness of the wicked will be upon himself" (Ezekiel 18:20)

"He who justifies the wicked, and he who condemns the righteous, both of them are an abomination to the Lord" (Proverbs 17:15).

"No man ['Jesus' included] can by any means redeem his brother, or give to 'God' a ransom for him" (Psalms 49:7)

Unlike the Greek Testament in the Christian Bible, The Holy Scriptures of the One True CREATOR of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob clearly teach that we are responsible for our own actions and sins. We alone must account and pay the price. God does not change! No virgin born savior deity from Babylonian mythology can contradict the clear instructions of CREATOR of Israel.

Answer for yourself: Why are there two theologies concerning atonement in your Bible; one in the Old Testament by the God of Israel who says He changes not, and then the Pauline corpus of material in the New Testament that contradicts it by paralleling pagan mystery religions and their false atonements of their false gods? This is very evident when the Old Testament is compared with the NT, and if you say you never saw it dear one you never looked deep enough for it is there!

NOW FOR THE REALLY BIG QUESTION

Here is a question that Christian ministers have danced around for two thousand years, but have never truthfully answered. This question bothered me all the years I pastored.

Answer for yourself: If indeed 'Jesus' came as the final sacrifice to atone for the sins of the world, **why do The**

Holy Scriptures proclaim that the Third Temple will be built and sacrifices resumed during the Messianic era?

The vast majority of average Christians are completely ignorant of these prophecies, as they have been cleverly hidden by their ministers. **Notice the clear teachings of The Holy Scriptures regarding this:**

"Even those I will bring to My holy mountain, and make them joyful in My house of prayer. Their burnt offerings and their sacrifices will be acceptable on My altar; for My house will be called a house of prayer for all the peoples." (Isaiah 56:7)

"From beyond the rivers of Ethiopia My worshipers, My dispersed ones will bring My offerings." (Zephaniah 3:10)

"All the flocks of Kedar will be gathered together to you, the rams of Nebaioth will minister to you; they will go up with acceptance on My altar, and I shall glorify My glorious house." (Isaiah 60:7)

"And I will make a covenant of peace with them; it will be an everlasting covenant with them. And I will place them and multiply them, and will set My **sanctuary** in their midst forever." (Ezekiel 37:26)

"And He will sit as a smelter and purifier of silver, and He will purify the sons of Levi and refine them like gold and silver, so that they may present to [YHWH] **offerings in righteousness**. Then the offering of Judah and Jerusalem will be pleasant to [YHWH], **as in the days of old and as in former years.**" (Malachi 3:3-4)

LET THERE BE NO DOUBT

(Ezekiel 45:17) "And it shall be the princes part to provide the burnt offerings, the grain offerings, and the libations...**to make the atonement for the house of Israel.**"

Apparently, dear reader, **'Jesus' sacrifice did not make atonement for the sins of all the world.** If the death of 'Jesus' had atoned for all sins for all time, why will atonement need to be made during the messianic era?

Answer for yourself: How do you answer the true words of Israel's CREATOR, Mr. Christian minister? These questions caused me to study like I never had to find the answers. The root of the whole problem lies in the texts and their authority. As a Christian Pastor I came to realize after many years of serious study following Seminary that the New Testament was little more than a propagandist Roman document full of anti-Semitic ideas and teachings. Considering all the manuscripts available to day totally a little less than 6000 pieces, there are over 300,000 contradictions and no two are "identical" or "read the same". Surely God could do better. As if that was not enough, my heart broke within me when I discovered my KJV Old Testament was a purposefully falsified and altered translation of the Jewish Masoretic text which had been "doctored" as had the New Testament. It took over ten years to substantiate these discrepancies beyond any doubt and were a major factor in my resignation from my Pastorate. I was an ordained Pastor of an apostate faith. Such shame no man can know. I had believed "the" lie and the "very elect" was deceived. I accepted everything on "faith" never questioning anything. I was gullible for the LORD until YHVH put in my heart and head the desire to study out the conflicting errors of my Christian theology. The fruit I lay before you for your inspection as a gift to God and as a love offering in hopes your hunger for truth is greater than your commitment to tradition.

YHVH AND MERCY

The Christian claim that only through bloodshed can atonement be made show that Christians are unfamiliar with how compassionate and merciful the Holy One of Israel really is. Sometimes, He forgives us simply because He is kind, loving, compassionate and merciful. Even when we don't seek our LORD appropriately, He has the ability to reach out to us with love and forgive us:

"Who is a [Elohiym] like unto thee, that pardoneth iniquity, and passeth by the transgression of the remnant of his heritage? He retaineth not His anger for ever, because He delighteth in mercy." (Micah 7:18)

"Their heart was not steadfast toward Him, nor were they faithful in His covenant. But He, being compassionate, forgave their iniquity...remembering that they were but flesh." (Psalms 78:36-39)

"You have not brought Me the sheep of your burnt offerings...or the fat of your sacrifices, but you have burdened Me with your sins...Nevertheless, I will wipe out your transgressions for My own sake, and I will not remember your sins." (Isaiah 43:23-25)

Truly, truly the Holy one of Israel is a just and merciful CREATOR.

WHAT DO THE PROPHETS HAVE TO SAY?

Answer for yourself: If the Christian claim that one must be covered by the shed blood of the Messiah in order to make atonement for his sins is valid, why can this claim not be validated by the writings of the prophets?

Time and time again, the writings of the prophets emphasize prayer and repentance as the method to atone for sins. I challenge any Christian to produce a scripture from Unaltered Holy Hebrew Scriptures (OT that Jesus used) that teaches us that we must believe in the atoning blood of a Messiah in order to obtain salvation [even the Christian Bible does not say it]. What the prophets teach us is that our own obedience to the laws of Israel's CREATOR combined with sincere repentance and prayer for forgiveness will atone for sin if done with the proper attitude of humility.

- "That every man will turn from his evil way, then I will forgive their iniquity and their sin." (Jeremiah 36:3)
- "Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts, and let him return to [YHWH], and He will have compassion on him; and to our [Elohiym]. for He will abundantly pardon." (Isaiah 55:7)
- "And if My people who are called by My name humble themselves and pray, and seek My face and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven, will forgive their sin, and will heal their land." (II Chronicles 7:14).
- "But if the wicked man turns from all his sins which he has committed and observes all My statutes and practices justice and righteousness, he shall surely live; he shall not die. All his transgressions which he has committed will not be remembered against him; because of the righteousness which he has practiced he shall live...When a wicked man turns away from his wickedness which he has committed and practices justice and righteousness, he will save his life...Repent and turn away from all your transgressions, so that iniquity may not become a stumbling block to you (Ezekiel 18:21- 22,27,30).
- "By loving kindness and truth iniquity is atoned for..." (Proverbs 16:6).
- "If you return to [Elohiym] you will be restored; if you remove unrighteousness far from your tent...then you will delight in [Elohiym]..." (Job 22:23-27).

Clearly, the central teaching of The Holy Scriptures is that we must break away from our sinful past and sincerely repent. This is the only way to restore our relationship with the Holy One of Israel. If one strays from the path set forth by the laws of our God, one must repent and return to the path. This is how forgiveness is obtained. Even when sacrifices were offered, they in and of themselves did not effect atonement. You now have seen that in the first articles in this series. The sacrifice was part of the process but only a "picture" of the sacrificer after his repentance. What is repentance? Returning to ETERNAL by forsaking our evil ways and praying for forgiveness. The prophets were constantly correcting the Israelite people for relying on blood sacrifices as the essential element of atonement instead of or without

repentance and obedience to ETERNAL's laws:

- "What are your multiplied sacrifices to Me? says [YHWH]. I have had enough of burnt offerings of rams, and the fat of fed cattle. And I take no pleasure in the blood of bulls, lambs, or goats...Wash yourselves, make yourselves clean; remove the evil of your deeds from My sight. Cease to do evil, learn to do good; seek justice, reprove the ruthless, defend the orphan, plead for the widow. Come let us reason together says [YHWH], 'Though your sins are as scarlet, they will be white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they will be like wool, if you consent and obey...' (Isaiah 1:11-18).
- "The sacrifice of the wicked is an abomination to the Lord." (Proverbs 15:8).
- "To do righteousness and justice is more acceptable to [YHWH] than sacrifice." (Proverbs 21:3)
- "For I delight in loyalty rather than sacrifice, and in the knowledge of [Elohiym] rather than burnt offerings." (Hosea 6:6).
- "Has [YHWH] as great a delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices as in obeying the voice of the Lord? Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice, and to hearken more than the fat of rams." (1 Samuel 15:22)
- "With what shall I come to [YHWH], and bow myself before the [Elohiym] on high? Shall I come to Him with burnt offerings, with yearling calves? Does [YHWH] take delight in thousands of rams, in ten thousand rivers of oil? Shall I present my firstborn for my rebellious acts, the fruit of my body for the sin of my soul? He has told you, O man, what is good; and what does [YHWH] require of you but to do justice, to love kindness, and to walk humbly with your God" (Micah 6:6-8)

Answer for yourself: Do you now begin to see what the very wise king Solomon was trying to explain in 1 Kings 8, when he said that even though the Israelite people may not always have access to the sacrifices and the Priesthood, they would always have access to the Holy One of Israel?

Solomon, the wisest man who ever lived, understood that repentance and not blood is the Scriptural form of atonement.

Answer for yourself: Remember the story of Jonah?

He was sent to the evil city of Nineveh (non-Jews) to warn them of their impending destruction. Jonah does not come into the city and tell the people that unless they begin offering sacrifices they are doomed. He does not tell them that unless they accept on faith that the shed blood of Israel's Messiah will atone for their sins they are lost. No! He warns them to repent. Their response to his warnings is: they fast, pray, and turn from their evil.

Answer for yourself: What is YHVH's response to their repentance?

"When [Elohiym] saw their deeds that they turned from their wicked way, then [Elohiym] relented concerning the calamity which He had declared He would bring upon them, and He did not do it." (Jonah 3:10).

EVEN NEBUCHADNEZZAR IS TOLD HOW TO ATONE FOR HIS SINS....VERY INTERESTING....

"Therefore, O king, may my advice be pleasing to you: Redeem your sins by doing righteousness, and your iniquities by showing mercy to the poor."
(Daniel 4:27).

THE POWER OF PRAYER FOR ATONEMENT

After the ten northern tribes split away from Judah, a civil war prevented most of Israel from Temple worship. The prophet Hosea addressed this situation and instructed the people accordingly:

"Return, O Israel, to [YHWH] your God, For you have stumbled because of your iniquity. **Take words with you** and return to [YHWH]. **Say to Him**, 'Take away all iniquity, and receive us graciously, for we will render as bullocks the offerings of our lips'." (Hosea 14:1-2)

We are able to approach our god directly with prayer, which is possible at all times and regardless of the size of our bank accounts; and He assures us that sincere prayer can achieve forgiveness for our sins:

- "Deliver me from blood-guiltiness, O [YHWH], the [Elohiym] of my salvation. And my tongue shall sing aloud of Your righteousness. O [YHWH], open my lips, and my mouth shall show forth Your praise. For You do not delight in burnt offerings. The sacrifices of [Elohiym] are a broken spirit, a broken and contrite heart. These, O [Elohiym], You will not despise." (Psalms 51:14-17)"
- "I will praise the name of [Elohiym] with a song, and will magnify Him with thanksgiving. This shall please [YHWH] better than an ox or bullock that has horns and hoofs." (Psalm 69:30-31)
- "For You, [YHWH], are good, and ready to forgive, and abundant in loving kindness to all who call upon You. Give ear, O [YHWH] to my prayer, and give heed to the voice of my supplications." (Psalm 86:5-6)
- "And listen to the supplications of Your servant and of Your people Israel, when they pray toward this place; hear from heaven Your dwelling place, hear and forgive." (II Chronicles 6:21)

The Holy Scriptures of Israel are very clear. Prayer, a humble attitude, and above all, sincere heartfelt repentance is what the Holy One of Israel requires of His people in order to atone for sins. No doubt He knew thousands of years in advance that there would come a time when some would wrongly rely on the blood of a deified human sacrifice to vicariously replace obedience to His laws. It is evident to anyone with eyes to see that a comparison between The Holy Scriptures of Israel and the Greek NT to 'Baal' will reveal two entirely different religions. One is dedicated to the One True ETERNAL of Israel; the other is dedicated to just another of many mythological savior gods of the Babylonian mysteries.

The time will come when Israel's true messiah will usher in an era of peace when all nations will believe in and seek to worship the one true Holy One of Israel of our fathers Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. At that time, the proponents of Christianity will deeply repent of the day when they taught the beloved nation of Israel and the descendants of Abraham to break the first commandment and worship another besides the Holy One of Israel.

One more article left....



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THOUGHTS ON THE DEATH OF JESUS AS RELATED TO THE SACRIFICIAL SYSTEM #8

Bet Emet stands for "truth" as the name implies; House of Truth. Such truth has been dug out of man-made traditions and anti-Semitic teachings held sacred by millions for almost 2 millennia. What I am going to do next is somewhat dangerous but I want you warn you ahead of time. I am going to make an assumption that I know is totally false for the purpose of teaching another truth which will shed even more light upon the truths of atonement.

LET'S ASSUME.....ALTHOUGH IT IS WRONG....JUST FOR A MINUTE.....

Let us assume that the traditional Christian teaching about Jesus' death being a sacrifice for atonement was true. So we approach what is said next with the erroneous assumption that that Jesus' death was for our sin. Now lets proceed.

ATONEMENT FOR BOTH TABLETS OF THE LAW OR ONLY FOR THE FIRST TABLET? THIS WILL SURPRISE YOU!

Answer for yourself: As a Christian, being told your whole life that Jesus' death was an atonement for your sin, then is this "atonement" as seen in his sacrifice (a type and shadow of sin offerings) an atonement for all kinds of sin?

Honestly, the answer is "NO" not all sin, because in the sacrifice of lambs, on Yom Kippur for instance, they only atoned for sins of the First Tablet of the Law and not the Second Tablet of the Law.

This is very important to recognize especially when one makes parallels to Jesus as a "type and shadow" of Old Testament truths regarding atonement. And few Christians have ever studied enough to know this....but the Jews did!

You can be a Christian you whole life and go to church your whole life and NEVER know that even when sacrifices were brought to the Temple that they not only **ONLY** atoned for unintentional sins....but also **ONLY** atoned for the sins of the First Tablet of the Law and not for **ANY** sins committed which were violations of the Second Tablet of the Law!

Answer for yourself: Even if Jesus' death was an atonement for sin, then if being truthful to the rule of "types and shadows" how is it possible that his death and shed blood atoned as the "Lamb of God" for sins that never were atoned for by any animal sacrifice?

THINK!

Knowing this, that Jesus is type and shadow of the Suffering Servant of God, instead of a representative of the "many" "Suffering Servants" of Israel as he really was, then you can see how a false security in focusing on the blood could, and does lead, others to think light of sin and compromise with sin much more than they should (not knowing that such sins of the Second Tablet of the Law are not handled by the sacrifices for atonement).

Answer for yourself: What? Is this news to you? Did your pastor ever tell you this? Mine never did!

Answer for yourself: Then how are we to get atonement for such things we do when we sin if sacrifices NEVER covered it before?

Answer for yourself: Did God give us a "way" for atonement for such sins and because as Christians and followers of Jesus in Christianity he we failed to understand the sacrificial system correctly and miss this important message?

Such knowledge comes only if you study the Sacrificial process in detail. If Christians trusting the blood for "everything" only knew that the atonement provided by the Suffering Servant Israel (as typified in Jesus) atoned only for the First Tablet of the Law they would most likely think twice before sinning, thus understanding they are not "under the blood" for all things, that their moral responsibility and fear of God is a requirement in being co-laborers with God in their own salvation. Now you should better understand the passage which says "work out YOUR salvation with fear and trembling

If we truly understand the Sacrificial system, and you should now if you have been reading these articles, then you know that Jesus, and the Suffering Servant of God (Israel) did not die for atonement for ALL SINS! Without this knowledge of sins atoned only for the First Tablet of the Law (sins between man toward God) we will not have a strong enough deterrent to avoid sinning sins involved in the Second Tablet of the Law...sins between man and man. Thus, understanding the Sacrificial system and the dynamics involved, the more correct interpretation would be "Christ died because of sins." And in this death of Yeshua as a paradigm of all of Israel [Suffering Servant] was efficacy for sins of the First Tablet of the Law ONLY and not the Second Tablet of the Law. The Second Tablet of the Law is atoned for by your repentance, confession, prayer, restitution, alms, etc., as Isaiah and other Prophets teach in the Hebrew Scriptures where were later altered by the Alexandrian Essenes and later Romans to exclude such concepts from the Hebrew Scriptures when translated into the Greek and Latin!

Let us not forget that Israel is a Holy Nation and a Royal Priesthood. A Priest's function is to make intercession for another and aid in another's reconciliation. As you saw earlier that prayer was one of the several forms of atonement, then this should renew your appreciation for the Jewish people who, on Yom Kippur, stand in the gap for the world in their prayer services. They literally, as Priests to YHVH, pray for the world and their sins that God would be merciful and forgive their sin. This is such a Holy thing which is not understood by Christians let alone Christian missionaries who are fixated on converting every Jew to Christianity?

Answer for yourself: If such a demonic and diabolical plan was ever to succeed, God forbid, then who would stand in the gap for the world on Yom Kippur.....Baptists, Catholics, Charismatics? Christianity does not ever recognize or observe the commanded Holy Days in the Bible.

ARE YOU GUILTY OF BREAKING THE SECOND TABLET OF THE

LAW.....AND NOT KNOWING IT?

So many might have read this article so far and say..."so what...I don't break the commands of the Second Tablet of the Law?"

Not so fast now.

Christians, because of their perverse theology, break them at will, and what is so devious, is that they do it without ever knowing. My purpose is not to offend anyone, but if I could be honest with you and God for a moment I want you to grasp this next sentence. When I graduated from Seminary I had learned a lot, but most was religious propaganda to support a particular denominational position. It was only after years of intense study following Seminary did I come to the knowledge of the truth that I had hoped to find there but didn't. And if I can say that then what is the level of understanding of the typical pew setter in the Churches who never reads books or studies his own faith in-depth?

If you were aware of what is contained in the Second Tablet of the Law you would be overwhelmed and I would hope, once realizing the magnitude of such violations of God's will by the typical Christian following "Christian doctrine" then your tears would run like rivers and your conduct change.

TAKE TITHING FOR EXAMPLE

This is a commandment between man and man, as the **Bible commands that the tithe be used for certain things only**. These "things" were always "people" in one way or another, for only if the giving of one's finances was to God and Godly pursuits would the Kingdom of Heaven be manifested on earth as it is in Heaven. God does not need our money; other do. For example the Tithe is commanded every 2 out of 6 years to be given wholly to the poor, the lame, blind, sick, infirm, widows, orphans, etc. Only these needy people, made in the image of God, receive your blessings and care will they experience the love of God the way He intended. God intended their need be met; not miraculously from heaven, but by you!

Two years out of six you were commanded by God to "keep" your tithe and use it for "whatever your soul lusted after." Now, understand this was to be in a Godly pursuit. For example the celebration of the Sabbaths and the Seven Biblical Festivals. Also, you were commanded to share it with the poor as they again might experience in "earnest" the Kingdom of Heaven God had prepared for them. Notice it was you again who were to give to these people.

Lastly, two years out of six you were to give your tithe, and I paraphrase, to the choir, the janitors, and the levites. The levites basically are the choir. They also taught the people. They were NOT preachers but teachers. Notice also this is one of the gifts to the body as Paul states. Conspicuously absent from such a list of gifts is a "preacher." Understand if I am a good teacher, then you the student, become the proclaimer or the "preacher." That is how God intended it to work.

Now, the vast, vast majority of Christian Churches do not allocate their funds in the above manner as taught by the Holy Scriptures. Ask for our teachings on the Tithe and you can quickly see in detail of what I speak. This means that no matter how much you give to your church, if your spiritual authorities do not obey the Commandments of giving and appropriate your monies in areas not sanctioned by God in His Word then they have robbed from God no matter what Scriptures they read when they take up the offering. And you become an accomplice to stealing from God as you are accountable for His Word whether you know His Word or not. You will be judged by it.

Now as you can see, you can give to your Christian Church all day long and "feel" good about it, but you violate the Commands of God in doing so. Now understand you violate God's Commandments of giving by so trusting your Church with your money.

Answer for yourself: If you have believed in Jesus' death for your sin, as if such "death" and "shed blood" does not and never did atone for violations of the Second Tablet of the Law....then you do realize you die in your sin and never know until you see God face to face?

Answer for yourself: You really have two problems. You didn't know well enough the Commandments about tithing to even questions what your Church is doing and you did not know well enough the Sacrificial System to know that some sins are never covered by it. Then do you realize that your erroneous understandings of such things as caused you to ignorantly continue to rob God and assure your rebuke when you meet up with Him since the work of Jesus you have been taught to "trust" in never applied in the first place?

Answer for yourself: Do you grasp the horrible consequences of such ignorance of the truths of God's Word and the sure fate that awaits you because Christianity has not studied hard enough to see the truth since blinded by anti-Semitism of the Church Fathers since the 2nd century?

Well if you tithe according to the manner of most Christian Churches today you not only rob from God but from those created in His image as well. If you continue to give to churches which don't obey the Laws and Commandments concerning tithing you are a partaker of their sins and there is no atonement for that sin for you when you die unless your repent now of such behavior! Sadly few Christians know what the Jewish Scriptures command regarding "how to tithe". Giving your tithe to the Christian Church where the elders fail to appropriate the correct percentages into the designated areas commanded by the Torah guarantees you that you rob God! While pastoring in Dallas as a Staff Pastor on staff of a mega church, the last two years I could no longer tithe to the church where I Pastored having learned the truth about the tithe. Contention was an understatement but when truth comes error must leave

Repentance toward that sin, a new obedience, a new conduct, and confession of that sin is our only methods of atonement and if not done, will ensure we enter into the World to Come with sins in those areas where atonement has not been proved.

PUTTING IT ALL TOGETHER

You have seen that it is a life, your life, that makes atonement for sin. Such repentance, confession, prayer, and new obedient conduct is the only reassurance that at-that-moment you are right with God. Being so, and having done so, then you have the right to be on the altar of God and you are ..in your heart. You need not bring an animal sacrifice for you and your life are already one! The animal, if you remember, was only a physical demonstration of the atonement you already have acquired by your actions. Such is the mercy of God to reveal to us, His people, how we can cleanse ourselves.

The Gentile Christian Church, over the centuries, has stolen such truths from you and corrupted the truth and recorded it in their anti-Semitic document...the New Testament

There is no atonement for the sins of the Second Tablet of the Law unless you make it for yourself!

You now understand our lives, or our "souls", will be devoted to error instead of truth and our lives will not provide atonement unless we repent. But one must know the truth in order to repent or else he never knows he is wrong. That is why study is so important. This is only one small example.

After years of dedicated intense study I found that worshipping according to Christian teachings often is sin as the vast majority of Christianity today has changed the Sabbath as well as made obsolete the Holy Days and Festivals of God and there are commandments regarding Gentile

believers keeping them. Remember your poor tithe goes to these observances as well.

You might not be a murderer with a gun, but our word “kill” is equated by the Rabbis to mean gossip, slander, blasphemy, as well as the failure to take care of the poor, widows, and the orphans. The Rabbis group this with murder which again is sin of the Second Tablet of the Law.

Answer four yourself: Can you see how involved this can get and how important for the Christian who loves God to know and make adjustments with his life while he can?

"FAITH OF JESUS" OR "FAITH IN JESUS"

In discussion of these aspects of the Sacrificial system, we must never forget that we are called to accept the “faith of Jesus” and not just have “faith in Jesus.” In these articles I have presented the faith of Yeshua in light to his views on atonement. Yeshua believed the Tanakh (Law, Prophets, Writings). If we are to approximate holiness by living Christ-like that means we have to have a new understanding of how we are to live and we must become familiar with the Laws of God which regulate man’s conduct in life. **Only then will our lives, lived in conformity to the Laws of God, result in atonement.** At your death you will appreciate the atonement your life procured through your obedience and repentance when shown your lives and conduct are in error. Such Laws, statutes, and ordinances reveal to us, in 248 positive commandments, what God is and does, and in 365 negative commandments what God is not and what He does not do. Only in incorporating them into our lives can be assured that what we do and believe is correct. Only then can our lives [souls] be an atonement. Failure to measure our conduct as compared with these commandments only assures we live by our own understanding, and that cannot be trusted for our hearts, according to Jeremiah are desperately wicked and we cannot know them for sure. **Having this knowledge, the rest is up to you.** Shalom.



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DID THE APOSTLE PAUL CONTINUE TO BRING BLOOD SACRIFICES AFTER THE DEATH OF JESUS & ITS MEANING FOR CHRISTIANITY TODAY?

Before we begin let me see if we can agree on a premise before reading this article.

A Christian's religious belief system, when tested and exposed to contradictory facts from Biblical languages, Biblical history, Biblical culture, and archeology, must in the Spirit of Truth and Repentance, be flexible enough to change

If you can admit to the truth of the above statement, then read on. If not, you need not continue.

If you were like me then most likely you grew up in the Christian church. Having done so you probably, like myself, were fed a steady diet of the book of Hebrews. In that book which is traditionally attributed to Paul as being the author, we are told that Yeshua was the ultimate sacrifice.

In particular we read:

- Hebrews 9:12-14 Neither by the blood of goats and calves, but by his own blood he entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us....How much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to G-d, purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living G-d?
- Hebrews 9:28 So Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many; and unto them that look for him shall he appear the second time without sin unto salvation.
- Hebrews 10:1-2 For the law having a shadow of good things to come, and not the very image of the things, can never with those sacrifices which they offered year by year continually make the comers thereunto perfect. 2. For then would they not have ceased to be offered?
- Hebrews 10:10 By the which will we are sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all
- Hebrews 10:14 For by one offering he hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified
- Hebrews 10:18 Now where remission of there is, there is no more offering for sin

After writing these passages the writer goes even so far as to say in Hebrews 10:20...."by a new and living way which he hath consecrated for us, through the veil, that is to say, his body" and Hebrews 10:22 "let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith..."

NOW FOR THE HARD PART

Although it cannot be proven for certainty, the tradition of the Church maintains Pauline authorship for the book of Hebrews. As early as the second century Paul was regarded in the East as the author, and during the third century his authorship was the accepted view. In the West, where the epistle was known from earliest times, Pauline authorship was rejected and did not gain acceptance until the fourth century.

Having said that, then we should expect to find examples in Paul's life where he lives out the doctrines of salvation espoused in the book of Hebrews... especially the one concerning the finality of Jesus Christ's death as the final atonement for sin?

Answer for yourself: Does the Apostle Paul, in his life after the cross, share with us examples whereby he shows us that he believes that Yeshua "once for all" redeemed us from sin? Astonishingly, no he doesn't! In fact I will show you in a minute he does just the opposite!

Answer for yourself: Can we find examples in the Apostle Paul's life where he goes against the teachings of the book of Hebrews and continues to bring blood sacrifices for sin as an atonement after the cross? Yes. We will examine the book of Acts and the book of Numbers to prove it to you shortly.

Answer for yourself: Did Paul demonstrate through a Nazarite vow and its accompanying blood sacrifices (Num. 6) that he was obedient to the rules and laws of the Pentateuch and the Mosaic Law, thereby producing a state of approval before G-d after the cross? Yes.

Answer for yourself: How could obedience to the laws of G-d (including those dealing with blood as well as non-blood atonements) produce a state of approval when we are told different today? It sure does and does so easily. If we look up the word used for "law" in the New Testament we find the correct meaning in the Greek:

The Greek word for "law" is as follows:

Lexicon Greek 3551

3551 nomos {nom'-os} from a primary nemo (to parcel out, especially food or grazing to animals); TDNT - 4:1022,646; n m

AV - law 197; 197

- 1) anything established, anything received by usage, a custom, a law, a command
- 1a) of any law whatsoever
- 1a1) a law or rule producing a state approved of G-d
- 1a1a) by the observance of which is approved of G-d
- 1a2) a precept or injunction
- 1a3) the rule of action prescribed by reason
- 1b) of the Mosaic law, and referring to the context. either to the volume of the law or to its contents
- 1c) the name of the more important part (the Pentateuch), is put for the entire collection of the sacred books of the OT

IT CAN BE SHOWN THAT THAT IN THE NEW TESTAMENT THE APOSTLE PAUL BRINGS BLOODY SIN OFFERINGS AFTER THE

CRUCIFIXION OF YESHUA.....SO WHAT GIVES?

That's right it can! Let us now examine the word "offering" as used of the type of sacrifice Paul is recorded as having made in fulfillment of the Nazarite vow in Acts 21:26.

Acts 21:26

26 Then Paul took the men, and the next day purifying himself with them entered into the temple, to signify the accomplishment of the days of purification, until that an offering should be offered for every one of them.

(KJV)

The Greek word for "offering" as used in the text is as follows:

Lexicon Greek 4376

4376 prosphora {pros-for-ah'} from 4374; TDNT - 9:68,1252; n f

AV - offering 8, offering up 1; 9

- 1) the act of offering, a bringing to
- 2) that which is offered, a gift, a present. In the NT a sacrifice, whether bloody or not: offering for sin, expiatory offering

Answer for yourself: Did you notice that this offering could be bloody or not? Yes. So we have to keep studying deeper to get to the truth cause as of now it is unclear which type of offerings Paul brought.

Answer for yourself: How do come to the correct understanding about whether Paul brought blood sacrifices on non-blood sacrifices? Easy. We let the context of the passage define it for us.

And since this offering occurs after the cross - the ramifications of such an offering if is "blood" has staggering consequences for traditional Christianity and Christian doctrine.

INVESTIGATING PAUL'S OFFERING IN DETAIL

We need only to look at what was required in numbers 6 for one who undertook a Nazarite vow.

Since this is a Nazarite vow as described in Acts 21, which occurs almost 30 years after the death of Yeshua, we must look no further than the commandments surrounding the Nazarite vow and these are recorded for us in Numbers chapter 6 to determine if the offerings attendant with it are "bloody" or not:

Numb 6:13 (KJV) And this [is] the law of the Nazarite, when the days of his separation are fulfilled: he shall be brought unto the door of the tabernacle of the congregation: 14 And he shall offer his offering unto the LORD, one he lamb of the first year without blemish for a burnt offering, and one ewe lamb of the first year without blemish for a sin offering, and one ram without blemish for peace offerings, 15 And a basket of unleavened bread, cakes of fine flour mingled with oil, and wafers of unleavened bread anointed with oil, and their meat offering, and their drink offerings. 16 And the priest shall bring [them] before the LORD, and shall offer his sin offering, and his burnt offering: 17 And he shall offer the ram [for] a sacrifice of peace offerings unto the LORD, with the basket of unleavened bread: the priest shall offer also his meat offering, and his drink offering. 18 And the Nazarite shall shave the head of his separation [at] the door of the tabernacle of the congregation, and shall take the hair of the head of his separation, and put [it] in the fire

which [is] under the sacrifice of the peace offerings. 19 And the priest shall take the sodden **shoulder of the ram**, and one unleavened cake out of the basket, and one unleavened wafer, and shall put [them] upon the hands of the Nazarite, after [the hair of] his separation is shaven: 20 And the priest shall wave them [for] a wave offering before the LORD: this [is] holy for the priest, with the wave breast and heave shoulder: and after that the Nazarite may drink wine. 21 This [is] the law of the Nazarite who hath vowed, [and of] his offering unto the LORD for his separation, beside that his hand shall get: according to the vow which he vowed, **so he must do after the law of his separation.**

Answer for yourself: First of all, did you notice that one who undertook a Nazarite vow was required to bring peace offerings as well as sin offerings?

Answer for yourself: Don't you find this rather strange in light of what Hebrews teaches, yet we have Paul's example to the contrary?

Answer for yourself: If Paul is the writer of Hebrews, and if he ascribed to such doctrines taught in Hebrews then why is he doing just the opposite?

Answer for yourself: Are you aware that these peace and sin offerings required the killing and spilling of an animal's blood which had to be sprinkled on the altar?

Answer for yourself: Having read Numbers 6, do you see for yourself that blood sacrifices had to be brought in fulfillment of the Nazarite vow which Paul was obedient to over 30 years after the cross? I hope so.

Answer for yourself: Does it look like it to you that Paul believed, as seen in his actions, that Yeshua was the last sacrifice once and for all? No way.

Answer for yourself: Does it appear to you that the writer of the book of Hebrews 10:1-2 is correct when it states that blood sacrifices for sin had "ceased to be offered?" No way. Evidently Paul surely does not seem to believe it by his actions.

Answer for yourself: Can you say that by Paul's actions he believe that the offering of the body of Yeshua was a once for all sacrifice for sin? You sure can't!

Answer for yourself: How can we believe Hebrews 10:14 where it says we are "perfected forever" by the sacrifice of Yeshua when just 30 years later the Apostle Paul was still bring sin offerings to the Temple (after the death of Yeshua)?

Answer for yourself: Over the course of thirty years had Paul forgotten that "Now where remission of there is, there is no more offering for sin" as Hebrews 10:18 professes? Evidently he did not ascribe to such a teaching as evidenced by his life and actions.

Answer for yourself: How can we draw near to G-d with a true heart when we have been taught a doctrine by our Christian church which cannot be substantiated by looking at Paul's life when he is the one believe to have written it in the first place?

Answer for yourself: Why would Paul bring "blood sacrifices" and "sin offerings" if the Law had been down away with in Yeshua's death or if Yeshua's death had been understood as the final sacrifice of all sacrifices? He most assuredly would not have done so.

Answer for yourself: From the examples I have shown you, how can you in true faith believe that there is a "new way" when it can be shown by Paul's life that there is not any new way at all, but that the only way given to G-d by man was still followed by him as well as gentile converts he taught?

Answer for yourself: Are you aware that maybe for the first time you are seeing the many conflicts in the New Testament which lie just before the surface of the English translation?

Answer for yourself: Will you admit to yourself that what you have just saw throttles mainline Christianity and its teachings about the death of Yeshua as a final atonement for sin? (request our in-depth teachings on atonement and get the answers you need..they are free).

Answer for yourself: Are you aware that not just in Hebrews, but all through the New Testament we have passages which pass for "truth," which upon just a little investigation can be shown to be Gentile fabrications created by Roman and Gentile authors to change the faith of Yeshua into a faith about him and replace Biblical Judaism intended for all mankind with neo-paganism which was their heritage?

Answer for yourself: In other words, are you aware that as a typical Christian you practice a replacement faith which can be shown to be in error by anyone well versed in both the Jewish as well as the Greek Scriptures?

You might ask yourself why no one besides me has pointed this out to you before. I can assure you that there are multitudes coming to the realization to which I bring you today. The Last Days are upon us and as the Prophet Hosea states that in the Last Days G-d will restore the roots to the faith of the Gentiles. Simply, the vast majority of Christian pastors and teachers today are not qualified in the study of the Scriptures to lead anyone as evidenced by what I showed you today. I too like you was led astray by my spiritual leaders as well as my Seminary. Such is the sad reality to which I was born, and only departed after many years of in-depth study to find the truth when my studies challenged much of what I had accepted "by faith." Faith should only confirm and not contradict Biblical facts! But the roots of Gentile anti-Semitism created a new theology to replace what G-d had given all mankind. The legacy remains today and most are not aware.

The fact that Paul does bring blood sacrifices **COMMANDED BY THE LAW** testifies to him and should to us that the Law had not passed away after Yeshua's death as a pattern for life for believers in Yeshua and his message as we so often have been told. But more than that it demonstrates two things:

- **1. That Paul evidently did not think that Yeshua's death was a sacrifice to end all sacrifices.**
- **2. That Paul still felt the need to obey the Law after the death of Yeshua, even laws concerning sin offerings as an atonement for sin.**

Answer for yourself: Is that the message you have received from your church?

Answer for yourself: Has your church or clergy studied deeply enough to search out these truths buried beneath the pages of your Bibles or have they accepted the "echoes" of the past as truth even when the text of your Bibles correctly interpreted says different?

Answer for yourself: What does that do to the traditional teachings we hear week after week in our churches preached by those who repeat what they have heard and not studied out for themselves? Should we feel secure?

Answer for yourself: Dear Christian, can you now see that the Law had never passed away after the cross and we have severely misunderstood the message of the Bible and in its place accepted the traditions of men...many of which are in error and contradict the truths given by G-d? I hope so.

Answer for yourself: Can you begin to guess at the staggering consequences facing you since not only the Law has not passed away, but it seems Yeshua's death was not understood by the first believers as a final atonement for sin as we have been told?

Answer for yourself: As most who read these thought-provoking articles are Christians, do you understand that you, like I did before I learned the truth, have lived most of your lives as "Lawless Believers" and are trusting for your atonement something other than the Bible teaches and what Paul actually believed?

Needles to say we have a great contradiction. Paul's life speaks otherwise than what is attributed to him in his letters. What we have to come to terms

with is that much of what is believed written by Paul is rhetoric put into the mouth of Paul by the early Gentile Church. For you have seen hidden beneath the lines of your Bible evidence which contradicts much of what we are told Paul wrote. The both cannot be reconciled!

It is almost too scary to consider the many sins we have committed "under grace" without the guidance of G-d's Law which would have regulated our conduct and behavior if followed. Bet Emet Ministries continues to warn the Christian concerning the Law and its demands made upon one's worship of G-d through the correct giving of the Tithe, as well as the sanctification and observance of the many appointed times with G-d as commanded in the Law concerning His Festivals and Saturday Sabbaths. Not only this, but the Law details other than non-blood atonements which often are the subject matter of the teachings of Yeshua in the "red" of our Bibles, but our unfamiliarity with the Bible blinds us to such understanding. The only problem is that we, for the most part, don't know the Law and are not aware of what G-d gave besides animal sacrifices that atones for our sins. We must repent if we truly are believers in G-d and love Him more than our erroneous traditions.

SO WHAT IS THE BOTTOM LINE PASTOR CRAIG?

We at Bet Emet Ministries realize that the vast majority of our readers have never had the opportunities presented to me as well as others who are part of our ministry to study in-depth to the degree that we do.

I personally understand the great handicap this presents to the average Christian believer today. The average believer cannot read either Hebrew or Greek and is at a total loss in coming to terms with the original language in which the Bible was written. Those who try to study rarely go deep enough since lacking the skill to do so to the degree necessary to arrive at pertinent information such as this article has provided. Thus, they find themselves dependent upon their local spiritual authorities for spiritual guidance in the Scriptures.

This is the tragic irony of all! Much within the documents comprising the New Testament can be shown to be Gentile fabrications when viewed against the religion of Yeshua which was Biblical Judaism.

As I have shown you in this article alone, a thorough understanding of the Bible and the Jewish Scriptures is necessary to accurately understand the events of the New Testament. Without such a background one is easily led astray by the "agenda" of the Gentile authors of the books of the New Testament in spite of the fact they carry "Jewish names" (given by Jerome). The real apostles of Yeshua had nothing to do with the writing of the Synoptic gospels, for just a cursory background in Judaism betrays the mistakes and errors within the Synoptic Gospels that pass for "Judaism" to the unlearned, which in reality never were a part of the Judaism practiced in the first century. The pagan religions of the non-Jews who were familiar with mystic blood cults. It is not surprising to find in Mythic cults, as well as others, liturgies in their pagan rites often quoted word or for word in the New Testament. How are we to account for this as if given to us by a Jewish Rabbi who fought and gave his life to strengthen the faith of Moses? The chronology and evolution of the Canon of the New Testament which was disputed, argued, debated, and challenged up until the first millennium after Yeshua.

One you come to an understanding that there was not a consensus of opinion concerning the books we take for granted was "inspired scripture," and that consensus was arrived at only after hundreds and hundreds of years, then your opinion of these documents as "authoritative" will quickly vanish. Not only were books "in" and "out" of the Canon of the New Testament repeatedly, but this nonsense seriously calls into questions the role of the Holy Spirit in the selection process itself. Besides that, if you are acquainted with the theologies of those who did the selection, then you should be horrified that G-d would allow such an important task to fall into the hands of idolaters such as the early Roman Church. Let us not forget it was these people who prayed to the dead, believed in Mary as co-mediator with Yeshua, believed in purgatory, believed in purchasing indulgences to get people out of hell, baptized infants for salvation, etc.

did paul continue to bring blood sacrifices after the death of jesus and its meaning for christianity?

Answer for yourself: It is to these we are to look for “inspired Scripture

I could go on and on, but you see the point. If you would like more in-depth teachings concerning the Hebrew Roots of the Christian Faith, how the original faith taken in the Great Commission was corrupted and later changed by Roman invention and how you can return to “the faith once given to the saints,” please contact us or visit our other websites. Shalom.



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WHAT IS THE TRUTH ABOUT THE SCARLET RIBBON THAT FAILED TO TURN WHITE ON YOM KIPPUR FOR 40 FOLLOWING THE TIME OF JESUS' DEATH?

One of our readers sent me an article by two distinguished Christian writers entitled: "Search For The Messiah." The main point of the article concerned the failure on Yom Kippur of the scarlet ribbon to turn white the last forty years of the existence of the Temple. These Christian writers, as well as many others, read this in the Jewish Talmud and arrive at conclusions that are not warranted concerning the death of Jesus at this time and possible atonement through his death. I hope to show you the error of connecting the failure of the scarlet ribbon turning white and the death of Jesus in this article.

But first, the pertinent piece of the article:

"THE SEARCH FOR MESSIAH" BY MARK EASTMAN AND CHUCK SMITH; THE WORD FOR TODAY, JOY PUBLISHING 1996

The following is a synopsis of the article connecting Jesus' death and the failure of the scarlet ribbon to turn white on Yom Kippur as taken from Eastman's and Smith's article. In the days of the Second Temple there was a custom to fasten a red-colored strip of wool to the head of a goat which was to be sent away on the Day of Atonement. When this red ribbon became white, it was a sign that God had forgiven Israel's sins.

There is a statement in the Talmud that about *"forty years before the Second Temple was destroyed...the red wool did not become white!"* [Babylonian Talmud Yoma 39b] The same passage informs us that the gates of the Temple swung open on their own accord! The ancient Rabbis believed that these events were indicators that the sins of Israel were no longer being forgiven and the Temple would soon be destroyed!

- **Answer for yourself:** What was the reason for these strange events?
- **Answer for yourself:** Why was this sign that God gave to the Israelites removed?
- **Answer for yourself:** Was the Levitical system of atoning for sins through animal sacrifice no longer recognized by God?

You must make your choice. Either this man was and is the Son of God: or else a madman or something worse. You can shut Him up for a fool, you can spit at Him and kill Him as a demon; or you can fall at His feet and call Him Lord and God. But let us not come with any patronizing nonsense about His being a great human teacher. He has not left that open to us. He did not intend to. [C.S. Lewis, Mere Christianity]

And it goes on.....

THE CHRISTIAN POSITION ON THIS TALMUDIC PASSAGE:

Simply said, and you read it for yourself, Christians read this or an article where other Christians have alluded to this passage in the Talmud and make two generalizations:

- The Levitical system of atoning for sins through animal sacrifice was no longer recognized by God?
- The death of Jesus, 40 years or so prior, was the reason why the scarlet ribbon no longer turned white, thus indicating his death was a replacement sacrifice for the Temple sacrifices.

Answer for yourself: Can we trust these conclusions as brought to us by the Christian community?

HAVE YOU EVER PERSONALLY READ THE TALMUD FOR YOURSELF?

I learned a long time ago in Seminary to believe nothing I was taught unless I could verify what was being said because, quite frankly, many who represent themselves as “religious authorities” would be better off selling shoes (no offense intended to shoe salesmen for we all need their services, but you get the point).

Answer for yourself: Do you happen to own or have access to the Tractate in the Talmud called Yoma 39 b?

Well you need to get it and read it for yourself. Because what these well intentioned Christians meant is unfortunately a total misrepresentation of the facts recorded by the Rabbis!

When we, as believers in Jesus and followers of Jesus, read such propaganda generated from the misrepresentation mill of Christian energy, unfortunately we have untruths only grounded deeper into our minds and our conclusions are in error and they only sadly reinforce already held beliefs which are in error in the first place.

Before one Pastor or Teacher who represents God to His people writes anything he should have his facts straight and be able to prove what he says. Otherwise such gifts from his pen is to his shame, both to himself and God as he literally misrepresents God to His people and “strikes the rock a second time.” Moses was severely chastised for such an action and I can only wonder the fruit of my similar transgressions years ago as a Christian Pastor more full of zeal than knowledge. I have begged God forgiveness for teaching lies and doctrines accepted by faith uncritically from those “I trusted not to lead me into error.” I was just like you!

Today, I believe I have more integrity than before and before I write anything I have the confidence that I can prove everything I write; or simply I don't write it. I guess that is what is so scary to most who read the truth after years of settling for less. Today understand my research has been impeccable...and that is why I do what I do....try to alert others to falsehoods in their faith and relationship with God....surely we should want our relationship with God built ONLY on truth. Our faith in God and our allegiance to Jesus is not benefited by a lie; in fact it is a detriment to Jesus to teach or preach untruths about him.

SO WHAT DOES TRACTATE YOMA 39b SAY?

As I said earlier you need to read this for yourself for I am about to correct the distinguished Christian writers of the above article who more than likely earned money by such an article of misrepresented facts.

First of all Jesus was born as determined by scholars at in the year 4 BC.....a year before Herod died....so Jesus was born 4 years before his birth according to Christianity.....get it...that is a joke? I hope you caught the word play of "BC."

Next.....the Talmud DOES NOT SAY....the scarlet ribbon quit turning white in and around the

year 40 C.E. (A.D.). It does not make the connection of the failure of the scarlet ribbon to continue to turn white, indicating forgiveness of sins, at the time of Jesus' death.

Here is what Yoma 39 b does say...

"Our Rabbis taught: Throughout the forty years that Simeon the Righteous ministered, the lot [For the Lord] would always come up in the right hand: from that time on, it would come up now in the right hand, now in the left. And [during the same time] the crimson-colored strap would become white. ***From that time on IT WOULD AT TIMES become white, at others not.*** Also: Throughout those forty years the westernmost light was shining, ***from that time on, it was now shining, now failing;*** also the fire of the pile of wood kept burning strong, so that the priests did not have to bring to the pile any other wood besides the two logs, in order to fulfill the command about providing the wood unintermittently; ***from that time on, it would occasionally keep burning strong, at other times not, so that the priests could not do without brining throughout the day wood for the pile [on the altar].*** "It was considered a happy omen when the lot came up in the right hand, and the temptation was as great as near to improve upon chance by dexterous manipulation. If the scarlet ribbon which was tied between the horns of the bullock became white, it signified the Holy One, blessed be He, had forgiven Israel's sin. The westernmost light on the candlestick in the Temple, into which as much oil was put as into others, when extinguished, burned on, in spite of the fact that it had been kindled first. This miracle was taken as a sign that the Shechinah rested over Israel" (Yoma 39b). ***The failure of these manifestations was at first INTERMITTENT and they were connected by the Rabbis to the cessation of the ministry of Simeon the Righteous!***

"From that time on a curse was sent..." (Yoma 39b).

Answer for yourself: Did you see anything mentioned about the failure of the scarlet ribbon turning white, the failure of the westernmost light to shine, and the failure of the fire to keep lighted connected with Jesus or his death in any way?

YOMA 39B GOES ON TO SAY:

Answer for yourself: Did you notice that for many years the manifestations ceased on an intermittent basis and only the last 40 years did it become constant?

"During the ***last forty years before the destruction of the Temple*** the lot [For the Lord] did not come up in the right hand; not did the crimson-colored strap become white: not did the westernmost light shine; and the doors of the Hekal would open by themselves, until R. Johanan b. Zakkai rebuked them, saying: Hekal, Hekal, why wilt thou be the alarmer thyself?"

If one keeps reading we find that there is an allusion to the cessation of the miraculous in the Temple during the reign of Solomon when "idolators" entered the Temple.

Answer for yourself: Since the same passage refers to the cessation of the miraculous first intermittently, then constantly, and includes a reference to the same cessation of the miraculous due to the presence of "idolators" in the Temple, do you not think that the same message is being conveyed to Israel during these difficult day? Are you aware that pagan sacrifices were being brought to Caesar in the Temple at this time?

Answer for yourself: So what did we just read? There was no mention of Jesus death....and that the cessation of these miraculous signs were occurring long before the last 40 years.....during Jesus' infancy, his childhood, his ministry....while he was still alive.....not waiting till his death to manifest!

Answer for yourself: Are the conclusions from Christian commentators like Chuck Smith and Mark Eastman accurate?

Answer for yourself: So what have we learned? The cessation of these miraculous signs as God approval and forgiveness of Israel's sins began when Simeon the RIGHTEOUS' ministry ceased at his death. The righteous example to Israel had perished among them. Simeon's light illuminating the path of repentance from idolatry had been extinguished, and if you have studied the religious milieu of Second Temple Judaism in this time frame you then understand the message being conveyed by God to Israel because their hearts had not returned to the fathers (Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Moses, etc.).

John the Baptist, Jesus, and Peter began their ministry with one word: "repent and return to God and His commandments." Israel was given a generation to repent and merit its calling as a Holy Nation and Royal Priesthood to the nations. Instead she wanted to be like her Gentile neighbors. The generation was given 40 years to repent and she would not. Her Temple would be taken from her and the failure of the scarlet ribbon was a testimony from God that Israel's heart was not symbolized by the animals slain on the altar. Israel had continued to put the "blood/life/soul of the animal on the altar at Yom Kippur for the nation for atonement, but the nation had failed to repent of her idolatry before offering the Yom Kippur sacrifice, and the nations' soul/life was not accurately represented when the blood/life/soul of the animal, in proxy, was presented on the altar in lieu of Israel's soul. God, not seeing a repentant heart of His people before the offering of their sacrifices, meant the animal or blood accomplished nothing; for the animal and its blood/soul was but a picture of the actual state of those offering the sacrifice in the first place. God had no choice but to send the message: *"your sins are not forgiven just because you slaughter animals and sprinkle their blood....it is your hearts that still harbor sin which is not yet forgiven."* [see Isa.1] If you have never understood how the sacrificial system worked, ask and we will see you get this very important information as Christianity teaches it completely wrong!

If you have studied much you can see Israel needed desperately to repent.....modernism, liberalism, when in Rome do as the Romans stuff....and this was the message of the Prophets and Jesus and Simeon as well.

The lapsing of such miraculous events as the scarlet ribbon failing to turn white intermittently before the birth of Jesus demonstrates to us that God was telling them the same message that He will only reinforce more strongly later. It has nothing to do with the death of Jesus as it began long before his birth. This was a message from God to the people to repent...and return to Him...it began long before Jesus died....and accurately he dies in and around 36...that is 4 years before the events would lapse completely.

Answer for yourself: So let me ask you...you are reading materials by people who misrepresent the facts.....hopefully you will tired of that.....I did.....so I set out and dedicated myself to learn the truth for myself and teach it to others.

Answer for yourself: Nowcan we say that the cessation of these events signal that Jesus' death replaced the Sacrificial System and are connected to Jesus' death? Nooooooooooooo!

But it does not matter...we can still believe in him and look to him as a model of "Godliness" and the possible Messiah.....Christians do not need to embellish the truth to make Jesus greater than he already is...let us be satisfied with the truth. Shalom.



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WHAT DID THE DEATH OF YESHUA ACTUALLY ACCOMPLISH? ...STUDIES IN BIBLICAL ATONEMENT #1

It is assumed that before you read these articles that you have already read and are conversant with the prior articles on "Atonement and the Sacrificial System". If not then to properly understand what follows will not only be difficult but impossible for most.

Christians have been told their whole lives that two great objectives were accomplished by Yeshua's death as recorded in the New Testament. As I grew up in the Christian church I was told Sunday after Sunday that Yeshua's death and crucifixion was an act of atoning, or making up for human sin. Along the same vein such atonement was to be understood as my "salvation" as accepting such death for my sin allowed me to enter into right relationship with God through Yeshua's death. It was explained to me that salvation requires God's forgiveness and that this in turn required an adequate atonement to satisfy the divine righteousness and/or justice. It was further explained to me that Yeshua's crucifixion whereby he shed his blood was the atoning act that make payment to wipe out my debt due to my sin and subsequently canceled my impending judgment by God.

Answer for yourself: Assuming that your have read the prior articles on "Atonement and the Sacrificial System" as it is understood in Biblical Judaism then how this is possible as we saw that it is the "soul" that makes atonement and not actually "the blood" and that this was accomplished long before any animal was taken to the Temple through the spiritual actions of the "sinner" through repentance, confession, prayer, alms, etc.?

In the background there is the idea of the **moral order of the universe** which requires that sin, **as a disruption of that order**, be restored either by just punishment of the offender or a substitute, or by some adequate satisfaction in lieu of punishment. For those of you who have studied our Egypt Website then you understand this principle has been with mankind since the beginning (<http://www.egyptcx.netfirms.com>).

Besides the above, as a Christian I was taught that the shedding of Yeshua's blood was for the removal of the curse under which mankind labored as a result of the disobedience and fall. Along with these teachings I was assured that this restoration of men to the image and fellowship of God through the blood of Yeshua was essential to my salvation. All I needed to do was accept this teaching as true and I was "saved".

Reconciling God and men we call the **Atonement**; and this doctrine lies at the very heart of the Christian religious belief system. There is only one problem. **Sadly few understand correctly this very important doctrine correctly since most Christians have been taught to accept the above accounts of Yeshua's death over what the Jewish Bible, Moses, and the Prophets teach. Again, even if one studies atonement as taught in the Hebrew Scriptures, it usually is misunderstood correctly without a proper understanding of the Hebraic roots from which it came.**

It is hoped that this article will go along way to educate the believing Christian concerning the truth about the atonement. Let me caution you that since this material is highly controversial, read the whole series of articles and think for yourself. Try to give a fair hearing to what I will share with you and then make up your mind based upon the **new information and materials I will present.** Then and only then, after you have the facts, can you be expected to make an intelligent decision. **If I as a Christian, and an ordained Pastor no less, had understood the "Sacrificial System of the Bible correctly" in the first place before ever reading the New Testament then I would have spotted right away the "false atonement" teaching in the New Testament and would not have wasted the first thirty years of my life as an idolator.** I can never thank God enough that in my many years of intense study the day that I ran across two Christian Old Testament commentators that first opened my eyes to how the sacrificial system of the Old Testament really worked. These two Christian Commentators are C.F. Keil and F. Delitzsch and their important series of scholarly books entitled **Commentary On The Old Testament** (10 volume set). May God bless them for their honesty when I have found so many who are not and may our LORD bless your search for truth as He has mine. When encountering their explanation of the sacrificial system I was overwhelmed by what they taught and this began for me an intensive investigation into the nuts and bolts of how the sacrificial system operated from a Jewish perspective. It would not be long before I sought out Jewish Rabbis and found that what Keil and Delitzsch has said was true; the Jews and Rabbis had known this all along. I was amazed that I could have graduated Seminary no less and never heard the truth about the sacrificial system; such truth required a complete reevaluation of the New Testament and the meaning of Jesus' death. When you come to this knowledge for yourself then you must then inquire as to why such false teachings were written into the texts about Jesus and where the Gentile writers of the New Testament got such ideas. I did and the results of my research are found on our other websites. Such pagan ideas of atonement have existed I found since the beginning of time in the Gentiles' beliefs in crucified sun-g-dmen that find their origins in astral, cosmic, and solar religions that evolved basically from sun-worship: <http://paganizingfaithofyeshua.netfirms.com>. But that study is for another day and you need to completely comprehend the information in these articles first as they are the very basis of your true relationship with God as the sacrificial system was a picture only of what your true relationship with God really was and as you have seen this was determined by one's repentance, confession, prayer, alms, etc., or the lack of such spiritual disciplines. This information is my gift to you. May your relationship with God be strengthened like never before in what you learn in these next articles. **Only after you finish these studies on atonement should you begin your study on sun-worship and learn how and why such ideas replaced the faith of Jesus (Biblical Judaism) by the Gentiles who hated Jews and wanted nothing to do with a Torah observant life.**

WHO WAS GIVEN THE DOCTRINE OF ATONEMENT FIRST ...THE JEWS OR THE GENTILES?

We are altogether dependent on Scripture and Jewish writings for our knowledge concerning the doctrine of the Atonement and can know only what God has seen fit to reveal concerning it as such truth if found in the Jewish Scriptures. Human philosophy and speculation can contribute practically nothing toward its solution, nor can "eisegesis" whereby Yeshua is read into every text of the Old Testament when it is plain he is not in such contexts. **Our present purpose in this article is to give a systematized account of what the Jewish Scriptures teach concerning it, and to show that this fits in perfectly with the longings and aspirations of an enlightened spiritual nature. You will realize that the teachings of the Jewish Scriptures will be contradicted by some of the passages in the New Testament attributed to Paul and the writer of the Gospel of John (another Gentile writing under a Jewish name). This presents a major problem for the believing Christian if he is aware of what the Jewish Scriptures teach from Genesis to Malachi concerning atonement. But I have found over the many years of my Pastorate that Biblical ignorance of the Old Testament by Christians is a stumbling stone of immense proportions when it comes to discerning Biblical truth from Biblical lies written into the New Testament by anti-Semites**

centuries ago.

Answer for yourself: If the New Testament is wholly dependent upon the Old Testament for its credibility and foundation, then how can the New Testament teach doctrines contrary to what the Jewish Scriptures taught for 4000 years and be considered correct? Have you ever noticed such contradictions or have you passed them by due to insufficient study or shallow reading? It is time you see these things for yourself before you meet your Creator. It is my hope to awaken you to the truth of the faith once given to the saints before it is too late.

THINGS ARE BEGINNING TO GET MUDDLED WHEN YOU READ PAUL

In one of Paul's most condensed statements of Christian truth we read:

"For I delivered unto you first of all that which also I received: that Christ (Messiah) died for our sins according to the Scriptures; and that he was buried; and that he hath been raised on the third day according to the Scriptures," I Cor. 15:3.

First of all understand that the word "Christ" means "anoint" or "Messiah" in Hebrew. So Paul is saying that the Messiah died for our sins. For Paul that means Yeshua because Paul believed Yeshua was "the Messiah" who would return during his lifetime and fulfill the Torah and Prophets concerning what Israel was promised about the Messiah. Up to this time, and let there be no mistake about it, fulfillments of prophecies by Yeshua proving that he was "the" Messiah were unfulfilled. They remain unfulfilled today as well and the Jewish people who have a Old Testament which is not forged like our Christian one's know this for certain and look toward the coming of their Messiah yet today. If you take time to follow through and study the link to the website above you will see this tragedy for yourself as to how our Christian Old Testament and the quotes taken from it in our New Testament are a complete and abject forgery; in other words lies. So let us understand this statement by Paul is a statement of faith that Yeshua will be the Messiah. There is a big difference between faith and facts.

What must be understood as well is that this Corinthian letter is one of the earliest writings of Paul. Also we must take note of the fact that most of the New Testament and other Pauline writings were not written when Paul wrote this early epistle and that no gospels were written. Therefore we must conclude that "according to the Scripture" MUST refer to the existing Jewish Scriptures consisting of the Law, the Prophets, and the Writings. If you really know your Bibles then this is a major problem for the Christian religious belief system because NOWHERE ...NOWHERE in the Jewish Old Testament Scriptures can we find that the Jewish Messiah was to die and be resurrected a 3rd day as Paul attests. Paul's Gospel or his understanding concerning the Jewish Messiah is not the Jewish Messiah of the Hebrew Scriptures. You guessed it; we must look to Gentile sun-worship to find Paul's ideas concerning "his Gospel." Let us see this for ourself!

Answer for yourself: Have you ever seen for yourself any Old Testament passages which explicitly teach that the Messiah was to come and die by crucifixion? Before you say "yes" you need to read the next paragraph.

Well we have a problem right from the start because the Jewish Scriptures are not faithfully reproduced by the Greek translation and all subsequent Christian Old Testaments. Simply said they are "fixed" and sun-worship doctrines along with it's false atonement are intermingled on the pages of this Greek translation which served as the foundation for ALL later Christian Old Testaments. That means that ALL Christian Old Testaments contain passages that are 180 degrees opposed to what many of the Jewish texts originally said. Since ALL New Testament quotes come from these fraudulent Old Testament texts then by default we are led astray in the New Testament and never

know it. Simply said what this means is that intermixed with Divine Revelation given to the Jews by YHVH we now find astral, solar, and sun-worship along with its false atonement mixed in with Divine Revelation (in both the Christian Old Testament and New Testament) and without prior knowledge of this on your part it is impossible to discern the truth from these false teachings. We end up as Christians reading both and mingling them together in our religious belief systems. The sad part is that we end up as idolators and die and meet God and find out that we were wrong and lived our lives in error and then it is too late for proper worship or repentance. The fate of such is not what I want for myself nor you.

Answer for yourself: Have you ever seen for yourself any Old Testament passages which explicitly teach that the Messiah was to come and die and that his death was to be an atonement for our sin?

Some will say "Isaiah 53" teaches such. Again I direct you to the above paragraph which states that many of the passages of the Christian's Old Testament are "doctored" and Isaiah unfortunately is the worst. The apostate Essenes of Alexandria, Egypt, make over 6000 changes to Isaiah alone. But again you must see this for yourself and I have provided such information for your study on this site in the series entitled "[What You Were Never Taught In The Christian Church: The Truth About Isaiah 53](#)." You need to read the series to see what I am saying; once you have the facts you cannot be proved wrong. You will see how the original Hebrew Isaiah was "forged" to replace true Jewish atonement as practiced in the sacrificial system with a Cosmic God-man atonement which we read in our Christian Bibles today. Some will deny, some will wish that they had never seen the truth; but you cannot change what has happened; only become aware of it and repent of a false religious belief system. Now let us continue.

If you are an expert on the true Old Testament and true Jewish Scriptures you will have to admit that there are NO. passages that teach that the messiah will die and resurrect in 3 days!!! The Jews who have such true Jewish Scriptures which are not altered have always known this...it is we Gentiles with our false documents who don't!!!

Answer for yourself: If you are well versed in the Old Testament and the true Masoretic text which have not been forged (Stone Edition Tanakh or JPS Tanakh), then you already know what I have said is true. I must ask you: if you know this then Paul's statement in 1st Corinthians 15:3 will be a major problem for you, for how could Paul be teaching and quoting about something so fundamental to his religious beliefs concerning salvation as a prior Jewish doctrine in the Jewish Scriptures, which yet upon examination of the existing Jewish texts of his day, have no available reference for his claims?

Answer for yourself: Is Paul grabbing things out of the air and telling the non-Jews of the world who knew no better that what he is teaching them comes from the Jewish Scriptures when in reality it does not? Have false teachings been added to Pauline literature and whole epistles forged in his name? How can a "Pharisee of the Pharisees" not teach correctly the Sacrificial System let alone Atonement? You will soon see the truth of this matter as we study the texts and see the changes for ourselves and see a "different gospel" has been mixed in with the truth and without serious study one hardly ever notices the difference.

Answer for yourself: Could you as a non-Jew be just like Paul's audience...unacquainted and unknowledgeable concerning the true Jewish texts and ripe for believing anything you hear or read which is presented to you as "Scripture?" I sure was and I had a Seminary degree and it would be two years after graduation before I learned about the textual corruptions within my Christian Bible and the many falsifications of the Jewish texts as well as many of the Jewish doctrines concerning such topics as atonement which was done centuries ago and that is what I am sharing with you in these series of articles.

I have an extensive site exposing such deceptions of Paul: <http://paulproblem.faithweb.com>; but again that is a study for you only after you have come to the truth about true Biblical atonement.

CRITICAL FOR OUR UNDERSTANDING IS WHAT IF ANYTHING DID YESHUA'S DEATH ACCOMPLISH

For those who have studied sufficiently the Gnostic Gospels and Gnostic Christianity then you will understand my next comment. For all others then let us continue under the assumption that Yeshua is a historical person. With such an assumption then let us consider the possibility of the following concerning the death of Yeshua and what if anything it accomplished:

- Was the death of Yeshua the result of our sins or did his death atone for sins?
- Did such a death atone for **ALL** our sins or did such a death atone only for **PART** of our sins (Yom Kippur/The Day of Atonement teaches us the truth in this regard)...or did his death atone for **NONE** of our sins?
- Is it **death** or rather **life** which actually atones for sin?

Before we ever hope to get to the very heart of the issue we must come to a better understanding of the sacrificial system in order to correctly consider if Yeshua's death can be understood as a proper sacrifice within the Law and the dynamics within it that affects the forgiveness of sin.

WHAT IS THE TRUTH ABOUT THE SACRIFICIAL SYSTEM IN WHICH BLOOD WAS SHED?

When the glory of the Lord had entered the tabernacle in a cloud, God revealed Himself to Moses from this place where He would put His Name, according to His promise in Ex. 25:22 to make known His will through him to the people. The first of these revelations related to the sacrifices, in which the Israelites were to draw near (korban) to God, that they might become partakers of His grace.

The patriarchs, when sojourning in Canaan, had already worshipped the God who revealed Himself to them, with both burnt offerings and slain offerings. Whether their descendants, the children of Israel, had offered sacrifices to the God of their Fathers during their stay in Egypt, we cannot tell as there is no allusion whatever to the subject in the short account of these 430 years. What is certain is that they had not forgotten to regard the sacrifices as a leading part of the worship of God, and were ready to follow Moses into the desert, to serve the God of their Fathers there by a solemn act of sacrificial worship (Ex. 5:1-3; 4:31; 8:4); and also, that after the exodus from Egypt, not only did Jethro offer burnt offerings and slain offerings to God in the camp of the Israelites, and prepare a sacrificial meal in which the elders of Israel took part along with Moses and Aaron (Ex. 18:12), but young men offered burnt offerings and slain offerings by the command of Moses at the conclusion of the covenant (Ex. 24:5). Consequently sacrificial laws of these chapters presuppose the presentation of burnt offerings, meat-offerings, and slain offerings as a custom well known to the people and a necessity demanded by their religious feelings. They were not introduced among the Israelites for the first time by Moses by what he learned at Sinai, because animal sacrifices date from the earliest period of mankind.

The subject of sacrificial laws in the book of Leviticus was not to enforce sacrificial worship upon the Israelites, nor to apply some sort of a theory concerning the Hebrew sacrifices, but simply to organize and expand the sacrificial worship of the Israelites into an institution in harmony with the covenant between the Lord and His people, and adapt and promote the end for which it was established.

But although sacrifice in general reaches up to the earliest times of man's history, and is met with in every nation, it was not enjoined upon the human race by any positive commandment of God, but sprang out of a religious necessity for fellowship with God. These sacrifices assumed very different forms in different tribes and

nations, in consequence of their estrangement from God, and their growing loss of all true knowledge of Him. Their ideas of the Divine Being were regulated by the nature, object, and significance of the sacrifices they offered, and they were quite as subservient to the worship of idols as to that of the one true God. To discover the fundamental idea, which was common to all the sacrifices, we must remember, that the **first sacrifices**

were presented after the fall. Also interesting by its absence is any mention of expiation or forgiveness in the pre-Mosaic sacrifices of the Old Testament. This is very important! THINK!

You will come to see that something happened in the time of Moses that will change some things regarding sacrifice, offerings, and relationship with God and we will get to that in a minute but don't forget this important thought.

Answer for yourself: Are you telling me that sacrifices before the Golden calf were never brought for forgiveness? Yes that is exactly what I am saying **(THINK OF THIS FOR A SECOND)!**

FORGIVENESS WAS NOT THE THEME OF SACRIFICES FROM ADAM TO MOSES...BUT REPRESENTING FELLOWSHIP OF ONE'S SOUL WITH GOD

Before the fall man lived in blessed unity with God. This unity was destroyed by sin, and the fellowship between God and man was disturbed, **thought not entirely abolished**. In the punishment which God inflicted upon the sinners, He did not withdraw His mercy from men; and before driving them out of paradise, He gave them clothes to cover the nakedness of their shame, by which they had first of all become conscious of their sin. Even after the expulsion He still manifest Himself to them, so that they were **able once more** to draw near to Him and enter into fellowship with Him. **This fellowship (NOT forgiveness) they sought through the medium of sacrifices**, in which they gave a visible expression not only to their gratitude towards God for His blessing and His grace, but also to their supplication for the further **continuance of His divine favor**. It was in this sense that both Cain and Abel offered sacrifices, thought not with the same motives or in the same state of heart toward God. In this sense of fellowship and not forgiveness Noah also offered sacrifice after his deliverance from the flood; the only apparent difference being this, that the sons of Adam offered their sacrifices to God from the fruit of their labor, in the tilling of the ground and the keeping of sheep, whereas Noah presented his burnt offering from the clean cattle and birds that had been shut up with him in the ark (those animals would from that time forward be assigned to man as food...Gen. 9:3). Noah was probably led to make this selection by the command of God to take with him into the ark not one or more pairs, but 7 of every kind of clean beasts, as he may have discerned in this an indication of the divine will, that the 7th animal of every description of clean beast and bird should be offered in sacrifice to the Lord, for His gracious protection from destruction by the flood. Also notice the distinction of "clean and unclean" foods long before the Sinai experience.

Answer for yourself: What does this have to say about a non-Jew and his diet before God? Remember this was a long time before Sinai and both God and Noah made distinction between clean and unclean food.

Moses also received a still further intimation as to the meaning of the animal sacrifices, in the prohibition which God appended to the permission to make use of animals as well as green herbs for food: **"flesh with the life thereof, which is the blood thereof, shall ye not eat "** (Gen. 9:4-5). **This prohibition is because the flesh still contained the blood as the animal's SOUL (the soul resides in the blood of the animal). In this there was already an intimation, that in the bleeding sacrifice the soul of the animal was given up to God with the blood; and**

therefore; that by virtue of its blood as the vehicle of the soul, animal sacrifice was the most fitting means of representing the surrender of the soul (ie. the human soul) to God. The blood was not important; it was the soul in the blood that was important and this is something that a New Testament believer must come to understand because it will have a dramatic effect when we get to the death of Jesus.

This is an aspect of the death of Yeshua that the church has not ever considered nor ever heard. This truth may possibly have been only dimly surmised by Noah and his sons; but it must have been clearly revealed to the patriarch Abraham, when God demanded the sacrifice of his only son, with whom his whole heart was bound up, as a proof of his obedience of faith, and after he had attested his faith in his readiness to offer this sacrifice, supplied him with a ram to offer as a burnt-offering instead of his own (Gen. 22). In this the truth was practically revealed to him, that the **true God did not require human sacrifice from His worshipers, but the surrender of heart/soul and the denial of the natural life, even though it should amount to a submission to death itself,** and also that this act of surrender was to be perfected in the animal sacrifice; and that it was **only when presented with these motives that sacrifice could be will pleasing to God.**

PURPOSE OF OFFERINGS?

The word "korban" is commonly translated either "sacrifice" or "offering", but the truth is that the English language does not possess a word that accurately expresses the concept contained in the word. **The Hebrew word "korban" means to draw near as in drawing near to God.** The word "sacrifice" implies that the person bringing it is required to deprive himself of something in order to satisfy someone else's need, but God finds no satisfaction in inflicting pain or deprivation upon His children. The word "offering" is closer to the mark but it too fails to convey the true meaning of a "korban". "Offering" implies that the Recipient of the gift must be appeased, that He requires a tribute that will somehow appease His wrath or make Him receptive to the entreaties of a supplicant, or that He has a need that can only be satisfied by someone other than Himself. As if God required our gifts!

"If you have acted righteously, what will you have given Him! (Job 35:7);

God does not become enriched by man's accomplishments.

Answer for yourself: Which concepts has Gentile Christianity drawn from in its understanding of "offerings": drawing near to God as the Jews did, or deprivation of self or appeasement of an angry God? That should not be hard to answer as deprivation and appeasement are major themes within Christianity. But such understanding misses the point entirely as you now have seen in the Hebrew definition of "Korban."

KORBAN..WHAT DOES IT MEAN?

The Hebrew word "korban" itself provides the answer. The root of "korban" means **"to come near."** Again the idea carries the concept of fellowship as we have seen in the sacrifices between Adam to Moses. The person bringing an offering does so in order to come closer to God, to elevate his level of spirituality thereby approaching God in the Spirit.

When Adam was deposited in the Garden of Eden, his first responsibility was to work it and guard it (Gen. 2:15). That means that Adam was commanded to plant, work, cultivate; everything that was necessary to keep the Garden as a Paradise. Before Adam's sin, man had no need to be a peasant; everything grew for him at God's command, with no need for him to exert himself in any way. It was only after his sin that he was expelled from Eden and required to earn his bread through the sweat of his brow.

Answer for yourself: How then was he to work and guard Eden?

The answer is simple if you know a little about Judaism and the religion of Jesus; through the study of Torah and the performance of positive and negative commandments. His livelihood would come in return for his obedience to God's will. God will always respond to man's righteousness by blessing his material efforts.

Adam's mission was to make himself an offering in his lifetime, by dedicating himself unreservedly to God. Adam's life of obedience (soul/life in his blood) was to be his offering to God. Such a life lived in obedience to the commands of God would assuredly draw God's presence near to Adam as well as allow Adam close to God. On God's Throne of Glory, there is an image of a man (Ez. 1:10). Every human being has his own image above, his ideal spiritual self, which represents his goal and his potential. Man's soul is placed in an earthly body so that he can surmount the challenges of material life and raise himself up to his personal, heavenly self; to unite his earthly self with his higher self. Just as everyone has a body and a soul, and his mission is to triumph in the eternal struggle of body versus soul, so, too, many must struggle to live up to the summons of his higher self.

Man is religious yet he sins! How can he defy the Creator he believe in? He is kind and generous, yet he is sometimes mean and stingy. He is moral, but has lapses in conduct. Whatever man is, he is often inconsistent, and if he is honest with himself, he knows that he is far from living up to his inner image. He wants his body to come closer to his soul; on a yet higher level, he should also want his soul to live up to its counterpart on high.

Similarly, there is a Temple in heaven that corresponds to the Temple on earth. Egypt always taught "So as above so beneath". I love the study of Egypt and its religion for when you see past the erroneous teaching that Egyptian religion is polytheistic then you see the most fascinating understanding of God to date. They knew that we are but an image of the real in the Heaven above and that is why they built upon this earth mirror images of what exists above us in the Heavens. The masters of Kabbalah (the Jews being the offspring of the Semites and Egyptians) likewise teach that the good deeds of the people of God accumulate to build a spiritual replica of that heavenly Temple, and when there are enough such good deeds, the heavenly Temple will come down to the Temple Mount, signaling the end of the exile and the beginning of the perfect world foretold by the prophets. This is similar to the striving of the individual soul. There is a higher ideal we must see to capture in our mundane lives. Possibly it is best expressed by the Psalmist: "the heavens are the Lord's, but the earth He has given to mankind (Psm. 115:16). The heavens are already heavenly; God does not need man to improve upon them. But He has given us the earth that we might make it heavenly, as well. God gave mankind the Torah as instruction to bring heaven to earth through obedience of God's will as expressed in His living Word. This is best expressed through acts of Loving Kindness (Gemilut Hasadim) and Repairing of the World (Tikkun Olam). Adam was the offering, and for him to devote anything less than his maximum to God would have been to steal his Divinely conferred potential and misappropriate it for himself. The sin of eating from the Tree of Knowledge was such a misappropriation because he would be flouting the will of God. The truest offering is when the owner brings "himself" to God, making himself and his desires subservient to the teachings and guidelines of the Torah. The symbolism of the offerings is based on this concept; that the animal is secondary; that is but an indication of what its owner feels and toward what he strives.

REASONS FOR THE OFFERINGS

The function and purpose of the offerings are not concepts that man can grasp rationally. Especially in modern times when anything not measurable, observable, or repeatable is questioned and denied, the idea of offerings is not an easy one to understand. It is necessary, therefore, to understand that they and their efficacy are manifestations of God's plan and wisdom. They are reality, even though we have never seen them and have no personal experience through which to know their potency.

We cannot understand why the slaughter of a sanctified animal, the placing of its blood and the burning of its

flesh on the Altar; why these acts should bring God's Presence down to earth (accomplishes fellowship). Had the Jewish people been asked about the possibility of this happening before they had seen it, perhaps even they would have been skeptical. **But they saw it happen!** They saw the cloud of God's glory descend upon the Tent of Meeting. They saw a heavenly fire descend to their Altar and remain there for hundreds of years. They saw a Divine glow on Moses' face. To them, these were demonstrable, visible, tangible facts.

Answer for yourself: Incomprehensible to our rational, scientific minds? Surely. But so was the splitting of the atom to rational minds a hundred years ago.

Various reasons for the offerings are given by classic commentators. The reason for the offerings is so profound that it is beyond human comprehension and the best efforts of the greatest of Jewish thinkers can yield only a drop in the ocean of God's intent. I want to share some of these with you as the purpose and reasons for offerings.

OFFERINGS AS A SUBSTITUTE FOR MAN

The offerings were seen to elevate three parts of every human deed: **thought, speech, and action**. When a person sins and then brings an offering, all three of those elements are used to take the sinful use to which he had previously put them, and transform it into the instrument of doing God's will. The person bringing the offering performs the commandment of **leaning, by placing his hands on its head and leaning on it, thereby dedicating his strength and activity to God. He purifies his thought and intentions, by confessing his sin**, pronouncing the spiritual goal that he hopes to attain, or uttering praises to God. As a further way of **purging his sinful thoughts, the innards of the animal; representing the human organs that are the seat of desire and through, are burned on God's Altar**. In the case of an elevation-offering, which is completely burned, the animal's feet symbolize the hands and feet with which man ran and acted to defy his Creator. **The animal's blood (containing its soul), representing man's soul, is placed on the Altar (notice it is the soul that is the "key" that is placed upon the Altar and not just the blood...the blood is only the vessel or the vehicle for the soul)**. Let us not forget that the animal was purchased by man's finances which were a product of his energy and work; therefore the animal was representative of the man and his investment in the animal...**in a way the animal was an extension and picture of the man who would later bring the animal as an offering**. Time and effort had gone into the upkeep and maintenance of the animal prior to his sacrifice. **In a large way a lot of the man was in the animal and the animal was literally an extension of his life. Such was a perfect substitute for man. A lot of a person's life, his soul, was invested in the animal. In a way soul of the animal was an extension of the offerer's soul, as seen in the animal, which was placed on the altar.**

This is of major importance as we continue to see that the animal's soul, as contained in the blood, was put upon the altar in oneness/fellowship with the Spirit of God which was in reality a picture of the person bringing the offering which was, through the animal, placed by proxy also was upon the altar. In other words, the offerer's soul/life, as tied up in the animals' life, was in reality placed on the altar with God. Such was the manifestation of fellowship as stated previously and since God had already promised to meet man ON THE ALTAR then when such a man placed the animal's soul/blood on the altar he was in reality placing his soul on the altar where God resided. Thus man's soul was on the altar in complete communion and fellowship with YHWH through the sacrificial system. What is important for us as we shall soon see is the "condition of such a man's soul" both before and during the placing of the blood/soul of the animal (picture of him) on the altar.

ATONEMENT...IS IT ACCOMPLISHED THROUGH "THE BLOOD" OR "THE LIFE" WHICH JUST HAPPENED TO BE IN THE BLOOD?

Let us go deeper now. In other words it is not the blood that atones, but the "soul" that atones.

Isa. 53:10 states

"Yet it pleased the Lord to bruise him; he hath to grief: when thou shalt make his soul an offering for sin...KJV"

In one of the greatest passages in the Bible, we are told by Isaiah the prophet that it is the "soul" and not the blood of the suffering servant that atones for sin and as Christians we are told that this verse is supposed to refer to Jesus; but hold on for a shock!

Amazingly but 2.5 billions Christians are not aware that there is a major problem with this verse as quoted from the KJV. It is a gross mistranslation of what the Hebrew really said. Here is but one example of the falsification of the Jewish Scriptures that I have been telling you about. Before we go on we must look at what the verse in the Hebrew Masoretic text really said.

Reading Isa. 53:10 from the Hebrew Scriptures and the Hebrew Bible we have:

- 10 And the Lord wished to crush him [corporate Israel...remember?] He made him ill; **if his soul makes itself restitution**, he shall see seed, he shall prolong his days, and God's purposes shall prosper in his hand.

Answer for yourself: Did you notice a completely different rendering? Did you notice the conditional statement **"if"** which alludes to one's personal responsibility to make restitution for one's own sin?

Answer for yourself: Do you remember that previously I mentioned that it was only after one repented, confessed his sin, prayed, made atonement, etc., that he received atonement and this was done prior to any animal being selected or killed and the blood collected according to the Hebrew Scriptures? Now do you see the importance of the "if" word in the real Isaiah 53:10 which is not altered as we find in the Greek and English versions? Can you imagine this referring supposedly to a non-sinner like Jesus? Does the passage really refer to him or has it been altered to make it "Jesusized"?

It is not surprising, but such an idea is totally removed from the English Bibles who quote Isa. 53 incorrectly. The problem I assure you is not one of the Christian's inability to translate Hebrew, but one that goes much deeper.....**a gross theological conflict which renders their whole religious beliefs of atonement inaccurate.**

Answer for yourself: As asked earlier, where did Paul get such an idea that Yeshua's death (or anyone's for that matter) was as atonement for sin "according to the Scriptures?" **Such an idea as expressed by Paul has absolutely no basis once you have the true translation of Isa. 53:10. as well of the rest of the true Jewish Masoretic text which is not corrupted by the Greek translation which inserted such pagan Gentile sun-worshipping concepts.**

Answer for yourself: What was Isaiah really saying here in the Hebrew Isaiah 53:10?

Contrary to Christianity today, Isaiah was teaching that when the Jews go into captivity as a punishment for their sin, that when in captivity, if they repent and turn from their sins, their lives following their repentance will atone for their prior sin. This is Biblical Judaism and what Yeshua really believed regardless of how Gentile Christianity wants to paint the picture. You have not been

told the truth because you carry a corrupted Christian Bible which slanders the Old Testament text as well as created religious lies in the New Testament which you unwittingly believed. How could you do else? You were never shown the Hebrew for yourself which was mistranslated originally in 200 B.C.E. by hellenized Jews in Alexandria, Egypt, which had long departed from normative Judaism and continued to be mistranslated down through history and culminating in 1611 in the KJV.

Answer for yourself: The only thing you need to ask yourself is if such mistranslations were done on purpose to create a new religion that replaces the faith of Yeshua with one of another group's making (hellenized Jews and later Rome)? The answer is obvious to those who study in depth, and it is our hope to educate the Christian Church to the deceptions to which they have fallen prey to unknowingly.

I wish to also say that Isa. 53:10 is in full agreement with other passages from the Hebrew Scriptures. The message is simple. If the children of God, who will be in captivity, obey Him and His commandments, they will prosper both physically (offspring) and spiritually. In captivity "if his soul (life) makes restitution (repents)" then he shall prolong his days in the land and receive blessing. If not, then further exile. What we must never fail to remember is that God often used Gentile nations to chastise His people and bring them to repentance. Such is the message hidden within Isaiah 53. If you desire to know more about mistranslations in Isaiah read and study our series of articles concerning Isaiah elsewhere on this website; you will never be the same.

As stated earlier in looking at the mistranslation of Isa 53:10 from the KJV....*"Yet it pleased the Lord to bruise him; he hath put him to grief: when thou shalt make his soul an offering for sin, "* First of all this verse refers to the corporate nation of Israel who has suffered at the hands of the anti-Semitic nations. The reference from Isa 40 onwards is ALWAYS referring to the "corporate nation" and not an individual. Of course Yeshua is part of this nation, so it would not be in error to include him in our understanding of their verse. Without a doubt Yeshua suffered at the hands of the Romans. But to include Yeshua in this verse is a major problem for Christians according to the original Hebrew since it would infer Yeshua had to repent for at least one sin...and that alone destroys any idea of a perfect sacrifice.

Answer for yourself: If we remember the conditional phrase in Isa. 53:10 *"if his soul makes restitution"* and try to apply it to Yeshua we find that it destroys any and all concepts of his sinlessness as well as his death being an acceptable sacrifice for sin, because what is it that a sinless Yeshua needs to repent of?

You can quickly see how advantageous it is for Christianity to mistranslate Isa. 53:10 from the Hebrew as it was done originally and continued to be done so up to the 1611 KJV....and of course it remains corrupted today in our Christian Bibles. We simply don't have to deal with it because it was written out.

But what we must conclude from the original Hebrew of Isa. 53:10 is that atonement was for one's OWN personal sin and not the sins of others.

The mistranslation of Isa. 53:10 drops this idea and understanding totally. Again such is a deception that destroys the meaning intended by Isaiah the author as well as God who send the revelation to His prophet.

Also we must recognize the context is that there was a time frame at work. The people addressed by the original Isaiah 53:10 were in exile. Such does not apply today, but this I admit is a weak argument. Overall however, I believe we see a pattern of how God deals with man's sin. Within this pattern is the way in which man can deal with his own sin and make himself acceptable to God. The whole purpose again is to "draw near to God" and repentance is the manner in which God revealed such fellowship was to be maintained.

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

We need a summary of the sacrificial system before moving on. While this procedure (placing the animal's soul (contained in its blood) on the altar in substitute for the offerer's soul) is being accomplished with one's offering, he meditates upon his sin, for the offering service teaches him graphically that he has sinned against God with body and soul. He contemplates that justice would have dictated that his human body be burned on the Altar as a penalty for sin and his soul required by God in lieu of the animal's blood be placed upon it. It is only God's graciousness that permits the animal to become his substitute (soul for soul as a representative example). Then, parts of the offering are given to the Kohanim (priests/teachers), so that those who dedicate their lives to study and teach the Torah are sustained through him and so that they will pray for him. It is an act of supreme graciousness that God is prepared to accept an offering from us instead of punishing us directly for our misdeeds. This is why the offerings are described throughout Leviticus as a satisfying aroma to God, because God is pleased when His children repent and seek to change their lives for the better. What is forgotten in all of this is that before an animal is ever brought and his blood sprinkled on the altar (representing the soul of the sacrificer), the offerer of the sacrifice **MUST HAVE PREVIOUSLY prayed, and repented before God and made confession of his sin before any animal could be brought. Blood of the sacrifice, containing the soul, never brought fellowship with God without the prior repentance of the offerer.** This repentance was both before God and his fellow man prior to bringing the animal. **To do otherwise brings the rebuke of God in the Old Testament as seen in Isa. 1 where God is weary of the blood of bulls and goats without the contrite and brokenness of the hearts of those who bring such offerings. Contrary to what many Christians think, God is not in Isa. chapter 1 abolishing the sacrificial system in lieu of Yeshua's death, but calling people back to the basics...repentance and prayer and restitution when needed. Such has always been an effective atonement and remains so today.**

When one brings an offering with such noble thoughts he has truly made himself an offering and has the right to be with God in oneness on the altar of communion and fellowship. The Sages have said of one who brings a humble meal-offering, it is as if he had offered his own life upon the Altar. He thereby raised his mundane desires and makes them worthy of being placed on the heavenly Altar.

Now, if we apply what we have just learned to the death of Yeshua's we find many problems accepting what we have been taught by both Paul and the Church. Nowhere is Paul's concept of Atonement written in the Old Testament, but as the New Testament was canonized in 380 C.E., along with the many admissions of the early church to the alteration of manuscripts, it is easy to see how the concept of atonement was changed to what we have today. The real problem is that God never changed it, Yeshua never believed what we do today, and when we die we will be sadly prepared for the judgment because most Christians have never heard such truths and mistakenly rely on Yeshua doing it all for them when they are ultimately responsible for repenting of violating the Laws of God in the Torah. Besides this we boast as Christians that we are not under this "Law" of God but under "Grace". Most Christians think according to this false teaching that they have a huge "gray area" where then can sin and don't need to worry for another as paid their penalty when such is not true!!! This is hard to deal with especially in light that we grew up in churches which continually taught that believers were no longer under the Law but under grace....all you need to do is accept that Yeshua died for you. Now you know better. The bottom line is that we have been deceived about the whole thing by men who preached corrupted prior Hebrew doctrines on purpose and provided corrupted documents which we have sadly inherited unknowingly today in our Christian Bibles. More to follow. Shalom.



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WHAT DID THE DEATH OF YESHUA ACTUALLY ACCOMPLISH #2?

LETS GET A CLEARER PICTURE OF DYNAMICS OF SACRIFICE

UNION WITH G-D-FELLOWSHIP

Whenever the Torah commands that offerings be brought, these commandments use only G-d's Four-letter Name (yod-hey-vah-hey); the "Tetragrammaton" (I AM). If other names were used, some might err, thinking that there are many g-ds or forces, one demanding this offering and another demanding some other offering. Since the Name **Elokim** represents G-d as the One Who controls nature, that Name might be taken to imply that there is an angel or a power who has dominion over a particular land or aspect of existence, and that that power requires the offering. The Four-Letter Name is formed of the letters that spell, **was, is and will be**, meaning that G-d is eternal. This is not G-d as He appears in a particular manifestation (Judge, Provider, Life-giver) but G-d as He is.

This is His Name as the G-d of Mercy. No one should think that G-d requires offerings to feed or appease Him. The Eternal One has no needs that man can satisfy for everything is His and nothing is beyond His power!

Answer for yourself: What then is the purpose of the offerings? We were introduced to that concept the in the prior article in this series. Now we shall go a little deeper. **Offerings provide man an opportunity to unite himself to G-d to whatever extent it is possible for mortal man to do so. Let me further explain this concept.**

Similarly, there is a humanly created fire below on the Altar and there is the Heavenly fire from above, which G-d has placed upon Israel's Altar. Both of these flames are fed by the offerings of the Jewish people, **symbolizing the union of man's spiritual aspirations with G-d's goals for him. Thus the offerings provide Israel a means for spiritual elevation (and if you are united and grafted in with the Israel of G-d in a spiritual sense then this means you).**

ACKNOWLEDGING NOTHINGNESS

All creatures emanate from G-d and have no independent existence on their own. Man has freedom of choice and his intellect puts great achievements within his reach, but all of this is possible only because G-d gives him the power to do so. Man could not function or even exist without G-d. The goal of creation is for man to acknowledge this basic fact; to recognize and proclaim that everything exists because of G-d and nothing can survive without Him. There are many ways for G-d's glory to be revealed and recognized. The highest recognition of all is for man to know The Oneness of G-d, meaning that there is nothing aside from Him. He achieves his ultimate greatness when he recognizes that **there is none beside Him** (Deut. 4:35). **An offering is a demonstration of this concept. It says that its owner is surrendering himself and his possessions**

to their Source (G-d). Theoretically, one might expect him to be ready to give even his very life in acknowledgment of G-d's sovereignty, but that is not His will. G-d wants man to live, to grow, to thrive, to serve; and G-d ordains the offerings as man's way to recognize His Oneness. Thus, by offering himself and his possessions, one symbolizes that he has no existence but for G-d's will.

UNITING BODY AND SOUL

The efficacy of offerings in obtaining G-d's favor is comparable to the way food makes it possible for the soul to maintain its attachment to the body. Material food cannot provide nourishment to the soul, which is not a physical entity. It is this nourishment of the body that enables it to remain healthy enough to play host to the soul. Likewise, the "food of the Altar's fire" somehow effects the process that enables the Shechinah to remain among Israel.

The food of the soul is not measured in calories, vitamins, and minerals. Only intellectual and spiritual pursuits can nourish the soul. Torah study, prayer, even meals in celebration of such events as Sabbath and Festivals all have a sacred content that is capable of nourishing the soul. Only in this sense do the offerings constitute food for G-d. Man's dedication to G-d and His commandments provides the nourishment that enables the Shechinah to attach itself to human beings and their handiwork. We think of food in terms of nutritive value, but that is not what sustains life. Man does not live merely because of the bread (material component). He lives through the bread's spiritual component; what emanates from the mouth of G-d. This is what holds together body and soul and what holds together G-dliness and Israel through the agency of the offerings.

GETTING BACK TO PAUL

With this as a background let us return to Paul's statement that "Christ died for our sins" which was the fundamental belief of the early Gentile Christian message, the cornerstone of early Gentile Christianity (but not Jewish Christianity or Messianism as can be proved by Acts 21 where James commanded Paul, and he obliged, to bring sin offerings and atonement offerings over 30 years after Jesus death...evidently they did not hold to what you and I have been taught as Christians in the Gentile church). But as soon as this simple fact is stated a number of vital questions are bound to arise. In order that we may have an intelligent and correct understanding of this important doctrine it is necessary that we know precisely what occurred and did not occur when Yeshua died on the cross. We cannot rest content with teaching that leaves the central doctrine of the Christian faith shrouded in mystery and uncertainty. This does not mean that all mystery can be removed. But the Jewish Old Testament Scriptures do supply the interpretation of the death of Christ that the inquiring mind legitimately asks for, and the salient factors concerning it should be known by all Christian people. Believing that the Hebrew Scriptures (Old Testament) is G-d's word to man, and that the statements of Scripture regarding the death of Yeshua in the Greek New Testament are meant to be understood correctly by ordinary Christian men and women, we shall not be deterred from this study by those who deprecate any "theory of the atonement." Rather we hold it to be our task and privilege under the promised guidance of the Holy Spirit to "search the Scriptures" until we reach that understanding which satisfies the mind and heart and conscience, and leads to certainty and finality.

We cannot expect to give a full explanation of the Atonement any more than we can give a full explanation of the nature of electricity, or of the force of gravity, or of our own mental and physical processes. But the main outlines of the plan of salvation are clearly revealed in the Hebrew Scriptures, and it is both our privilege and our duty to acquaint ourselves with as much of that plan as G-d has seen fit to reveal.

According to the New Testament we are told, for instance, in broad terms that we are members of a fallen race, that G-d has given His only-begotten Son for our redemption, and that salvation is through Him (Messiah) and not through any works which we ourselves are able to do.

Answer for yourself: How correct is this statement when compared with the teachings of the Hebrew Scriptures concerning atonement and forgiveness?

Certainly anyone who accepts these facts and acts upon them will be “saved” because the fruit of the Christian message leads to godliness. Yet, accepting these facts and acting upon them would appear to represent only a minimum of faith, and G-d has made it possible for us greatly to enrich and expand our knowledge of the way of salvation if we will but give careful attention to His word.

SAVED BY THE BLOOD OF YESHUA (A PICTURE OF THE SUFFERING SERVANT...ISRAEL) OR THE LIFE OF YESHUA (A PICTURE OF THE SUFFERING SERVANT...ISRAEL)?

I presume you have read the first in this series of articles. In it I exposed the mistranslation of Isa. 53:10 in the KJV Bible. However, with understanding of the dynamics involved, it is possible to arrive at the truth even if we read this mistranslation. Let me show you.

I suppose one of the greatest revelations I have ever received through my study occurred when I came to the proper understanding of Isaiah 53:10 which DOES NOT SAY THE FOLLOWING:

10 Yet it pleased the LORD to bruise him; he hath put him to grief: when thou shalt make his soul an offering for sin, he shall see his seed, he shall prolong his days, and (KJV)

Reading for the Hebrew Bible we have:

10 And the Lord wished to crush him [corporate Israel.....remember?] He made him ill; if his soul makes itself restitution, he shall see seed, he shall prolong his days, and G-d's purposes shall prosper in his hand.

The Hebrew word for “soul” is as follows as seen in Strong's Concordance:

5315 nephesh (neh'-fesh); from 5314; properly, a breathing creature, i.e. animal of (abstractly) vitality; used very widely in a literal, accommodated or figurative sense (bodily or mental):

KJV-- any, appetite, beast, body, breath, creature, X dead (-ly), desire, X [dis-] contented, X fish, ghost, + greedy, he, heart (-y), (hath, X jeopardy of) life (X in jeopardy), lust, man, me, mind, mortally, one, own, person, pleasure, (her-, him-, my-, thyself-), them (your)- selves, + slay, soul, + tablet, they, thing, (X she) will, X would have it.

The Hebrew word for “soul” is as follows as seen in Brown-Drivers-Briggs Hebrew Lexicon:

5315 nephesh- a soul-self,, life, a creature, a person, an appetite, a mind, a living being, a desire, an emotion, a passion

- **what breathes, the breathing substance or being, a soul, the inner being of man**
- **a living being**
- **a living being (with life in the blood)**
- **the man himself, a-self, a person or an individual**
- **the seat of the appetites**
- **the seat of emotions and passions**

- the activity of mind
- the activity of the will
- the activity of the character

SO WHAT ARE YOU SAYING CRAIG?

My whole life I was told that I was “saved” by the blood of Yeshua, yet Isaiah tells me that I was “saved” by the activity of will, mind, and character of Israel as G-d’s suffering servant (as an example for all to follow). Yeshua, like all Jewish people who came before him who were devoted to G-d and His Torah, as well as those who followed him, comprise the “suffering servant Israel” who is “the” light for the non-Jewish nations. The proper understanding of the “suffering servant” is a corporate people and not an individual as determined by the writer's consistent use of singular and plural pronouns from Isa. 40-66 where they both refer to the nation as used in the contexts of each of the passages! Knowing this we must be careful when we look at Yeshua as the transcendent Jew of all Jews Since Israel is the Suffering Servant of Isaiah, then it is not a problem to let Yeshua be the example of all Jews, past, present, and future. For me he is the perfect example. With this understanding, we now can come to an understand that the blood of Yeshua carried the life force of Yeshua (his soul), which was totally committed and surrendered to the will of G-d and His Torah. Remember this is but a picture of all Jews who love G-d and were Torah observant. That instead of Yeshua’s death, which was to “save me,” it was in reality the life lived pleasing to G-d as part of the Israel of G-d which G-d accepted as atonement for sin. Israel’s “soul” saves as understood as a life lived in complete submission to the Commandments of G-d as demonstrated by the complete submission of the mind, will, and emotions to G-d and His desires for his people. If I can learn from this example then if my life is lived in faith toward G-d and lived with diligent effort to live according to the laws of G-d with repentance a daily life-style when I sin, then I like Yeshua will find that G-d will accept my repentant life as an atonement for my sin.

I am fully aware that this goes against everything that is preached in Christianity today, but dearly beloved I have done more than preach my opinions to you, I have shown you the evidence from the Jewish Scriptures as well as the fraudulent attempts to change the truth in the Christian Bibles by falsifying the translation along with the making up of Gentile scriptures which contradict the real Word of G-d contained in the Old Testament Prophets.

Yeshua lived a G-d-honoring life to such a degree that G-d accepted his life, as he had all Jews devoted to Him, in which He could tabernacle in a way He never had before and the “Word/Messiah became flesh” [understood as G-d's anointing] at the immersion and anointing of Yeshua. Let us never forget that Israel has had many “anointed” messengers of G-d as was Yeshua. Then subsequently such a G-d-honoring life (soul) was to be later accepted as an offering for one's own sin in his own life at his death. Whether you apply this to Yeshua or not is dependent upon if you believe he lived with or without sin. But understand what I am saying. One's repentance was acceptable for one's own sin according to the real Jewish Scriptures. Such is altered in the KJV and the idea is lost completely.

Answer for yourself: Should not the English KJV accurately reflect what he Hebrew of Isaiah actually said? You bet.

So it was not Yeshua’s death so much as a G-d-honoring life-style lived by Yeshua in complete submission to the Father and His Commandments which not only brought G-d to tabernacle within Yeshua but provided a means of atonement for sin. This same picture can be applied to our lives as well. If we have faith in G-d and respond to such faith with a contrite heart ready to repent when the Holy Spirit convicts of sin, then our repentance is accepted as atonement for our sin. Such is the message of Isaiah before the early Gentile Christians deleted it from the Bibles we have today. This may no longer be the message of the Church, but it should be. But until the Christians learn that their documents are flawed, few will come to this revelation unless they study hard like many who have discovered this sham today.

IN SPITE OF ALL THIS...YET I BELIEVE I AM SAVED BY THE BLOOD OF YESHUA...LET ME EXPLAIN FURTHER (ALLEGORY)

Historically, in the wake of Yeshua's death would come a movement into all the world which aimed at taking the Torah to the nations whereby non-Jewish could learn how to live lives pleasing to G-d as had Israel. As stated before a life lived in faith to G-d with a contrite heart willing to repent and turn from sin is effective atonement according to the Jewish Bible and Isaiah the Prophet.

Answer for yourself: But what if I never knew it as a non-Jew living across the globe?

In others words Yeshua traded his life for ours as previous suffering servants of G-d had done in preserving the truths of G-d for all mankind, and G-d accepted the bargain. I believe that Yeshua's life lived in complete obedience to G-d mandated his resurrection and no longer was Yeshua just a competing voice but "the" voice of the resurrected Suffering Servant. And this glorified man commanded that the Laws go into all the world whereby non-Jews would be recipients of this revelation.

The vast majority of Christians in the world today have not been told this and wander in fables because they lack the correct understanding which only can come from in-depth Bible study. So it was the suffering servant, Israel, composed of many Israelites, whose life lived daily in complete obedience to their G-d which was so pleasing to G-d that it could be accepted by G-d as an offering for their sin and not the red corpuscles (blood) which Christianity sadly focuses that accomplished atonement. Yeshua gave his soul for souls, not blood for souls. Such is the teaching of Isaiah. Because of the proliferation of bloody rites in Gentile paganism, the Gentile converts to Jewish Christianity would in the first centuries, inherently revert back to pagan backgrounds. Thus the emphasis today on blood instead of a G-d-honoring life as the offering for sin has been inherited by the Gentile Church. This is a pagan concept totally foreign to what Isaiah and Yeshua really believed.

Having now come to the understanding that it was a life lived above sin that was so pleasing to G-d that He accepted such a life as an offering and atonement for sin, and understanding as an animal's soul represented the soul of one making the sacrifice, we today are beneficiaries of having the Jew's soul (Yeshua) given as an atonement. What we need to remember is that in first century Judaism there was little if any outreach to the non-Jew. Salvation of the non-Jew was not a priority. Millions of non-Jews were dying and entering perdition. But G-d go loved the world that He, G-d, gave his only son (Israel is My Son declared YHWH) Yeshua is the archetype for all of Israel. The resurrected Yeshua's message was to go to the non-Jew, and had it not been for his death, then indirectly there would not have been salvation or atonement for me, for I would be ignorant today of the Biblical way. The only Jew that came knocking on my door to bring me G-d, Torah, and Israel. So literally if it had not been for the death of Yeshua, had it not been for the resurrection of Yeshua, then there would have been no movement within a Gentile hating Judaism of the first century that repented of racial bigotry and began to take salvation to the non-Jewish world. In this way you can see as I do that indirectly we are "saved" by the death/blood of Yeshua because the revelation of G-d came to us because of him and his legacy. Christianity understand its differently. I have shown you that they are wrong. I present to you the real meaning as seen by yourself from the Jewish text which both corrects mainline Christianity and yet preserves the truth. Sadly Christians today know little if any of what I speak. I encourage you to buy your own Stone Edition Tanakh and compare the passages quoted from your Christian Bible with the passages originally written in the Hebrew. Then, and only then, will you see for yourself of what I speak.

In this lesson we must no longer overlook the importance of a life lived above sin which won our redemption which brought a resurrected message that culminated in the salvation of the Gentile world. To focus only on the death and blood of Yeshua/Israel and not the life lived pleasing before G-d as an atonement does great injustice to our Father in Heaven as well as Yeshua. The church has focused incorrectly for too long on the inert blood of the animal or of Yeshua. Such is the message of Bet Emet as we are called to live like Yeshua and not just "believe in Yeshua." It has been my experience as a Pastor over the years to encounter numerable

Christians who trust in Christ's blood instead of his life lived pleasing to G-d for atonement. They fail to make the connection for themselves. Thus the need for such intense Bible study. Such a mistaken understanding of our redemption since not being taught the truth from a Hebraic perspective has caused multitudes of Christians to trust in the acclaimed miraculous powers of the blood of Yeshua instead of focusing on the miraculousness of a life lived above sin. Such a false sense of security in "blood" instead of "lives lived holy before G-d and man" unconsciously causes the believer to not regard sin with revulsion as he should. We tend to view sin as less harmful than it is, and compromise with sin which lies at the door.

And one more thing needs to be said: G-d is a G-d of love and answers prayers of all His children regardless of what religion they are when they call out to him. G-d does not just answer prayers of Christians; this explains why when people pray in Jesus' name or another their prayers are directed to G-d and even if one pleads the "blood" as many do G-d sees their hearts and in His great compassion answers many of them. This does not mean that our "theology" is correct; only that G-d's love is bigger than our ignorance.

I wonder if we saw in such turning from sin that our very own atonement was involved would prompt us to reevaluate its importance.

Answer for yourself: For after all if saved by the blood of Yeshua, what need do I have to live like Yeshua and not disobey the commandments of G-d? For after all I am under grace and not law...right?

Answer for yourself: If saved by the blood, what does a little sin mean...what can it hurt?

Answer for yourself: See the tragic thinking involved in focusing upon the blood of Yeshua instead of the life of Yeshua lived above sin?

ATONEMENT FOR BOTH TABLETS OF THE LAW OR FOR ONE TABLET ONLY?

I have taken great pains to teach you the truth about Isa. 53:10 and atonement. But yet we are not finished.

Answer for yourself: Is this atonement of which I speak efficacious for both tablets of the Law or only one?

Answer for yourself: In other words, is our atonement which we accomplish ourselves good for the sins of the First Tablet of the Law (sins between G-d and man), for sins of the Second Tablet of the Law (sins between man and man), or for both?

Answer for yourself: Implicitly we settle for less than holiness and don't think twice when considering not to sin, for after all, are we not forgiven of all sin by the blood of Yeshua? If you have read this article up to now then you should be able to see beyond this now.

Honestly, the answer is "no" ...we cannot atone ourselves for all our sin, because in the sacrifice of lambs, for instance, **such blood sacrifices atoned only for sins of the First Tablet of the Law and not the Second Tablet of the Law.** That means that if you are looking to Jesus to be a type and shadow of the sacrificial system for you then his death would only have applied to the sins of the First Tablet of the Law and not the Second Tablet of the Law anyway.

Answer for yourself: What takes care of the sins of the Second Tablet of the Law that blood sacrifices never covered? Do you get the drift?

Knowing this, that Yeshua is type and shadow of the Suffering Servant of G-d, you can see how a false security in focusing on the Yeshua's blood instead of a life lived above sin pleasing to G-d could, and does lead, millions

of others to think light of sin and compromise with sin much more than they should. Also thinking that all their sins are under the blood of Yeshua, which they are not, goes along way to trivializing sin. Again, not knowing that such sins of the Second Tablet of the Law are not handled by the sacrifices for atonement, cause others to fail to grasp the harsh reality of their sin and its consequences. Such knowledge comes only if you study the Sacrificial process in detail. If Christians trusting the blood for “everything” only knew that even the atonement provided atoned only for the First Tablet of the Law they would most likely think twice before sinning, thus understanding they are not “under the blood” for all things, that their moral responsibility and fear of G-d is a requirement in being co-laborers with G-d in their own salvation and atonement. Now you more correctly understand the passage which says “work out YOUR salvation with fear and trembling

Now you better understand and see through the deception of many passages of Paul in the New Testament as he taught doctrines to non-Jews who knew no better; remembering Paul’s passage of I Cor. 15:3: "For I delivered unto you first of all that which also I received: that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures; and that He was buried; and that He hath been raised on the third day according to the Scriptures"....we now know that such a statement is false.

If we truly understand the Sacrificial system, and you should now, then you know that Yeshua, and the Suffering Servant of G-d (Israel) did not die for atonement for ALL SINS as your church as taught you. Without this knowledge of sins atoned only for the First Tablet of the Law, we will not have a strong enough deterrent to avoid sinning sins involved in the Second Tablet of the Law...sins between man and man. Thus, by understanding the Sacrificial system and the dynamics involved, the more correct interpretation would be according to Paul that “Christ died because of sins.” And even in one’s death was efficacy for sins of the First Tablet of the Law and not the Second Tablet of the Law. Not surprising but one look to repentance for atonement of sins of the Second Tablet of the Law. The wages of sin is death, and our death is the final payment for our sin that is not covered by our repentance...and there are some...like idolatry and blaspheming the Name of YHVH which all Christians have done since being taught that Jesus is G-d and worshipping him like YHVH. We all carry that guilt until we die due to our ignorance of what the Bible Jesus’ used actually teaches.

SO WHAT DOES THIS MEAN TO ME?

So many might have read this article so far and say...”so what...I don’t break the commands of the Second Tablet of the Law?” You might find this surprising but if you tithe according to the manner of most Christian Churches today you not only rob from G-d but from those created in His image as well. If you continue to give to churches which don’t obey the Laws concerning tithing you are a partaker of their sins and there is no atonement for that sin for you when you die if you don’t repent before your death! Repentance, new obedience, and confession of that sin is our only methods of atonement and if not done, will ensure we enter into the World to Come with sins in those areas where atonement has not been applied through our repentance. This is only one small example. Worshipping according to Christian teaching often is sin as the vast majority of Christianity today has changed the Sabbath as well as make obsolete the Holy Days and Festivals of G-d and there are commandments regarding Gentile believers keeping them. Failure by the non-Jew to heed these in his life is sin.

You might not be a murderer with a gun, but our word “kill” is equated by the Rabbis to mean gossip, slander and blasphemy and they group this with murder which again is sin of the Second Tablet of the Law. I could go on and on but you get the point. We must study to know our faith.

In closing, even if Yeshua’s death was an atonement, and I have painstakingly shown that it was not according to the Old Testament text according to Isaiah and other Prophets, then it would only have provided atonement for the First Tablet of the Law...and of course as you are coming to an accurate understanding of atonement you are realizing that this is not accurate.

Answer for yourself: Are you wondering what G-d provided for our atonement for our sins of the Second Tablet

of the Law?

We must look to another article for this answer. See you in article #3. Shalom.



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WHAT DID THE DEATH OF YESHUA ACTUALLY ACCOMPLISH #3?

I understand that you have read the first two articles in the series "What Did Yeshua's Death Actually Accomplish". Following up on it in this article I will address again how a live lived in repentance from sin procures atonement and ultimately salvation. This is the real meaning in Yeshua's death as well as the Jewish Scriptures as taught by Isaiah for example. Many people mistakenly read Yeshua into Isaiah 53 not knowing that the author intends the Suffering Servant to be corporate Israel and not an individual, but if such a mistake is avoided then it is easier to come to the knowledge of the truth. I took great lengths to explain how the message of atonement has been misunderstood in Christian Circles in articles one and two of this series. I hope you checked me out on the information from a Jewish perspective as presented for it can stand the scrutiny of your evaluation. Truth is truth and we nothing to fear when we teach it and let it expose lies dressed at truth. In the same spirit of truthfulness I will continue in this article to present Yeshua's religious belief system which dovetails with Isaiah 53:10.....

Reading for the Hebrew Bible we have:

10 And the Lord wished to crush him [corporate Israel.....remember?] He made him ill; if his soul makes itself restitution (atonement), he shall see seed, he shall prolong his days, and G-d's purposes shall prosper in his hand.

Answer for yourself: Did Yeshua believe that men make atonement for their sin as Isaiah taught or did he expect to atone for all mankind with his death?

Answer for yourself: Do you realize the answer to the above question will determine if you continue as a New Testament Christian or respond in repentance to errors taught as truth to you in the Christian Church?

For many of our readers the information in this article will be startling. After reading this article you will see for yourself that if you follow contemporary Christianity and its teachings then you are following Paul and not Yeshua, because Yeshua's message of redemption as well as atonement is entirely opposite to what Paul teaches. I can hear many of you say...."that's not so" or "he is wrong." Let me sincerely tell you that in the beginning, even after my seminary training I did not see it as clearly as I do today. But I beg of you to read this article and THINK...THINK....of what I will show you. For in the end, you are directly responsible before G-d, and HaShem is sending you and many of His children today appeals to repent and return to the true faith once given to the saints. Time is of the essence, and it will be horrible to die and find out that you followed the wrong faith...a faith that does not save.

One last thing; you might wonder what the end-result should be of such a series of studies. It is our hope at Bet Emet ministries that when you complete these articles the reader will be able to understand that Christianity is best understood and practiced from a Jewish viewpoint which restores the Sabbaths and the Seven Biblical Festivals as well as the correct manner of atonement. Such emphasis is almost totally lacking in the Christian

church today. Also, a renewed emphasis in proper tithing and righteous giving hopefully will replace the current perversion of giving as seen in most churches and on televisions today. What you will come to see is that all these above things, and more, embody the true salvation experience. Let us begin...shall we?

YESHUA WAS A JEW...AND TAUGHT BIBLICAL JUDAISM

I think few will take issue with my statement that in the New Testament Yeshua is pictured as a Jew who believed in Judaism and taught others to be faithful to his religion's precepts and laws forever!

In this article I will quote many verses from the New Testament, and it is important to understand from the outset that although much in the New Testament is unreliable, when we find places in it which agrees with Moses and the Prophets we have found a witness to the Word of G-d as recorded in the Tanakh (the Jewish Bible). Let us not stagger at the comment that "much in the New Testament is unreliable," because in this article I will show you that many of these New Testament verses oppose Moses and the Prophet, let alone Yeshua's teachings, and are irreconcilably contradictory to the Gospel Yeshua preached which can be found along side them in the New Testament. Both passages confirming that Yeshua believed and both taught Moses and the Prophets regarding salvation, as well as verses contradicting what Yeshua taught, have remained included in the New Testament through the ages. These verses remain for a purpose today. They remain to show the careful reader and student the truth amidst fiction as written in the New Testament.

Likewise, the purpose could well be to reassure Jews who are in doubt about their Judaism, and are thinking of leaving Judaism for Christianity, that Judaism and Torah has always been and will always be the road to G-d for the people of G-d; both Jew and Non-Jew. Those unsure Jews and deceived Christians perhaps can have their belief in G-d, Torah, and Israel (Judaism) kindled and can be kept on G-d's pathway by the very same Christian Book through which they have unknowingly deserted their true people and G-d! Indeed, Jews who already have left their faith as well as Christians who are returning to the Jewish faith once given the saints are daily having their eyes opened to the truths I will reveal in this article. Prayerfully, many will return as baal teshuvah and through repentance turn to the G-d of Israel, who surely is waiting with fatherly understanding and forgiveness. Believe Yeshua in this matter - Eternal life is obtained through Judaism. Paul teaches otherwise and contradicts Yeshua on this matter.

For devout Jews who were once Christians and Christians who have studied to see the errors of their prior faith and have returned to a more correct and Biblical Sinai faith, the revelations in this article will be very comfortable corroboration of their firm faith in the holiness of the religion of Yeshua; namely Biblical Judaism. Others who read these verses will bring to them their own heritage and will make of them what they will. In other words they will continue to selectively hear what they choose regardless of the facts presented here.

These pages of reverse proof-texts are intended to strengthen the course G-d set up for Jews as well as Non-Jews and to fortify their faith and devotion to His plan of salvation for all mankind. In effect, here you will discover confirmation of Biblical Judaism's everlasting truth and validity through the words of Yeshua and others in the New Testament. Often this confirmation will conflict with what Paul taught, but more on that later. Now, let's get into it.

WHO WILL YOU BELIEVE.....YESHUA OR PAUL? LISTENYESHUA SPEAKS!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!

Matthew 5:17-19,

"Think not that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfill. For verily I say unto you, Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one little shall in no wise

pass from the law, till all be fulfilled. Whosoever therefore shall break one of these least commandments, and shall teach men so, he shall be called the least in the kingdom of heaven: but whosoever shall do and teach them, the same shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven."

Try and read the above passage over three or four times. Get the intent of Yeshua into your mind and soul. You can read this over and over and never end your astonishment; especially in light of what you have heard preached in your churches. **Remember, these are Yeshua's words saying he is here to follow the law of Moses, not end the law. Until the world ends, the law as written will be in effect.** Jews and Non-Jews who obey the law and teach it are greatly loved by G-d, while those who transgress the law and teach its transgression are not. Notice that although the word "fulfill" could mean "to complete or end," in this case and context it clearly means "to obey and do." We know this because the following sentence continues the idea that the law will not change until the world ends, which still has not occurred two thousand years later. Just look outside your window.

Luke 16:16-17, "The law and the prophets were until John (the Baptist): since that time the kingdom of G-d is preached, and every man presseth into it. **And it is easier for heaven and earth to pass, than one little of the law to fail.**"

Preaching the kingdom (G-d's rule and reign over mankind through submission to the King's decrees...laws and commandments) is emphasized since John the Baptist, Yeshua said. But the laws of the Torah are still effective and good, to be fulfilled until the world ends. **Notice for yourself that in no way does "until John" signify the end of the law, because the very next sentence substantiates the law's validity forever (easier for heaven and earth to pass....notice again that this has not occurred yet).**

Luke 16:19-20,22-24,27-31, "There was a certain rich man, . . . And there was a certain beggar named Lazarus, . . . the beggar died, and was **carried by the angels into Abraham's bosom**: the rich man also died, and was buried; And **in hell** he lift up his eyes, being in torments, . . . And he cried and said, Father Abraham, have mercy on me, . . . I pray thee . . . send him (Lazarus) to my father's house: . . . that he may testify unto them, lest they also come into this place of torment. Abraham saith unto him, **They have Moses and the prophets; let them hear them.** And he said, Nay, father Abraham: but if one went unto them from the dead, they will repent (**Yeshua and not Paul**). And he said unto him, **If they hear not Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded, though one rose from the dead.**"

Answer for yourself: Is this a New Testament teaching?

Answer for yourself: Did you notice that Yeshua in the New Testament is teaching that making it to Abraham's bosom (Heaven) was connected to listening to Moses and the Prophets?

Answer for yourself: What is this parable from Luke really teaching?

Notice first that it is Yeshua and not Paul who is doing the teaching in this story. **Yeshua clearly relates in this story that the laws of Moses and the words of the prophets which teach repentance lead the faithful to Abraham's bosom, instead of hell. Moses and the prophets are the pathway to eternal life in heaven according to Yeshua. Yeshua taught this and not Paul.** If you will be honest with yourself most of you are typical Christians who read our articles, and the vast majority have been told by their Pastors and Churches that they are not under the Law (Moses and the Prophets), but rather, they are under grace (Paul). They have been told that the Law (Moses and the Prophets) has passed away for Christians and they are no longer under the Law but under grace (Paul's gospel). **In other words you have listened to Paul more than you have to Yeshua.**

Answer for yourself: But how can the teaching of Paul in this regard be opposite to what Yeshua said, and since opposite, who are you to trust for your eternal life?

Matthew 19:16-19 (Mark 10:17,19) (Luke 18:18,20), "... *Good Master, what good thing shall I do, that I may have eternal life? And he said unto him . . . if thou wilt enter into life, keep the commandments . . . Which? Yeshua said, Thou shalt do no murder, Thou shalt not commit adultery, Thou shalt not steal, Thou shalt not bear false witness, Honor thy father and thy mother: and, thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself* "

Answer for yourself: Did you notice that "having eternal life" is connected by Yeshua with "keeping the commandments" (all of these except one are categories of the law and commandments called The Ten Commandments and under each of these categories are grouped 613 other laws)?

Answer for yourself: Is Yeshua just referring to the Ten Commandments or is there something we as Non-Jews unacquainted with Yeshua's religion are missing in this teaching?

It may amaze you but upon my study of Biblical Judaism I have discovered that each Tablet of the Law was separated by commandments between man and G-d and between man and man. In other words, the First Tablet of the Law is dealing with how man relates to G-d according to G-d's commandments, and the Second Tablet of the Law is dealing with how man relates with mankind. But more than that, each of the Ten Commandments is best understood as categories consisting of many commandments within the 613 Commandments grouped under each of the ten headings. So in effect, when Yeshua tells this man "thou shalt not steal" he is telling the man to obey all the different facets of the broad commandment, because under such a heading the Bible enumerates the various ways such a commandments can be kept and broken.

Answer for yourself: Is Yeshua teaching that eternal life and salvation in Heaven is connected to keeping and observing the Laws of G-d? The answer to that question is yes.

There you have it. The way to eternal life for both the Jew and the Non-Jew and salvation in heaven, according to Yeshua, is living like a good Jew and submitting to the laws of the commandments of G-d. These detailed instructions by Yeshua are plainly presented.

Notice that in the following verses the man asks what more he needed do. And Yeshua replies, to be perfect he should sell everything he owns and give it to the poor and receive treasure in heaven: "and come and follow me." The man, on hearing this, leaves disturbed because he has great wealth and doesn't want to lose it. There is no indication that the "follow me" means anything else but to accompany Yeshua penniless. The message remains intact that observing Torah law gives eternal life. Perfection is another story.

Mark 12: 28-31 (Matthew 22:36-40), "... Which is the first (great commandment in the law) commandment of all? And Yeshua answered him, The first of all the commandments is, Hear, O Israel: The Lord our G-d is one Lord: And thou shalt love the Lord thy G-d with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and with all thy strength: this is the first commandment. And the second is like, namely this, Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself. There is none other commandment greater than these. (On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets)."

So, Yeshua selected Deuteronomy 6:4-5 and Leviticus 19:18 as the greatest two laws. This was very Jewish of him, as most rabbis would completely agree, especially Rabbi Hillel. He chose the Shema prayer, the Jew's affirmation of G-d's oneness and dedication to love of Him together with Judaism's great moral teaching of loving people with the love you have for yourself. What could be more indicative of the essence of Judaism?

Luke 10:25-28, "... *Master, what shall I do to inherit eternal life? He said unto him, What is written in the law? how readest thou? And he answering said, Thou shalt love the Lord thy G-d with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy strength, and with all thy mind: and thy neighbor as thyself. And he said unto him. Thou hast answered right: this do, and thou shalt live."*

Answer for yourself: Did you make the connection between "inherit eternal life" and "thou shalt live" as also

referring to eternal life? I hope you did because this is typical of Hebrew parallelism.

Answer for yourself: Have you noticed that in Luke 10:25-28, Matthew 19:16-19, Mark 10:17-19, and Luke 18:18-20 something very important is repeated?

Answer for yourself: What is it?

Namely, that possessing and inheriting eternal life is always connected with doing something.....not with believing something!

Answer for yourself: How does Luke 10:25-28 teach us more than we learn from Mark 12:28-31?

The writer of the Gospel of Luke goes one step further than the just given, Mark 12:28-31. Here we have the New Testament teaching us of the indisputable link between the “doing” of the commandments of G-d and eternal life, which is the reward for obeying them.

Answer for yourself: Are you aware that Yeshua is teaching in the New Testament that eternal life is to be taught from the Law.....the same Law that tells us “what to do” and what you most likely have been told has passed away or which you are no longer under?

It is evident that Yeshua said, in the New Testament no less, that the law of Moses, as epitomized in Deuteronomy 6:5 and Leviticus 19:18, is the pathway to personal salvation and eternal life. Yes, Yeshua said this as found in the New Testament. Let us continue.

Mark 12:32-34, "And the scribe said unto him, Well, Master, thou hast said the truth: for there is one G-d; and there is none other but he: And to love him with all the heart (alone as the one G-d), and with all the understanding, and with all the soul, and with all the strength, and to love his neighbor as himself, is more than all burnt offerings and sacrifices. ... Yeshua . . . said unto him, Thou art not far from the kingdom of G-d . . ."

Answer for yourself: Did you notice that acknowledging the oneness of G-d, and not the Trinity or triuneness of G-d, is connected with the reward of G-d's kingdom and eternal life?

Answer for yourself: Did you likewise notice that loving G-d and one's neighbor who is created in the likeness of G-d is connected with inheriting G-d's eternal life?

I John 5:3, “For this is the love of [for] G-d, that we keep his commandments: and his commandments are not grievous

Answer for yourself: Since we are told that loving G-d is connected to eternal life, did you notice the New Testament teaches “how” the love for G-d is to be manifested?

Answer for yourself: Does the New Testament teach us that loving G-d is manifested through the keeping of the 613 commandments? It sure does!

This is a straight follow-through of Mark 12:28-31, which connects the acknowledgment of the oneness of G-d, loving Him, and loving ones neighbor as written in the law, with the reward of G-d's kingdom. Burnt offerings and sacrifices are secondary to the commandments in Judaism and always have been. With no Temple, there is no doubt about this low degree of importance. This passage demonstrates Yeshua's Judaism through and through. Notice likewise that the term "Master" means good teacher, not anything more.

Matthew 7:12 (Luke 6:31), "Therefore all things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so

to them: for this is the law and the prophets."

If you thought that "do unto others" is not Judaic or that it is different from "love your neighbor as yourself" you see here that it is totally of Jewish origin. Yeshua declared that it is the law and the prophets. It is Judaic.

Luke 11:28, "... blessed are they that hear the word of G-d and keep it."

Notice also with me that when the writer of Luke penned this verse, that there was not a New Testament in existence and that the only possible identity we can give to "the word of G-d" is the Law, the Prophets, and the Writings....the Jewish Bible.

Matthew 7:21, "Not every one ... shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven."

Again we find the expressed will of the Father in the Law, Prophets, and Writings...the Jewish Bible.

Matthew 3:15, "... it becometh us to fulfill all righteousness ..."

These powerful statements are tucked in between verses which emphasize other ideas. But they can stand alone. And, standing alone they are Judaism's own. Yeshua believed that the will of G-d is revealed in the word of G-d, the Hebrew Bible. In the Hebrew Scriptures we learn the law of Moses (Torah) and the Prophets. Thereby, we can perform righteousness as G-d desires by adhering to what they teach. This Yeshua believed.

Luke 19:8-9, "... half of my goods I give to the poor; and if I have taken any thing from any man by false accusation, I restore him fourfold. And Yeshua said unto him, This day is salvation come to this house forasmuch as he also is a son of Abraham."

What comes next is very important to keep your ears open. It appears that Yeshua believed that even a partial fulfillment of the commandments of the Torah is sufficient to be accepted by G-d. In the above verse it is recorded for us that Zaccheus repented by observing 2 commandments. In fact, as taught by Yeshua, even by rectifying transgression of the Torah's laws and doing good deeds a person is deserving of salvation. As Jews trust, it is the trying to please G-d, it is the effort, not the success in total compliance with G-d's ordinances which is required of us to be righteous and gains us salvation.

Answer for yourself: How confident should we feel about our salvation if we have followed teachings that state that obedience of the law or the striving to observe the laws and commandments of G-d don't matter any longer because we are saved by "grace" or that this same law that Yeshua connects with eternal life has been taught to us as if it has passed away and of little importance in our lives any longer?

Answer for yourself: Are we absolved by G-d to not try to choose those things to please Him by keeping His commandments? Is this conduct really connected to eternal life as Yeshua taught, or is he wrong and Paul right?

All the more reason to study to learn how to acquire mitzvoth and commandments, thereby taking upon yourself the yoke of the Kingdom of G-d. Such obedience to commandments is both pleasing to G-d as well as our demonstration of our love for Him and our fellow man. To do otherwise is not to love G-d, but rather, show our ambivalence toward Him and our neighbor.

Luke 13:28, "There shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth, when ye shall see Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, and all the prophets, in the kingdom of G-d, and you yourselves thrust out."

Keep your ears open for this as well. Here Yeshua said that the fathers of Judaism and the goodly Hebrew prophets are all accepted into the kingdom of G-d. Evidently, good Jews need nothing more than the

Hebrew religion for life eternal in Yeshua's own belief.

NOW FOR THE HARD PART

Notice that Yeshua also said that many of his followers (the “ye” in the above verse) will not get into G-d's kingdom and inherit eternal life and salvation because of their sinfulness.

Answer for yourself: Does this same New Testament teach that “transgression of the law is sin”? Yes.

Answer for yourself: Did you notice what is missing from the above words of Yeshua?

There is no Pauline religious belief system mentioned as a means of salvation for the followers of Yeshua!

There is no Christological "belief" presented here as an antidote for spiritual wickedness for mankind.

There is no “easy believeism” taught by Yeshua or his Apostles as a way to eternal life; on the contrary, every time he and the other Apostles emphasize the same thing; namely an earnest attempt to live by the commandments and laws of G-d for eternal life!

If you have paid attention so far in this article I have shown you repeatedly that Yeshua repeatedly connects eternal life with keeping and observing the Law and Commandments of G-d.

Nowhere does Yeshua teach that a belief “in him” brings for its adherents eternal life! In fact he teaches just the opposite!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!

John 4:22, "(to Samaritan who is part non-Jew) *Ye worship ye know not what: we (the Jewish people) know what we worship: for salvation is of the Jews.*"

Yeshua "worships" what Jews worship, namely G-d.

Answer for yourself: Salvation is of whom...the Jews (Jewish theology) or the Christians (Christian theology)?

This passage from John 4:22 is even more startling when one realizes that the Samaritan woman who is part Non-Jew mixed with Jewish heritage and ancestry. In other words, she is a mixture; not only of blood line but religious teaching as well. She is a perfect example of the Christian today who follows Paul instead of Yeshua. He has part right and part wrong.

Lets look at Paul where he get some things correct.

I Corinthians 6:9-10, (Paul) "Know ye not that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of G-d? Be

not deceived: neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor abusers of themselves with mankind, Nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners, shall inherit the kingdom of G-d."

Answer for yourself: In this passage are you aware that Paul is in full agreement with Yeshua and his teachings on eternal life?

Answer for yourself: Are you aware that there are commandments in the Torah forbidding each of the above conducts?

Although Paul adds some of his own ideas, the listing of "thou shalt nots" is derived from the commandments. He stresses what he considers unrighteousness and Paul says that transgression of the Law prevents people from earning reward of heaven. Paul, here, reveals his faith in the teachings of the Torah and its stance on eternal life. Paul is in agreement with Yeshua and the other Apostles and their teachings on inheriting eternal life. So far so good.

So there you have it....Yeshua understood what Isaiah was saying....

10 And the Lord wished to crush him [corporate Israel.....remember?] He made him ill; **if his soul makes itself restitution (atonement)**, he shall see seed, he shall prolong his days, and G-d's purposes shall prosper in his hand.

As did the exiles in captivity that repented of idolatry and were forgiven, so we see the pattern for all mankind to make atonement through their own repentance. Filter what you learned in this article back through what you previously learned in the first two articles in this series. It should be getting very clear by now that the Christian Church teaches a false atonement and such leads to death and not life. A life lives in repentance whereby one turns from sin (the violation of G-d's Laws) and returns to obedience of the commandments atones for its own sin.

Notice again that Yeshua mentioned in Matt. 19 only the commandments of the Second Tablet of the Law when asked by the man "what must I do to inherit eternal life."

Answer for yourself: Why did Yeshua **only** mention the commandments of the Second Tablet of the Law and not the First Tablet of the Law when asked by the man about procuring Eternal Life in Matt. 19?

Simply because he knew and believed as his Bible taught, that Yom Kippur brings forgiveness of the First Tablet of the Law only, and only through men's obedience and repentance toward the laws between man and man, the Second Tablet of the Law, will men affect their own atonement. This is of major importance and cannot be stated enough.

But I wish I could end here but I cannot. In the next article we will look intently to where Paul deviates from and teaches against Yeshua's teachings concerning eternal life and atonement. In the previous article I have already shown you where Paul lies about atonement through the death of Yeshua as being previously written in the Jewish Scriptures. We searched for such a text and could find none. The only way it can be done was to read Yeshua into the text of Isaiah 53 when clearly the author intended corporate Israel as the subject and not an individual.

Further study by many in this area will be difficult, but as I have tried to show you, such an exercise to recover truth is very necessary because your eternal life is dependent upon whom you believe and follow....Yeshua or Paul. More to follow in article #4.

Shalom.



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WHAT DID THE DEATH OF YESHUA ACTUALLY ACCOMPLISH #4?

Paul shaped the Gentile Church after 70 C.E. in a manner which stripped away all links to Judaism and cursed it at the same time. The New Testament in places says Judaism is bad and abandoned by G-d, while Christianity is good and beloved. In other places the New Testament teaches just the opposite as you were shown in article one of this series. In places the New Testament says the law of Moses is not valid and the Covenant is dead for the Jews. Instead of Moses being taught to all mankind, Paul teaches that the Church's laws and the existing Covenant is dead for the Jews as well as Non-Jews. Instead, the Church's laws and the New Covenant take their place. While Paul advanced separation from Judaism, Yeshua announced Judaism's greatness. The same New Testament in which you just saw Yeshua promote Judaism, in other places debases Judaism through Paul. I just showed you that Yeshua was a practicing, believing Jew who taught faithfulness to his religion's Torah and the Jewish way of salvation. Yeshua affirmed Torah, Moses, and the Prophets as the way to G-d and eternal life. He and his family all observed the Jewish customs, holidays, and Saturday Sabbath in the synagogue. Yeshua said personal salvation is obtained through Judaism and not another way. In fact Yeshua would command that such teachings be taken into all the world whereby all Non-Jews be taught to "observe those things" Yeshua had commanded of his followers. Paul and his brand of Christianity, in contradiction to all that had been both believed and taught before by Moses, the Prophets, as well as Yeshua, has announced a new way to salvation, through belief in Yeshua's vicarious atonement for sins and resurrection, not through faith in G-d and obedience to Him through His commandments, but through belief in Yeshua's death for sins and resurrection from death.

Answer for yourself: Can you find just one time where Yeshua teaches the same salvation doctrine as espoused by Paul or where he taught vicarious atonement? The answer is no!

What I ask you to do is keep the teachings of Yeshua in focus as you read Paul. The New Testament, in places, contradicts itself and contains two completely different salvation messages...Jesus' and Paul's. That is a fact. You must be sharp enough to see it for yourself when you read. No matter what Paul says he cannot invalidate Yeshua's own words in the same book. It is a matter of who you will believe concerning Eternal Life....Jesus.....or....Paul. If you listen to Yeshua, as I have laid out for you, you see that he proclaimed continually Judaism's eternal truths. Paul will not. Now let us look at Paul.

PAUL CONTRADICTS HIMSELF....DID YOU EVER SEE IT BEFORE?

What is the most perplexing for me when studying Paul is that he is not consistent in what he says. Most of you have never probably seen this but I will in the remaining pages attempt to reveal to you

the contradictions that come from the mouth and pen of Paul regarding salvation. When we look at Yeshua his message is consistent with what has always been taught by Moses and the Prophets. But with Paul we have another matter because he won't always agree with what he has said before. But if you are not sharp in your Bible study you can easily overlook such things. Let us begin our critical examination of the message of Paul on salvation.

Remembering what Yeshua just said about eternal life and observance of the commandments let us contrast Paul's view on the matter.

Answer for yourself: Does Paul in Romans 2:13 agree or disagree with what Yeshua has said about eternal life and the observance of the commandments of G-d? Well, let's read it and see.

Romans 2:13 *For not the hearers of the law are just before G-d, but the doers of the law shall be justified.*

So far so good. Paul in this verse agrees with the message of Yeshua regarding acceptance and eternal life with G-d..

But just wait.

Now on the back of the same page in my Bible where the above verse was quoted from Paul, we see **Paul writes something totally different and contradictory to the teachings of Yeshua in Romans 3:28:**

Romans 3:28 *Therefore we conclude that a man is justified by faith without the deeds of the law.*

Answer for yourself: Did you see that Paul just said the opposite of what he said earlier in Romans 2:13? In light of what I just showed you can you justify Paul's quick turn-around on this doctrinal stance so quickly, let alone a change in the same epistle?

Notice that within the space of 44 verses Paul reverses completely his stance on justification and righteousness through obedience to the law and commandments of G-d. Just 44 verses!

Answer for yourself: Did Paul teach "doing and obeying the Law" for justification AFTER THE CROSS in Romans 2:13? DEFINITELY YES!

Answer for yourself: Does Paul contradict himself in Romans 3:28? DEFINITELY YES!

Answer for yourself: So what are we to believe in the face of such contradictions of Paul when contrasted with the teachings of Yeshua and the other Apostles which teach otherwise than Paul? Are other of Paul's teachings to be viewed cautiously because they might be "wrong?"

Answer for yourself: Seeing this material for yourself, who are you going to believe for your salvation....Yeshua, Moses, and the Prophets and their message of salvation or Paul and his message which contradicts Moses, the Prophets, as well as Jesus?

1 Corinthians 6:11

And such were some of you (non-Jews): but ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified in the name of the Lord Yeshua, and by the Spirit of our G-d.

Please take note that the above verse says that those who "were" transgressors had been helped by the

Christological message of Paul and belief in "his gospel" which taught justification of the unG-dly through belief in the death and resurrection of Yeshua for eternal life.

Answer for yourself: How did that happen?

CAN PAUL KEEP A STRAIGHT THOUGHT?

1 Cor 6:9-10 9 Know ye not that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of G-d? Be not deceived: neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor abusers of themselves with mankind, 10 Nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners, shall inherit the kingdom of God. (KJV)

If you did not catch it everyone of the above sins are dealt with in the Law of G-d and in the Covenant and Law of G-d for the non-Jew. Let us understand what is really being said by Paul in this verse. Let us remember that Paul has just previously taught in 1 Corinthians 6:9-10 that the heathen who are guilty of the transgression of the Laws of G-d is led to death and separation from G-d, let alone the loss of eternal life. But what few fail to see is that Paul will move away from such a stance at places in the New Testament and relax G-d's requirement for salvation to those he is wishing to "win" to his personal beliefs concerning Yeshua. Having understood this, then we can understand his message intended for Non-Jews whereby he uses "Yeshua" literally as bait to get the Non-Jew to believe in "Paul's Yeshua" as a way for their eternal life instead of the way G-d had spoken for all time as found in the writings of Moses, the Prophets, as well as taught by Jesus as shown when I contrasted the different salvation messages of Jesus and Paul. Let us understand that Paul used cunning (become all things to all men in order to win some) in not telling the heathen he has to accept the Torah right off the bat, but rather shrewdly uses this "Pauline Yeshua" and relaxation of the Torah in his effort to win converts from the heathen gradually. Ironically Paul's adherents among the Non-Jews, in patterning themselves after such a Jewish Rabbi and his ethical teachings, would gradually develop lives of ethical and moral conduct which would assure that they become more G-dly than before. Such is repentance which is the first step in coming to G-d. Of course, if you give up evil you are closer to G-d, Christianity's way, Judaism's way, or any other way.

But there is one important difference from those who Paul was attempting to teach and you...the reader of this article. You are not like the heathen, but rather, most likely have been raised in church most of your life.

Answer for yourself: With your religious background and your love for G-d most of your life what excuse do we have not to obey G-d fully and choose those things which please him which I have demonstrated is His Law?

Luke 1:46-47,50-55.

"And Mary said, My soul Both magnify the Lord, And my spirit hath rejoiced in G-d, my Savior. And his mercy is on them that fear him from generation to generation. He hath showed strength with his arm; he hath scattered the proud in the imagination of their hearts. He hath put down the mighty from their seats, and exalted them of low degree. He hath filled the hungry with good things; and the rich he hath sent empty away. He hath helped his servant Israel in remembrance of his mercy; As he spake to our fathers, to Abraham, and to his seed for ever."

Answer for yourself: Did Mary, Yeshua' mother, call the G-d of Judaism, the same G-d who gave her People the Torah for salvation her Savior or did she, based on her new revelation, call her son Yeshua the "new" Savior?

Mary knew what most Christians don't. That's because today's Christians have read and believe Paul more than the Synoptic Gospels which teach Jesus' salvation message. G-d alone is the Savior not Yeshua or His

Messiah. Hence, Jews have salvation by G-d the Father and need no second or alternate source of salvation. The Jew's understanding of their Bible and their revelation is the "light" that lights the world and the hope of the Gentile world; it always has been and always will be! Above Mary spoke of G-d's greatness and His help of His servant, Israel. She spoke of G-d's message to Abraham's children, that the Covenant is eternal. This was the understanding of Mary after she was allegedly informed that she would have, according to the New Testament, a miraculous virgin birth and that the child would be the Messiah. As you surely can see, she spoke as a traditional, believing Jewish person, not the holy figure of Christianity.

Luke 1:6.

"And they (Zacharias and Elizabeth) were both righteous before G-d, walking in all the commandments and ordinances of the Lord blameless."

Answer for yourself: According to the New Testament does “walking in the commandments and ordinances of the Lord” allow a person to be “blameless” before G-d? It sure does.

Jews as well as Non-Jews can be free of sin, blameless, following the law of Moses, as exemplified by these two people. Therefore, we know according to the New Testament witness that the law does give justification for eternal life.

Again let us see what Paul has to say on the matter.

Romans 4:3. (Paul)

"For what saith the scripture? Abraham believed G-d, and it was counted unto him for righteousness."

Answer for yourself: First of all most Christians have never understood this passage correctly. You most likely have heard this passage your whole life. But do you know what believing truly consists of as spoken of in this verse?

Believe without response, or as James said it, “faith without works is dead,” is the meaning of the passage. Abraham believed G-d according to the revelation of G-d and RESPONDED because of that belief. He took his son to Mount Moriah to be offered to G-d. Abraham had faith and he had a concrete response to that faith. Consequently, righteousness in G-d's eyes is believing G-d's instructions and doing as G-d commands. In Abraham's situation, it was offering his son Isaac as a sacrifice. In our situation, it is obeying and following G-d's commandments in His Torah and His laws, not just believing they exist.

Answer for yourself: Do you find that following G-d's commandments somewhat difficult or foolish to keep and observe since the vast majority of Christianity today teaches (because of Paul) that the Christian is no longer under the law but under a grace which allows him to break and not keep these laws at will or substitute those of his own making?

Lets see what Paul has to say about being righteous and walking in the commandments and ordinances of G-d.

Answer for yourself: Is this Paul's doctrine as well and does he agree with Yeshua and the Apostles on this major issue? No, again we see where Paul contradicted the teachings of Yeshua.

Rom 3:20-22

Therefore by the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in his sight: for by the law is the knowledge of sin. 21 But now the righteousness of G-d without the law is manifested, being witnessed by the law and the prophets; 22 Even the righteousness of G-d which is by faith of Yeshua Christ unto all and upon all them that believe: for there is no difference:

Remembering what you previously read in the first article concerning the teachings of Yeshua, let us examine closely the above passage from Paul for contradictions to what both Yeshua, Moses, and the Prophets taught.

1. Moses (the Law) and Prophets NEVER taught that obedience of G-d's laws did not justify, in fact it was just the opposite they taught; namely, that obedience to the laws of G-d does justify.
2. Moses (the Law) and the Prophets NEVER taught that righteousness existed apart from obedience to the laws of G-d, in fact they taught just the opposite..they NEVER taught a "righteousness apart from the Law".
3. Paul discounts what Moses, the Prophets, and Yeshua all taught and held in common, and substitutes his own theology that replaces 4000 years of Biblical Truth with a "BUT NOW" theology of justification before G-d apart from the Law through belief in Paul's own understanding of Yeshua' death and resurrection.

Answer for yourself: Who are we to believe? What do the other Apostles who knew Jesus personally have to say? Do they agree with Paul or do they contradict Paul?

THE APOSTOLIC COMMUNITY DISAGREES WITH PAUL...ALL THE TIME

1 John 5:2-3,

". . . we love the children of G-d, when we love G-d, and keep his commandments. For this is the love of G-d, that we keep his commandments: and his commandments are not grievous."

Earlier I stated that we love G-d by keeping his commandments. Now we see the second phase of the Greatest Commandment: loving His children and our neighbors (such actions are expressed in the Second Tablet of the Law...all of the commands are between man and man). Notice also that ironically only by loving our neighbor are we actually loving G-d! Such loving of G-d and our neighbor requires fidelity to His laws, which are not hard to bear or perform. So, we read here in the New Testament that the commandments of the Torah are to be kept and can be kept. These laws should be observed to demonstrate our love of G-d and our fellow man.

Answer for yourself: Can I obey literally all of G-d's laws? I may not but it is not because I can't. I sin and fail to observe them due to my choices.

It may be beyond human experience to perform all our duties to G-d, always and perfectly. But, G-d gave the commandments which are not hard to uphold, when you use all your good intentions with all your heart. G-d's laws require your effort, not perfection. Spiritual maturity is growing in the obedience to the Commands of G-d during one's life..such is love for G-d and reveals one's spiritual growth.

Again let us look at Paul.

Romans 3:24

Being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus: 25 Whom G-d hath

set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of G-d; 26 To declare, I say, at this time his righteousness: that he might be just, and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus

Again you should notice Paul is teaching a completely different message from what Yeshua, Moses, Prophets, and the Apostles taught. Again Paul stands alone in his belief. No where is any of Paul's theology can we find references to what Yeshua, Moses, the Prophets or other Apostles taught. We must go to astral, solar, and cosmic sun-worship to find Paul's doctrines:
<http://paganizingfaithofyeshua.netfirms.com>

Rom 10:9-16

9 That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that G-d hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. 10 For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation.

For those who don't know...the above passage held so dear by Christians was not in the first collection New Testament writings in 150 A.D. but "appears" in the collection of writings of Irenaeus in 180 A.D.; so no apostle wrote it...but rather Gentiles as they crafted their own theology which we have swallowed hook, line, and sinker.

Again we see that Paul has a different way of salvation from what was taught by Yeshua, Moses, the Prophets, and the Apostles as demonstrated in the first article in this series. Paul stresses "faith only" for righteousness and not what Yeshua, Moses, the Prophets, and the other Apostles taught; namely walking in the commandments of G-d for righteousness.

Answer for yourself: Who are you going to trust for correct teaching for eternal life...Paul or Yeshua, Moses, the Prophets, and the Apostles?

If you are honest with yourself up to now I have repeatedly shown you that Yeshua's message revolved around keeping the Commandments and ordinances of G-d. Yeshua both taught and knew for certain that love for G-d and those created in His image could only be accomplished by adhering to a standard of righteousness (G-d's laws) set by G-d and not by man. Thus the need and availability of G-d's laws and commandments, which when earnestly attempted to keep produces acceptance and salvation.

Remember G-d requires our effort and not our perfection.

Again look at Paul and his views on the law.

1 Timothy 1:8

1 Tim 1:8 8 But we know that the law is good, if a man use it lawfully; (KJV)

Romans 7:12,14,16,22,

"Wherefore the law is holy, and the commandment holy, and just, and good. For we know that the law is spiritual: . . . I consent unto the law that it is good. For I delight in the law of G-d after the inward man:"

Answer for yourself: Does it stand to reason that G-d would need to replace something that is holy, just, spiritual, and good?

Answer for yourself: Did you notice that Paul even said that he delights in the law of G-d after the inward spirit?

2 Timothy 3:16-17.

"All scripture is given by inspiration of G-d, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: That the man of G-d may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works."

Answer for yourself: Are you aware that when Paul wrote this in his letter to Timothy that there was only the Jewish Scriptures (Law, Prophets, Writings) in existence and that the New Testament would not be canonized till 397 A.D. (almost 300 years later)?

Answer for yourself: Are you also aware that Paul is saying that the Law, the Prophets, and the Writings are, at the time of writing of this epistle which is around 30 years after Yeshua's death, profitable for DOCTRINE, REPROOF, CORRECTION, AND INSTRUCTION?

Answer for yourself: Don't you find it rather strange that something that is profitable for doctrine, reproof, correction, and instruction for the first church is considered passed away by today's church?

Answer for yourself: Are you aware that Paul's writings and his theology were not, even by him, considered Scripture?

You should not find these facts surprising since the creation of a New Testament or the creation of an alternate view of salvation and how to attain it was the furthestmost thing from anyone's mind at this time....except Paul's.

1 Peter 1:25.

"But the word of the Lord (the Law, Prophets, and Writings) endureth for ever...."

Understanding when Peter wrote this Paul's teachings were very limited in scope and accepted by only a few. In fact scholars today teach us that in no time during Paul's life did he have over 50 adherents to his message. In fact Paul would later say "all in Asia have forsaken me." All in Asia? This again shows you his message had a very limited scope since men from James continually followed him around to "undo" his teachings. Thus you can better understand why Paul was required to appear before James twice in his life. Literally this was to answer charges as seen in Acts 21:21:

"And they are informed of thee, that thou teachest all the Jews which are among the Gentiles to forsake Moses, saying that they ought not to circumcise their children, neither to walk after the customs."

What I have demonstrated to you in this article is that Yeshua continually walked after the customs of Moses and the Prophets. Paul did not. Tragically we have grown up in Churches which did not follow Yeshua, the Prophets, or the customs as well. We grew up most likely in Churches that followed Paul and literally oppose the teachings of Yeshua, the Prophets, and the Apostles.

Answer for yourself: How are we to reconcile that the Law endures forever but your church teaches that Christ is the end of the Law and that the Law has ceased and that we are no longer under the Law but grace?

Amazingly, the verses presented above from the pen of the Apostle Paul and Peter affirm the validity of the laws and the commandments of the Torah. They are described as sacred and beneficial, effective and everlasting. So you must face the fact that after the cross Paul at one time believed the laws of G-d to be holy,

just, spiritual and good. So did Peter for that matter.

Stop here and ask yourself this:

Answer for yourself: If the Torah is all these things of G-d, shouldn't the laws be performed and Biblical Judaism, which is the embodiment of such laws, be observed by all Jews and Non-Jews?

Romans 10:5,

"For Moses describeth the righteousness which is of the law, That the man which doeth those things shall live by them."

Answer for yourself: Did you again notice that the Apostle Paul states in agreement with Moses that "righteousness is of the law" and "that those do those things in the law" shall "live" by them (eternal life)?

But again another conflict of Paul is seen below.

Romans 3: 21

But now the righteousness of G-d without the law is manifested, being witnessed by the law and the prophets;

Answer for yourself: Can you find me just one Jewish Scripture that shows that the Law and the Prophets taught a "righteousness without the Law?" **No...because there is none...this is a blatant lie by Paul and if you don't know the Old Testament well then you will never know that Paul lies in this verse.**

Answer for yourself: How are we to understand Paul's comments about a righteousness "without the law" in light of Yeshua's teachings that connect all righteousness with observance of the commandments?

Answer for yourself: How do you reconcile that Paul speaks of "**righteousness without the law**" in Romans 3:21 and "**righteousness which is of the law**" in Romans 10:5?

Answer for yourself: Are you willing to trust contradictions like this from Paul for your eternal life?

Answer for yourself: Although we are warned by Paul not to believe another "gospel," is it not evident to you that in comparison to Yeshua and his message about eternal life that ironically it is Paul who teaches "another gospel"?

Answer for yourself: Which of the two teachings are we to trust for our eternal life as taught by Paul...."the man which doeth those things (law) shall live (eternal life) by them" [Romans 10:5] or [Rom 10:9] "That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Yeshua, and shalt believe in thine heart that G-d hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved"?

The Hebrew Bible teaches that the Torah's laws lead to virtue, which is rewarded by everlasting life. Paul, in this passage from Romans 10:5 admits that this is the message of Moses in the Holy Scriptures, who communicated G-d's will to the Hebrew people. Then he contradicts again this only 4 verses later!

James 5:16,

". . . The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much."

I John 3:22,

"And whatsoever we ask, we receive of him, because we keep his commandments, and do those things

that are pleasing in his sight."

Answer for yourself: Could some of our prayers not being answered and our lack of receiving what we ask of G-d be because we believe we are under grace and not under the law and commandments of G-d and don't attempt to know let alone keep as many of them as possible?

These two verses, from two different Apostles, show that keeping commandments and being righteous are connected. Both lead to G-d's hearing us, being pleased, and helping us. The verse quoted is very Judaic in nature, and that's a fact.

James 2:8.

"If ye fulfill the royal law according to the scripture, Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself, ye do well:"

Answer for yourself: Is James telling us we "do well" if we fulfill and keep the law? Sure is.

A person is good if he obeys the golden rule as given in the law of Moses.

James 1:27, (James) "Pure religion and undefiled before G-d and the Father is this, To visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and to keep himself unspotted from the world."

Here is the golden rule made specific and said to be the basis of religious requirements. Also, to be pure from worldly evils in general makes for a religious person. These are Jewish ideas, totally.

Let us look again at Paul.

Galatians 3:21,

*"Is the law then against the promise of G-d ? G-d forbid: for **if** there had been a law given which could have given life, verily righteousness should have been by the law."*

Here is where you have to read close as well as remember what you have already learned from reading Yeshua and the other Apostles regarding the law and its connection with eternal life. Strange as it may be to read, Paul is, in the first part of the verse anyway, seemingly lending support to the validity of the law of Moses. Now for a problem which most fail to grasp its significance. Paul is double-minded. Remember I told you that he contradicts not only himself but Yeshua and the other Apostles? Here again is another place where Paul deviates from the message of the other Apostles as well as the early church. For Paul says **"if" the law could be effective Moses' law would suffice for salvation. Paul is in reality stating that it is his personal feeling that no such law exists which is connected to salvation. For Paul the condition "if such a law existed" indicates that such a law and condition does not exist...at least for Paul!**

Answer for yourself: What? Is this a complete reversal by Paul of what he has said previously in some of his other epistles let alone a complete contradiction of the teaching of Yeshua and the other Apostles? It sure is.

Answer for yourself: Well, have you with your own eyes earlier in this article already seen that Yeshua said that keeping the commandments is the path to salvation and the law is effective to this end? If you read the article you have. This produces quite a dilemma for the Christian.

Answer for yourself: Does Paul agree or disagree with the teachings of Yeshua regarding salvation and eternal life? He does not!

Therefore, Paul, if he "believes" Yeshua, must conclude that righteousness is obtained by one's

effort to follow and pattern one's life after the Scriptural laws. But this is not the message of Paul therefore we must question if Paul really "believed in Yeshua."

Notice that Paul actually contradicts Yeshua on this essential matter and, in effect, created Christianity's separation from its Hebraic roots in Judaism.

Paul claims that sin is not overcome, but is created, by the law. Ironically, it is Paul's teaching, not Yeshua's, which invalidated the law for the budding Church. Such destroys the teachings of Yeshua and the other Apostles!

WERE WE WARNED ABOUT PEOPLE LIKE PAUL BY YESHUA? HAVE WE HEEDED THE WARNING?

Let's read what Yeshua said about this kind of opposition. In Matthew 10:24 (Luke 6:40) (John 13:16) Yeshua said,

"The disciple (Paul) is not above his master (Yeshua), nor the servant (Paul) above his lord (Yeshua)."

Answer for yourself: So we ask, whose statements take precedence...Yeshua's or Paul's?

Answer for yourself: Who is to be believed...Yeshua or Paul?

You have to decide that for yourself. We only desire to lay the materials out for you in such a way that you can make an intelligent decision.

Answer for yourself: What will you trust for your salvation...the message of Yeshua or Paul?

Answer for yourself: Which is truly linked to eternal life and G-d's salvation.....Christologies (believing in Yeshua) and his identity which was decided for us by the Catholic Church) or Judaics (following the faith of Yeshua)?

Answer for yourself: What is the real message of salvation of G-d since the New Testament teaches two ways which are mutually exclusive of each other.....faith in Yeshua or adopting the faith of Yeshua?

Let me warn and encourage all of our readers that if you should "believe" on Yeshua to be saved, believe his teachings about the eternal and effective holy law of G-d revealed by Moses and begin to do them. Begin a life before G-d where you tell Him that His laws and commandments are important to you and that you choose to try to do them to the best of your ability because you know they please Him. Begin to live by as many as possible for in them you demonstrate your love of G-d and those created in His image. And you will be saved as a Jew or a Non-Jew.

Paul also writes as follows:

Romans 14:14,

"I know. . . that there is nothing unclean of itself: but to him that esteemeth any thing to be unclean, to him it is unclean."

Certainly, this is true. Jews consider things unclean because G-d announced it in the Torah, not because they

are unclean of themselves. The law of kashruth (kosher) is G-d's law, as detailed by those who seek Him. G-d's ordinances create uncleanness, not the thing itself. And Jews and Non-Jews who want to please G-d and get close to Him keep the kosher laws. This is what G-d desires of us.

Romans 3:1-2.

"What advantage then hath the Jew? or what profit is there of circumcision? Much every way: chiefly, because that unto them were committed the oracles of G-d."

Romans 9:4, Romans 10:2.

"Who are Israelites: to whom pertaineth the adoption, and the glory, and the covenants, and the giving of the law, and the service of G-d, and the promises: For I bear them record that they have a zeal of G-d . . ."

Romans 11:29.

"For the gifts and calling of G-d are without repentance."

Acts 2:5

"And there were dwelling at Jerusalem Jews, devout men . . ."

Jews have a fervor for G-d and are devout, said Paul. In other words, Biblical Judaism promoted enthusiasm for G-d. Jews were given the Covenant, the law, the prophets, and the promises. Jews minister to G-d by being His Chosen People. There is benefit, much benefit, in being Jewish. Paul even bolsters the firm foundation of the Torah, G-d's gift, lasting for eternity, without G-d changing His mind, without repenting of His Torah. That is what Paul actually said.

Notice that Paul, however, in a complete reversal of what he said elsewhere, is recorded to having believed that all these positive features of being Jewish are canceled, and of no avail, due to the Jew's lack of belief in Yeshua the Christ. We will leave Paul's reasoning and reversal to others. Instead, we ask you to keep in mind his positive appreciation of Judaism. And also remember that Yeshua said, in effect, that Judaism is of G-d. Yeshua, himself, taught that "Jews for Judaism" is the way even for the Non-Jew. We have shown abundant evidence of this in our present article.

Answer for yourself: Who is the authority you choose, Yeshua or Paul?

Ephesians 6:2-3.

"Honor thy father and mother; which is the first commandment with promise; That it may be well with thee, and thou mayest live long on the earth."

Matthew 15:4 (Mark 7:10).

"For G-d commanded (Moses said), saying, Honor thy father and mother: and, He that curseth father or mother, let him die the death."

These verses are Paul's and Yeshua's utterances, condemning anyone who doesn't bestow honor upon his parents, as taken from the Ten Commandments. This means dutifully regarding them and respecting them, and implicitly honoring your heritage as well. This commandment is considered important enough to be put forward separately. Therefore, shaming your parents and their teaching by turning from them and the G-d of their heritage is prohibited and deserving of worldly death as well as loss of life in the hereafter. This is also

what we read elsewhere in the New Testament.

Luke 5:37-39.

"And no man putteth new wine into old bottles; else the new wine will burst the bottles, and be spilled, and the bottles shall perish. But new wine must be put into new bottles; and both are preserved. No man also having drunk old wine straightway desireth new: for he saith, The old is better."

Yeshua's saying appears to fit Judaism and its offspring, Christianity. To carry this analogy through, the new wine, Christianity, should not be placed into the old, Judaism. This, of course, is just what happened. In order for it to be good, the new should be nurtured separately. Both are then properly maintained, the old as it should be and the new as it should be. This did not occur. Sadly, the new has caused great harm to the old by claiming to succeed it, while mixing with it. And the new, by so doing, has harmed itself. Isn't that the proper conclusion to be drawn? Taken one step further, Yeshua also said that those who know the old, Judaism, prefer it.

Answer for yourself: Shouldn't you, as a Non-Jew and most likely a follower of Yeshua, prefer it too?

Answer for yourself: Whose teachings will you trust to lead you to eternal life...Paul's [which are filled with contradictions of Yeshua, Moses, the Prophets, as well as the other followers and Apostles of Yeshua who knew him personally and walked with him 40 days after his resurrection], or Yeshua's [which agree totally with Moses and the Prophets and which contains not one contradiction among them]?

I would think having read this article it is rather obvious....Shalom.



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WHAT DID THE DEATH OF YESHUA ACTUALLY ACCOMPLISH #5

At the heart of Judaism and Christianity lies some notion of sacrifice. In both traditions sacrifice provides a symbol for connecting a person to G-d: it makes possible repentance and a restored relationship with G-d. Jewish and Christian notions of sacrifice and salvation were affected by the destruction of the Temple in 70 CE. This event provided a key shift in their understanding of atonement.

For Judaism, sacrifice was not necessarily to be viewed as an external religious ritual but a matter of the heart—in line with the biblical prophetic tradition. For Christianity, Yeshua became the sacrifice which replaced all Temple sacrifices. Christ's death became the sacrifice which replaced the need for personal repentance for atonement.

Answer for yourself: How correct is this Christian teaching?

The point of departure between the early Jewish Christians and Pharisaic Judaism was twofold. Firstly, the Christians made Yeshua's death the atoning sacrifice; and secondly, they made it universal in scope rather than particular:

The link between the Jewish and Christian views of atonement lies in the concept of sacrifice. The notion of sacrifice seems very distant from most modern Western people, but that may be because they do not understand its purpose. Many people seem to view cultic sacrifice as a practice of superstitious primitive peoples who think that their gifts can placate the divine wrath or make up for their sins. Viewed as such, sacrifice indicates an amoral understanding of G-d's justice and human guilt.

However, this interpretation misunderstands the nature and purpose of sacrifice. Primarily, it is neither propitiation of the gods' anger nor satisfaction for sin but sacrifice is a medium whereby the worshippers are related to the divine, a 'ferry-boat between heaven and earth'. This is true of all religions that have used sacrifice, including the religion of ancient Israel. They performed sacrifices as part of the process of atonement, but, contrary to what the Christian Church taught on the matter, the Jews did not believe that their sins were magically removed when an animal was slaughtered on the altar, as if something took place that made their own moral actions irrelevant. This understanding has escaped most Christians I know.

Answer for yourself: Dear Christian, if this was the belief of the first followers of Yeshua should it not also be our belief as well?

That means we need to focus on a renewed value for repentance in a believer's life in response to the Commandments of G-d. Sacrifice was understood as the ritual that symbolically connected the sacrificer to their G-d (the animal on the altar was symbolic of the sacrificer's soul on the altar, which could only be there because the sacrificer had previously repented and made himself right

with G-d and his fellowman). Such was an external witness to all of the sacrificer's prior effective repentance and right standing before G-d. Sacrifice is not then to be viewed as an alternative to repentance but as that which makes sacrifice and right standing with G-d possible. Godfrey Ashby noted that...

'expiatory sacrifice should never be seen as a rival to other means of response, such as expressions of repentance, but as the provided vehicle for confession and reparation.'

Sacrificial acts show the penitence of the sinner and give concrete expression to his or her desire to repent (it is an external work that demonstrates an internal work). In this way, the sacrifice is part of the process whereby the sinner is reconciled to G-d.

THIS HAS NEVER CHANGED... REGARDLESS OF WHAT THE CHURCH SAYS

This understanding of the process of atonement did not change when the Second Temple was destroyed in 70 CE. The Jews soon realized that they would somehow have to preserve their religion without the temple sacrifices. The rabbis turned to the fact that sacrifice was never effective as an external rite in itself without repentance and that sacrifice was always the demonstration of the prior internal work within a man's heart by G-d.

Stop and read that last sentence again. Somehow this has been tragically overlooked and misrepresented by the Christian Church over the ages. This has to stop.

Sacrifice was never thought to automatically cleanse people apart from their own repentance. Atonement cannot be effective without the genuine expression of sorrow for sin and a sincere desire to reform. The rabbis, in absence of the Temple and the external demonstration of one's internal repentance as seen in sacrifice, therefore put forward and reemphasized the view that atonement is still possible through the individual confession of sins and repentance as it always had, apart from any cultic ritual or priestly sacrifice. Some changes were necessary, and Scriptural authority for such changes can be found in Deut. 17.

CHANGES??????

The high priest no longer confesses for the people on Yom Kippur; now it is the duty of all Jews to confess their own sins (same for Gentile believers). This confession is no longer externalized in ritual form with animal sacrifices but in deeds of lovingkindness done for one's neighbor. The way to this life of righteousness and love is to be found through following the Torah.

The rabbis supported this view by quoting the prophet's words that 'G-d desires mercy and not sacrifices'. However, this is not meant to imply a rejection of sacrifice as such as we as Christians have erroneously been taught. One should realize that, when the prophets said G-d took no delight in the offerings of Israel, this was only a rejection of sacrifice performed without the right intention and repentance prior to the killing of the animal. Ironically the call from the prophets is to perform sacrifice correctly, not to abolish it. It is sacrifice emptied of its content and detached from its context (contrite and broken heart over one's sin) that is denounced by prophets and psalmists. To have condemned all offering of sacrifice would have been, in effect, to have condemned all public worship.

Likewise, in quoting the prophets, the rabbis were not claiming that sacrifice was immoral or undesirable. They were simply trying to deal with a situation in which they could no longer offer sacrifices, which forced them to reconsider the deeper understandings of atonement. Therefore, they stressed the human intention to repent that underlay the sacrifice and that remains in effect even without the ability to sacrifice which was

imposed upon them from without.

SACRIFICE WITHOUT A TEMPLE...YOU BET

This does not mean that the idea of sacrifice has completely disappeared from Judaism. The prayer service itself was constructed as a form of sacrifice so that, as the rabbis said (quoting Hos. 14:2),

'we will offer the fruit of our lips'.

Furthermore, traditional Judaism looks forward to a restoration of physical sacrifice in the new Jerusalem, demonstrating that the cult had a role that has remained unfulfilled since the destruction of the temple. There is a sense, then, in which Judaism has continued to be a religion of sacrifice, even though sacrifice is no longer offered physically. Repentance requires some form of 'sacrifice' as its external expression, just as sacrifice requires repentance as its internal basis. Neither can exist without the other.

Sacrifice is also essential to the Christian concept of atonement. The first Christians were Jews who were familiar with the temple cult in Jerusalem as the means of atonement. Therefore, it is not altogether strange that they applied the language of sacrifice to the death of Yeshua. They believed that Yeshua was like the high priest at the temple, interceding with G-d on their behalf, making a holy offering to overcome the gap that separated them from G-d. Like the high priest, Yeshua did not provide a substitution for their own moral efforts to atone for their sins (failure of the second Tablet of the Law). Like other Jews, the first Christians believed their own repentance was essential to appropriate the value of the sacrifice. This does not mean that they thought the purpose of Yeshua's sacrifice was merely to prompt them to repent; rather, they believed his sacrifice provided the external form (just as animal sacrifices had done previously) in which their desire to repent and be forgiven was expressed.

In the Christian view, Yeshua's sacrifice and human repentance are inseparable, so atonement occurs in one's own personal appropriation of Yeshua's work. The Christian identifies with Yeshua's work through faith in him; hence, one's own obedience to the commands of G-d and suffering is included in acceptance of his suffering on one's behalf. Yet in churches that teach the Law has passed away such is impossible!

Yeshua is in this sense not a substitute for us, who acts without our participation, but a representative of us who reconnects us to G-d (by his example...if we follow it). The first Christians believed sacrifice requires our response of repentance to be effective, just as repentance requires sacrifice. The two are concurrent in early Christian thought just as they are in Judaism, because the Christian view evolved out of the Jewish concept of sacrifice.

SO WHERE DID THE IDEA THAT YESHUA'S DEATH WAS A SACRIFICE AND ATONEMENT ORIGINATE?

Although the Christian view of atonement was rooted in Judaism, there were still major differences in the way the doctrine developed in the Jewish and Jewish/Christian/Essene traditions. One obvious difference between the death of Yeshua, understood as a sacrifice (death by martyrdom was considered by the Essenes as an atoning sacrifice) and that offered by the high priest of Judaism (Biblical Judaism) is that in the apocalyptic view held by the Dead Sea Scroll peoples (the Essenes) the martyr offered up his own life as the sacrifice for the community himself. This is a major difference. Biblical Judaism as well as the Torah taught, as I have shown you in the previous articles in this series, that man atones for his own sin through repentance and restitution. The Essenes, a fringe apocalyptic group in the first century B.C.E., held beliefs not always accepted by Yeshua. This is of major importance

because Yeshua was a Pharisee in good standing in the House of Hillel. This was conservative Phariseism. Such a Pharisee group to which Yeshua belonged held traditional beliefs as taught in the previous articles. Over against that is the Essenes which taught otherwise where one could die for the sins of the community. In other words, the Essenes believed one could die and provide an atonement for many if he was a martyred tzeddek (righteous man).

Understanding that much of the Essenic beliefs were adopted by the apocalyptic first Christians, one might claim that this idea clearly separates the Christian view of atonement from the Jewish view, but this is not strictly true. The idea that one may suffer (suffer and not die) for the sins of another is found already in Isaiah 52-53, the "suffering servant" poem to which early Christians so often referred. Even before Yeshua's lifetime, other Jewish writings proposed the idea that the death of martyrs could atone for the sins of the community of Israel...but Israel only (notice atone for Israel and not Brazil or Spain).

The Apocalyptic Christians changed this idea to make it universal, that the death of the martyr atoned for all men worldwide. Such is a major deviation from the original intent.

The original concept of martyrdom as atonement for a community, Israel, stressed the importance that one must be a part of G-d's People...the Israel of G-d which is provided to Gentile believers by engrafting by faith and resultant obedience to the commands of G-d. The idea of martyrdom was developed more extensively during the period of persecution in the first and second centuries CE. This is understandable since the Maccabean war contained the slaughter and martyrdom of myriads of righteous Jews. One can find numerous references to it in the Jewish literature of the times. It was believed that the righteous ones who die for their faith not only cleanse themselves from sin but are also able to intercede with G-d on behalf of all Israel. In this sense, their lives are a sacrifice for the sins of others. Even though this idea was formulated most explicitly in texts written after Yeshua's lifetime, it did not appear then for the first time, so it is probable that the early Christians were familiar with it from the inter-testamental times. The belief in the atoning power of Yeshua's death, then, is not alien to Judaism, for it evolved out of a Jewish understanding of martyrdom as a form of representative atonement by the Essenic community. Today most Jews and Christians today are unaware of the roots of this form of atonement.

YET THERE ARE REAL DIFFERENCES

In spite of this similarity, however, there were two crucial differences that separated the early Christian conception of atonement from ideas of other Jews: it made the death of one individual the central act of atonement, and it made this atonement universal in scope.

First, by making the death of Yeshua central, Christians separated themselves from those Jews who either had no personal relationship to Yeshua or could not see why he had to be the central means of salvation from sin. Christian Jews as well as Gentile Christians claimed that Yeshua was central to salvation because he was the messiah, but this claim involved a view of the messiah that was very different from the typical Jewish view. In the view of the Prophets and most of the Jews, the messiah was to be the agent of G-d's rescue of Israel from suffering, not one who atoned for their sins. Nowhere in the Old Testament and Jewish Scriptures was it ever recorded that the Messiah was to die for sin!

You need to step back and read that sentence again.

Many of the early Christians, but not all of them however, viewed the mission of the messiah as sacrificial, first and foremost and overlooked the multitude of unfulfilled prophecies that discredit Yeshua as being the Messiah long awaited by Israel. As stated previously many some but not all Christians believed that through Yeshua's death and resurrection could he redeem Israel. This was made possible by the popularity of the Apocalyptic literature generated in response to the foreign threats to Israel by foreign nations prevalent at that time. Since so many Jews were dying at the hands of the unrighteous Gentiles the surviving Jews sought to give great

significance to their deaths by attributing an atoning efficacy to it. But be not mistaken, this view was popular among the fringe movement of Judaism and by and large the traditional conservative branch of Biblical Judaism did not hold such beliefs. Conservative Biblical Judaism, of which Yeshua was a part, did not hold to such beliefs!

By interpreting the concept of the messiah and applying it to Yeshua in this way, the first Christians gave a significance to his death above all other atoning sacrifices. This was a mistake.

UNIVERSAL ATONEMENT OR COMMUNITY ATONEMENT?

Second, the messianic significance attributed to Yeshua's death led to the view that the atonement he brought is universal in scope. The first Christians expanded the message of salvation beyond the boundaries of Israel in that Yeshua was said to have died for the sins of everyone in the world. It was this idea that made the mission to the gentiles possible, and very soon the idea was being translated into terms that made sense to them. There were already many popular myths of gods who die and are reborn to bring new life to the world, and the gentiles may have understood Yeshua's death in such mythic terms. Understand that even though the Essenes and apocalyptic believers in Yeshua as Messiah attached to him their concept of atoning martyrs, they changed the scope from community atonement to universal atonement.

At the same time, we should realize that the sacrificial concept of Yeshua's death was not developed in response to gentiles ideas alone but, included the Jewish conception of the righteous one who reconciles us to G-d by his sacrifice of suffering and death. These ideas were borrowed from the motif of Israel who suffered as G-d's Suffering Servant at the hands of unrighteous Gentiles. All fell into place as Yeshua was crucified by the Romans. Everything fit the Isaiah motif of Israel who also suffered at the hands of the Gentiles as taught in Isaiah 52-53. Although the centrality and universality attributed to Yeshua's death distinguished Christian views from those of non-Christian Jews, these ideas did not negate the Jewish form and content of their understanding of his death.

The bottom line is that if we do not understand the Christian view of atonement as originally Jewish, we cannot today explain its development within the primarily Jewish community of the early Christians. Thus the meaning of his death as taught from the Christian perspective is highly suspect in light of the evidences I have provided over the last 5 articles. If you read and understood the materials presented, then you can see like I and many others who have seen for themselves, that ideas have been attached to the death of Yeshua which are totally foreign to the Jewish Bible and which ultimately lead one to believe one's standing before G-d is assured because of what happened to Yeshua when in reality one's standing before G-d has always been and will continue to be dependent upon one's repentance as Isaiah said in the first place. To read into Isaiah concepts you have heard preached about Yeshua which are totally false, although you don't know them to be, does irreparable damage to the truth of the Holy Scriptures.

To further your study now, I strongly suggest you request our series on [Isaiah 53](#) whereby you can see for yourself that the concepts read into Isaiah by the Christian Church are totally false and without substance. Shalom.

If you desire more Hebraic understanding of the Christian Faith, see our Web Page at <http://returningtofaithofyeshua.freeservers.com> or email us at bennoah1@airmail.net. Shalom



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WHAT DID THE DEATH OF YESHUA ACTUALLY ACCOMPLISH #6

Comment: - According to the Bible atonement for sins can be accomplished by other ways than by blood sacrifice. This is an undeniable fact which discomforts most Christians. Let us examine the facts.

FLOUR CAN MAKE ATONEMENT FOR THE SOUL...BLOOD SACRIFICE IS NOT NECESSARY

Leviticus 5:10

10 And he shall offer the second [for] a burnt offering, according to the manner: and the priest shall make an atonement for him for his sin which he hath sinned, and it shall be forgiven him. 11 But if he be not able to bring two turtledoves, or two young pigeons, then he that sinned shall bring for his offering the tenth part of an ephah of fine flour for a sin offering; he shall put no oil upon it, neither shall he put [any] frankincense thereon: for it [is] a sin offering. 12 Then shall he bring it to the priest, and the priest shall take his handful of it, [even] a memorial thereof, and burn [it] on the altar, according to the offerings made by fire unto the LORD: it [is] a sin offering. 13 And the priest shall make an atonement for him as touching his sin that he hath sinned in one of these, and it shall be forgiven him: and [the remnant] shall be the priest's, as a meat offering.

MONEY CAN ATONE FOR THE SOUL...BLOOD SACRIFICE IS NOT NECESSARY

Exodus 30:15

15 The rich shall not give more, and the poor shall not give less than half a shekel, when [they] give an offering unto the LORD, to make an atonement for your souls. 16 And thou shalt take the atonement money of the children of Israel, and shalt appoint it for the service of the tabernacle of the congregation; that it may be a memorial unto the children of Israel before the LORD, to make an atonement for your souls.

JEWELRY CAN ATONE FOR THE SOUL....BLOOD SACRIFICE IS NOT NECESSARY

Numbers 31:50

50 We have therefore brought an oblation for the LORD, what every man hath gotten, of jewels of gold, chains, and bracelets, rings, earrings, and tablets, to make an atonement for our souls before the LORD.

PRAYER CAN ATONE FOR THE SOUL...BLOOD SACRIFICE IS NOT NECESSARY

Hosea 14:2

2 Take with you words, and turn to the LORD: say unto him, Take away all iniquity, and receive [us] graciously: so will we render the calves of our lips. 3 Asshur shall not save us; we will not ride upon horses: neither will we say any more to the work of our hands, [Ye are] our gods: for in thee the fatherless findeth mercy.

“ALMOST ALL THINGS”...HEBREWS DOES NOT SAY “ALL THINGS”

Hebrews 9:22

22 And almost all things are by the law purged with blood; and without shedding of blood is no remission.

There is remission of sins by several means other than the shedding of blood, as the previous passages say, BUT this last verse contradicts this.

It has been said “Just as it is unreasonable and unjust for all of humanity to be punished for the deeds of one man {Adam}, it is equally unreasonable and unjust for one man to die on the cross for the misdeeds of all humanity.” Let us investigate that statement.

LOOKING AT YESHUA AS A SACRIFICE FOR SINS...CAN WE?

After investigating atonement in the Bible thoroughly, there are many problems concerning considering Yeshua as an acceptable sacrifice or the lamb of G-d. Let us investigate the matter in depth. Sacrifices and sin offerings for unintentional sins and guilt offerings were all slaughtered and burned on the alter and then all of it eaten by the priests. Yeshua's body was not burned nor was he killed on the Brazen Altar. Neither was his corpse eaten by the priests or his followers.

The offering had to be perfect and without blemish or spot. By the time Yeshua would have been ready for sacrifice he was blemished -- crown of thorns on his head, pierced side, and he was spat upon, therefore not perfect. Thus you can see that Yeshua did not fulfill all the requirements for the sin offering, instead he died on a cross and was buried in a tomb instead of dying on an alter and eaten.

It is honest questions like these that prompted me to study in detail doctrines taught by the Church which I had accepted most of my life unquestioningly. When I asked my spiritual authorities it never seemed to fail that they were, for the most part, unprepared to answer such difficult questions as I posed here.

Now understand it is not my wish to denigrate Yeshua or his ministry. I have the highest respect for him and what he, and his original followers accomplished. In fact, I have come to know G-d because of him. However, I desire truth in the inward parts, and if what is taught by the church which passes for orthodoxy cannot stand the test of questioning or critical inquiry, then should you or I accept it any longer?

The ministry have detailed articles dealing with Biblical atonement for your evaluation if you desire. Inquire with us and we will see you get the information necessary for you to make an intelligent decision for G-d as well

as for truth. Shalom.





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WHAT DID THE DEATH OF YESHUA ACTUALLY ACCOMPLISH # 7

One of the cornerstones of Christian theology is that the only way to achieve atonement for sins is through the offering of a sacrifice whose blood is shed in our place. The Greek Testament makes this very clear in Hebrews 9:22 **"and almost all things** are by the Law purged with blood: and without the shedding of blood is no remission."

Answer for yourself: It says "almost all things;" but are you aware that there is a big difference between "almost all things" and "all things?"

The inclusion of the word "almost" opens the door for the New Testament believer to investigate what OTHER THAN BLOOD brings remission of sins. Coupled with this is the understanding that the "lamb of G-d" who was sacrificed for sins on Yom Kippur ONLY atoned for the sins of the First Tablet Law and not for sins of the Second Tablet of the Law.

Answer for yourself: Understanding that Yeshua's offering of himself as the Lamb of G-d fulfilled both type and shadow the Lamb of G-d in Scripture through his death, then if his death only atoned for the sins of the First Tablet of the Law, then what atones for the sins of the Second Tablet of the Law?.

Answer for yourself: Is this idea consistent with the teachings of the Tanakh (the Hebrew Bible), or do the Jewish and Christian bibles diverge on this issue?

Christians generally insist that the absolute need for a vicarious blood sacrifice is rooted in the Torah (first five books of the Old Testament), and cite as proof Leviticus 17:11

"For the life of the flesh is in the blood, and I have given it to you upon the altar to make an atonement for your souls; for it is the blood that makes an atonement for the soul."

As a Christian, you have probably heard many sermons on the topic of atonement, and have undoubtedly read many studies which support the contention that there is "no atonement without blood." But the truth of the matter is that neither the Book of Hebrews or the Old Testament says that. Of course you are also aware that this is a teaching which is not shared by traditional Jews and for a very good reason which has escaped the Gentile Christian church because of their misinterpretation of the passages in their Bibles as well as because of superficial reading of the whole Bible.

Answer for yourself: Have you ever wondered how the Jewish people could reject what to you seems so clear?

This study has been prepared to give you the opportunity to consider a different perspective on the vital issue of atonement and thereby make adjustments to your religious belief system as well as to your conduct and

behavior which is based upon it. The tragic state of affairs of the matter is that traditional Gentile Christianity as practiced today is guilty of the sins of the Second Tablet of the Law and not responding in appropriate manners of repentance to atone for it, for as I showed you, these sins are not dealt with through sacrifice and blood (Yeshua's death).

ANOTHER LOOK AT LEVITICUS 17:11-POSSIBLY THE MOST IMPORTANT THING YOU CAN EVER LEARN

You might remember that in junior high school, we were often given an assignment to write the title for a story; what is the central idea of a passage. Let's look at Leviticus 17:11 in context in order to make sure we understand the "central" idea of the passage.

"And whatever man of the house of Israel, or of the strangers who sojourn among you, who consumes any blood, I will set My face against that person who consumes blood, and will cut him off from among his people. For the life of the flesh is in the blood, and I have given it to you upon the altar to make atonement for your souls; for it is the blood that makes an atonement for the soul. Therefore, I say to the children of Israel, 'No one among you shall consume blood, nor shall any stranger who sojourns among you consume blood.'"

What should immediately be apparent is that the topic of this passage is not how to secure atonement from sins, but the prohibition against consuming blood. We are told parenthetically that the reason for this prohibition is that the blood contains the vitality (soul) of the animal (Genesis 9:4, Deuteronomy 12:23) and consequently, when we bring an animal sacrifice, its soul (life) which is in its blood serves as the atoning agent (Isa. 53:10), and not another part of its body. The prophet Isaiah informs us that G-d's suffering servant soul, which was offered in his death, was pleasing to G-d and G-d accepted it as an "offering for sin." Notice that it is not the "blood" which was accepted for an offering for sin, but rather the "life/soul" of the Suffering Servant. That means it is not the "death" or "the blood" which accomplished anything, but rather Yeshua's G-d honoring life lived (in Hebrew the "life" which is in the blood is the word for "soul"), which was lived completely obediently to G-d's Commandments [by which he never sinned] which was so pleasing to G-d that He accepted his life as an offering for sin. So when you read in the New Testament or head "saved by the blood of Yeshua" understand we are "not under the blood or anything like that." This is a completely erroneous Gentile interpretation of the sacrificial system which it completely misunderstands. When saying "saved by the blood of Yeshua" we need to understand the concept Paul is relating which is we are "saved" by Yeshua giving his G-d obediently and honoring life to G-d or ours in his death where his blood was shed as the vehicle of his death which offered up his "soul as an offering for sin." Now, let us continue.

REPAIRING OUR RELATIONSHIP WITH G-D

Since Leviticus 17 doesn't come to teach us about the principles of atonement as we have erroneously been told, we will have to look elsewhere for the Bible's most important teaching on how to repair our relationships with G-d which continually is adversely affected by our sin.

Before proceeding, let's consider another point about what is, and what is not being said in Leviticus 17:11. The passage does say that since blood symbolizes the life/soul of the animal, G-d has given it to us as a means of atoning for our sins (it carries the animal's soul which is sinless).

Answer for yourself: But does the verse clearly teach that it is the only means G-d has provided to make atonement?

As with any other Biblical study, we will have to examine this question in light of the Bible as a whole. But for now, we should note that our verse merely says that blood can serve as an atonement. It is an effective means of atonement, but by no means the only form of atonement.

In the Torah, blood sacrifices were not the only path to atonement; there were other ways to achieve forgiveness.

NON-BLOOD ATONEMENTS THAT ARE IN BOTH THE OLD TESTAMENT AND THE NEW TESTAMENT

For example, incense served to atone for the people in Numbers 16:46-47, and giving charity is described in Exodus 30:15-16 and Numbers 31:50 as `making atonement for your souls (the same expression as in Leviticus 17:11). In reality, blood sacrifices were the least effective of all the means of atonement mentioned in the Bible. One important limitation to the effectiveness of sacrifices is that they were only brought for unintentional sins (ie. someone didn't know that kindling a fire was prohibited on the Sabbath, or they were aware of this, but thought it was Sunday when kindling the fire). Now for a real scary thought: Sacrifices did not help to atone for sins that were done intentionally (Leviticus 4, and Numbers 15:22-31).

Examining the Christian interpretation of Leviticus 17:11 generates some serious problems.

Answer for yourself: What happens if someone can't afford to purchase an animal for his sin offering?

Answer for yourself: Is it possible that G-d would institute a system of atonement that could only be used by the wealthy?

The Torah took this into account and allowed the poor person to bring two turtledoves or two young pigeons if he couldn't afford a lamb (Leviticus 5:7).

Answer for yourself: However, what if someone was so destitute, that he couldn't afford even these small birds?

"But if his means are insufficient for two turtledoves or two young pigeons, then for his offering for that which he has sinned, he shall bring the tenth of an ephah of fine flour for a sin offering; he shall not put oil on it or place incense on it, for it is a sin offering." (Leviticus 5:11)

Since flour could be used for a sin offering, it is clear that blood was not a prerequisite for atonement. Another example will drive home the point. The proposition that only blood sacrifices could secure atonement creates a dilemma.

Answer for yourself: Could it be that G-d would set up a system of atonement that wouldn't be available to all people at all times?

Answer for yourself: Does it stand to reason that G-d would devise an atonement system in which those who were deprived of necessary "religious theology" because they lived in another part of the world at the time and who never knew about salvation only through Yeshua and receiving him would be lost?

Answer for yourself: Are we better suited now to understand Peter's revelation at Cornelius' house where he remarks in Acts 10:35: now I know that "in every nation he that feareth him (G-d) and worketh righteousness, is accepted with him (G-d)?"

Answer for yourself: Are you aware that Peter makes this startling discovery and remark BEFORE he ever began preaching about Yeshua to Cornelius?

Answer for yourself: Would it surprise you to know that the New Testament even says in Acts 10:33 that Cornelius sent for Peter in order to "hear all things that are commanded of G-d" and did not sent for Peter to come and tell him the latest theological beliefs about Yeshua?

Answer for yourself: Can you now see for yourself and make the connection with the Commandments of the Second Tablet of the Law which the Lamb of G-d on Yom Kippur (Yeshua) did not provide atonement for, and

the necessity for believers in G-d (Gentiles and Jews) to obey them correctly?

Answer for yourself: Since all Commandments of the Second Tablet of the Law concern actions taken between man and man, and not man and G-d, can you begin to see the importance of obeying G-d's will and Commandments correctly in your relationships with others; such as the commandments on giving your tithe correctly which is commanded to be handled in certain ways by you and the clergy according to the mandated pattern in Scripture?

Answer for yourself: Are you beginning to see that although you think you are obeying G-d, for example by giving your 10% tithe to your church each month, that if the tithe you give is not used and put in designated places according to G-d Law and Scripture by your church, then you have sinned along with them for violating the Law?

Answer for yourself: Are you aware that sin is breaking the Law (ie. Law of tithe for example) according to I John 3:4: Whosoever committeth sin transgresseth also the law: for sin is the transgression of the law, and that these sins (Second Tablet of the Law...commandments affecting man blessing other men through giving alms for example) have no atonement provided by the blood of the lamb?

Answer for yourself: Are you aware that if you don't tithe correctly as commanded by the Bible by giving you 10% between 3 areas only (1/3 of 10% goes to poor, sick, lame, blind, deaf, etc.; 1/3 goes to yourself to assure you and your family celebrate the Sabbath and Biblical Festivals, and 1/3 goes to support the teacher, choir, and janitor.....) then you violate G-d's Commandments and have not atonement provided for such sins of omission because the Lamb of G-d only atoned for the sins of the First Tablet of the Law only?

While the Temple stood, sacrifices did serve as part of the atonement process.

Answer for yourself: But what is the fate of Jewish people who don't have access to the Temple?

Answer for yourself: What were the Jewish people supposed to do after 586 B.C.E. when the first Temple was destroyed and they were exiled to Babylon?

Answer for yourself: What did the Jewish people do in the times of the Maccabees when the Syrian-Greeks were in control of the Temple and didn't allow sacrifices?

THE TYPICAL CHRISTIAN NEEDS TO KNOW HIS FAITH BETTER

Many Christians erroneously claim that Rabbinic Judaism came up with novel, non-Biblical measures to deal with atonement after the destruction of the Temple by the Romans in 70 CE.

Answer for yourself: But is that the truth?

Actually, it wasn't Talmudic innovation at all, because G-d in the Bible you carry to church each Sunday anticipated the possibility of the cessation of sacrifices. When King Solomon finally laid the finishing touches on the Holy Temple in Jerusalem, he inaugurated it with a moving dedication speech (I Kings 8; II Chronicles 6). In this lengthy speech of almost 50 verses, you will notice that Solomon doesn't speak about sacrifices at all! This omission would be strange if the most crucial part of the Temple were the sacrifices. Actually, the central focus of the Temple was the Holy Ark (Exodus 25) containing the Torah. The Temple was first and foremost a symbol of G-d's presence and revelation to the Jewish people (I Kings 8:13, Exodus 25:8).

Towards the end of his speech, Solomon deals with the possibility of the Jewish people being denied access to the Temple in the eventuality that they are exiled from the land of Israel. **"If they return (repent and obey)** to You with all their heart and with all their soul in the land of their enemies (thus without a Temple it would be impossible to make blood sacrifices for atonement) who have taken them captive, **and pray** to You toward their land which You have given to their fathers, the city which You have chosen, and the house which I have built

for Your name; then hear their prayer and their supplication in heaven Your dwelling place, and maintain their cause, and **forgive Your people who have sinned against You and all their transgressions which they have transgressed against You...**" (I Kings 8:46-50).

Answer for yourself: Do you see for yourself that in the absence of blood sacrifices G-d is expected to accept man's repentance and prayer for forgiveness of sins?

Answer for yourself: Did King Solomon understand and expect forgiveness of sin without blood sacrifice? He sure did.

This very important, but often overlooked passage (because most Christian Churches use only the New Testament basically) puts the spotlight on the Christian misunderstanding of Leviticus 17:11. **The Bible is clearly teaching that sacrifices weren't necessary in order to atone for sins.** Prayer and repentance are cited here as effective means for securing atonement. Certainly, when the Temple stood, and one could afford an animal, a sacrifice was brought as part of the atonement process for unintentional sins. Leviticus 17:11 teaches that when we bring such an animal as a sacrifice, we aren't allowed to consume its blood, because as the life force, it is the part of the animal that affects our atonement.

Christian dogma holds that the crucifixion of Yeshua at Calvary served as the final atoning sacrifice for the sins of the world. Christianity insists that this is not just a Pauline innovation, but reflects the requirements of the Jewish Bible, and tries to establish this by pointing to Leviticus 17:11 as the key to atonement in the Tanakh. However, if this passage is examined, as we will do later in this article, it will be clear that Yeshua could never serve as an atoning sacrifice because he gave his "blood". Obviously, the shedding of blood by pricking my finger or killing my cat won't fulfill the Biblical requirements for atonement because the "life" of the injured party was not given. The Torah delineates how sacrifices are to be brought, and understanding that, it's main reference is not the blood but the "soul" (life) that is in the blood. Yeshua gave his life (soul) as the offering for sin; it just so happens that his soul was in his blood. The blood is the vehicle for the soul. Yeshua's soul was given as "the" offering effecting atonement for sin and not his red blood cells.

"For the life (soul) of the flesh is in the blood, and I have given it (soul) to you upon the altar to make an atonement for your souls..." (notice the blood had to be placed on the altar or should I say the soul had to be placed on the altar in order to substitute for another soul). Clearly, not any spilled blood is accepted by the Torah as a sacrifice. Yeshua's crucifixion may qualify as an atonement according to the Greek Testament, but since his blood was not offered on the altar, it is not in line with what the Torah mandates. Again you can see the importance of repentance, prayer, charity, etc., as effective methods in man's atonement, especially as you see the requirements for blood to serve as an atonement and how it would be difficult to accomplish in Yeshua's death.

Some will draw attention to several other factors which would render the crucifixion of Yeshua an unacceptable sacrifice. According to the Biblical rules in Leviticus, all sacrifices had to be offered by a Priest who descends from Aaron. This was not the case in the death of Yeshua, who was crucified by Roman soldiers. Additionally, Biblical law prohibited any sacrifice which was blemished or maimed (Leviticus 22:19-21). However, prior to his crucifixion, Yeshua was whipped and beaten (Matthew 27:26, Mark 15:19, John 19:3) which would render him unfit. Furthermore, Yeshua was circumcised in the flesh, which according to Philippians 3:2 and Galatians 5:12 is considered mutilation. We have no answers for some of the problems encountered in the offering of Yeshua, but one thing we can be sure of: G-d did delineate in His Word alternate ways of effecting remission of sin and atonement. It is our strong recommendation, especially in light of Yeshua's teaching in Matt. 19 where the man who asked "what must I DO to inherit eternal life" (notice the question was not what he was to believe) was told he "lacked one thing." As for us, and our hope for you, is that in the resurrection we are not told "we lack one thing for eternal life" since most of our lives we have been told otherwise...that we are saved by the blood of Yeshua. You should by now, in just reading these seven pages, be wondering strongly to yourselves what things you are lacking in doing which will be required in the resurrection which you have up to now falsely believed were taken care of by Yeshua's sacrifice. The bottom line, in a nutshell, is that the anti-Semitic and anti-Judaic brand of Christianity we have inherited today has moved us far from the truths of Yeshua and what

is really involved in our salvation.

Frequently, Christians react to this line of reasoning by protesting that it is improper to be so literal, and that Yeshua's death was more of a symbolic or spiritual sacrifice. This would be fine if the Bible provided for such ethereal offerings, but such is not the case. The Greek Testament, however, does insist that Yeshua was a real sacrifice, literally fulfilling the Biblical requirements of such: "But coming to Yeshua, when they saw that he was already dead, they did not break his legs...in order that the Scripture might be fulfilled: `Not a bone of him shall be broken.'" (John 19:33-36)

The Gospel of John portrays Yeshua as the Paschal lamb which was not supposed to have any of its bones broken (Exodus 12:46, Numbers 9:12). Since the author of John insists that Yeshua was a real sacrifice to the extent that the Biblical rules of the Passover were fulfilled in him, we can't dismiss the problems concerning Yeshua's sacrifice cited above as legalistic nit-picking.

One wonders why the Greek Testament chose to type Yeshua as a Paschal lamb rather than the sacrifice for the Day of Atonement, because atonement is **not** associated with Passover in any way form or fashion. We know from Exodus 12 that the Passover sacrifice did not serve as an atonement for sins, rather it commemorates the exodus from Egypt. Even when the lamb was slaughtered in Egypt and its blood smeared on the doorposts, it did not serve to atone for the sins of anyone. It was a sign for the angel of death to pass over Jewish homes during the plague of the first born. The only people in danger were first born males, the blood wasn't a help to other people in the family, and didn't serve as an atonement for the first born. A more fitting prototype for Yeshua would have been the Yom Kippur sacrifice, which was an atonement for the sins of all the people. It is interesting that according to Leviticus 16:10,21-22, the animal which effectuated the atonement for the sins of the nation was not killed, but sent live out into the desert. Again, the shedding of blood is not for atonement.

However the Greek New Testament, literally re-written by the Gentile Catholic Church when taken from the Jewish oral traditions about Yeshua, went to some great lengths to demonstrate that the atoning death of Yeshua was predicated upon the Jewish Bible (which such is not the case). In the book of Hebrews, a verse from the book of Psalms is quoted as evidence that the sacrifice of Yeshua was part of G-d's original plan for the world.

"Sacrifice and offering You have not desired, but a body You have prepared for me" (Hebrews 10:5 referring to Psalms 40:6).

In verse 10 of our passage from Hebrews, we are told that the body spoken of refers to the body of Yeshua. However, the Greek Testament took some great liberties in quoting from the book of Psalms, which never mentions a body being prepared at all:

"Sacrifice and meal offering You have not desired; my ears You have opened; Burnt offerings and sin offerings You have not required" (Psalm 40:6).

The author of Romans asserts that the Jewish scriptures spoke about the Messiah coming in order to eradicate sin from Israel:

"And so all Israel will be saved, as it is written, `The deliverer will come from Zion and remove ungodliness from Jacob'" (Romans 11:26 citing Isaiah 59:20).

Answer for yourself: What is unique about this verse quoted by Paul in Romans 11:26?

Paul omits all references to repentance from Isaiah 59:20 in quoting the verse in misquoting it in Romans. What we need to understand is that Paul misquotes the verse, not just any verse, but a verse critically important in understanding what is required for our salvation!

However, if you take the time to check the original source in Isaiah you will see for yourself the flawed foundation of the claim made in the book of Romans.

"And a redeemer will come to Zion, to those in Jacob who turn from transgression, says the Lord."

Answer for yourself: What are we to understand in the salvation process which Paul obscures and which the Christian Church has based itself faulty upon for centuries?

Isaiah didn't teach that the Messiah's purpose is to remove sin; rather, he will come to the Jewish people when they show themselves worthy by turning away from sin. In other words G-d's redeemer comes ONLY for those who are repenting and turning from their violations of the Commandments of G-d, and turning back to G-d in repentance and obedience to the Commandments of G-d. Yeshua did not come for everyone as you can see.

WHAT DOES THE BIBLE SAY ABOUT VICARIOUS ATONEMENT?

One wonders why throughout the four Gospels, Yeshua never speaks about his death serving as a sacrifice to atone for the sins of the world.

Answer for yourself: Is the idea that an innocent person can be killed instead of those who are guilty consistent with what the Bible teaches?

- After the sin of the Golden Calf, G-d expressed His intention to destroy the Jewish people. Moses intercedes, and offers to die in their place. In response, G-d says "Whoever has sinned against Me, I will blot him out of My book!" (Exodus 32:32-33). Throughout the Bible, G-d says that one person cannot die for the sins of another:
- "Fathers shall not be put to death for their sons, nor shall sons be put to death for their fathers; everyone shall be put to death for his own sin" (Deuteronomy 24:16, II Kings 14:6).
- "But everyone will die for his own sin; each man who eats sour grapes, his teeth will be set on edge" (Jeremiah 31:30).
- "The person who sins will die. The son will not bear the punishment for the father's iniquity, nor will the father bear the punishment for the son's iniquity; the righteousness of the righteous will be upon himself, and the wickedness of the wicked will be upon himself" (Ezekiel 18:20).
- "No man can by any means redeem his brother, or give to G-d a ransom for him" (Psalms 49:7).
- "So you shall not pollute the land in which you are; for blood pollutes the land and no expiation can be made for the land for the blood that is shed on it, except by the blood of him who has shed it!" (Numbers 35:33).

Although Romans 4:5 says that Yeshua justifies the ungodly, the Tanakh teaches that

"He who justifies the wicked, and he who condemns the righteous, both of them are an abomination to the Lord" (Proverbs 17:15).

Answer for yourself: Since G-d is the same yesterday, today, and forever and changes not, then how are we to expect or believe, in light of consideration of the whole Bible and understanding clearly the dynamics of the sacrificial system, that repentance and turning back to G-d in obedience to Commandments we previously have been breaking, is not of major importance in the salvation process?

We approach this troublesome question with assurance, that the sins of the First Tablet of the Law, sins between man and G-d are atoned for in the death of Yeshua as G-d's Suffering Messiah, however those of the Second Tablet of the Law remain without atonement, for G-d designed all through His Word that we should learn of concepts like prayer, repentance, obedience, restitution, giving of charity and alms through correct principles of tithing, etc., are acceptable to G-d for our atonement as co-laborers with G-d in our own salvation.

Let us not forget that we are to “work out our salvation with fear and trembling,” not believe only for our salvation.” Such is the Church’s greatest lie which has deceived millions.

Answer for yourself: If indeed, Yeshua came as the final sacrifice to atone for the sins of the world, why does the Tanakh predict that the Temple will be rebuilt and sacrifices resumed?

- "Even those I will bring to My holy mountain, and make them joyful in My house of prayer. Their burnt offerings and their sacrifices will be acceptable on My altar; for My house will be called a house of prayer for all the peoples." (Isaiah 56:7). If you know anything about the history of the Temple and Second Temple Judaism, that prophecy has not been accomplished yet, and as of yet Gentiles will come up to Zion to pray in G-d's House of Prayer which is yet to be rebuilt.
- "From beyond the rivers of Ethiopia My worshipers, My dispersed ones will bring My offerings." (Zephaniah 3:10)
- "All the flocks of Kedar will be gathered together to you, the rams of Nebaioth will minister to you; they will go up with acceptance on My altar, and I shall glorify My glorious house." (Isaiah 60:7)
- "And I will make a covenant of peace with them; it will be an everlasting covenant with them. And I will place them and multiply them, and will set My sanctuary in their midst forever." (Ezekiel 37:26)
- "And He will sit as a smelter and purifier of silver, and He will purify the sons of Levi and refine them like gold and silver, so that they may present to the Lord offerings in righteousness. Then the offering of Judah and Jerusalem will be pleasant to the Lord, as in the days of old and as in former years" (Malachi 3:3-4).
- "And every cooking pot in Jerusalem and in Judah will be holy to the Lord of hosts; and all who sacrifice will come and take of them and boil in them." (Zechariah 14:21) "And it shall be the princes part to provide the burnt offerings, the grain offerings, and the libations...to make atonement for the house of Israel." (Ezekiel 45:17)

The Christian claim that our sins can only be forgiven if blood is shed on our behalf also seems to limit the power of G-d. It's ludicrous to say that G-d's ability to forgive us is dependent on anything. One of the most basic teachings in the Bible is that since G-d is merciful, He often forgives us simply because He is merciful.

"Who is a G-d like You, who pardons iniquity and passes over the rebellious act of the remnant of His possession? He does not retain His anger forever, because He delights in unchanging love"
(Micah 7:18; Psalm 103:7-18).

Even when we don't seek G-d appropriately, He has the ability to reach out to us with love and forgive us:

"Their heart was not steadfast toward Him, nor were they faithful in His covenant. But He, being compassionate, forgave their iniquity...remembering that they were but flesh." (Psalms 78:36-39)

"You have not brought Me the sheep of your burnt offerings...or the fat of your sacrifices, but you have burdened Me with your sins...Nevertheless, I will wipe out your transgressions for My own sake, and I will not remember your sins." (Isaiah 43:23-25)

One of the clearest indications that Christianity is off base in its insistence on the centrality of blood sacrifices is that none of the prophets speaks about it. There isn't one instance in the prophetic books where the Jewish people are told that in order to get right with G-d they need to get covered by the blood, be under the blood, or plead the blood.

Answer for yourself: If that's the case, what is the fundamental teaching of the Tanakh on the issue of atonement?

Answer for yourself: What theme is reiterated time and again by the holy prophets in the Bible?

- "That every man will turn from his evil way, then I will forgive their iniquity and their sin." (Jeremiah 36:3). This says it in a nutshell.
- "Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts, and let him return to the Lord, and He will have compassion on him; and to our G-d, for He will abundantly pardon." (Isaiah 55:7).
- "I acknowledged my sin to You, and my iniquity I did not hide; I said, 'I will confess my transgressions to the Lord', and You did forgive the guilt of my sin." (Psalm 32:5).
- "And if My people who are called by My name humble themselves and pray, and seek My face (see Ezra for "seeking" is study) and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven, will forgive their sin, and will heal their land." (II Chronicles 7:14). "But if the wicked man turns from all his sins which he has committed and observes all My statutes and practices justice and righteousness, he shall surely live; he shall not die. All his transgressions which he has committed will not be remembered against him; because of the righteousness which he has practiced he shall live...When a wicked man turns away from his wickedness which he has committed and practices justice and righteousness, he will save his life...Repent and turn away from all your transgressions, so that iniquity may not become a stumbling block to you (Ezekiel 18:21-22,27,30).
- "By loving-kindness and truth iniquity is atoned for..." (Proverbs 16:6).
- "If you return to G-d you will be restored; if you remove unrighteousness far from your tent...then you will delight in G-d..." (Job 22:23-27).
- "Depart from evil, and do good, so you will abide forever." (Psalm 37:27, cf. Ezekiel 33, Zechariah 1:3, Jeremiah 26:13).

The central teaching of the Bible is that only a break with our past and a sincere turning in repentance can restore our relationships with G-d. If I go off the path, I have to put myself back on track, and G-d will forgive me. Even when sacrifices were offered, they in and of themselves didn't effect atonement. The sacrifice was part of the process, it helped bring us to the core of atonement which is achieved by TESHUVAH, returning to G-d by forsaking our evil ways and praying for forgiveness. One of the main teachings of the prophets was to chide Jewish people who thought that sacrifices were the essential element of atonement:

"What are your multiplied sacrifices to Me? says the Lord. I have had enough of burnt offerings of rams, and the fat of fed cattle. And I take no pleasure in the blood of bulls, lambs, or goats...Wash yourselves, make yourselves clean; remove the evil of your deeds from My sight. Cease to do evil, Learn to do good; seek justice, reprove the ruthless, defend the orphan, plead for the widow. Come let us reason together says the Lord, 'Though your sins are as scarlet, they will be white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they will be like wool, if you consent and obey...' (Isaiah 1:11-18).

As you see in the above passage G-d does not desire the senseless slaughter of animals which accomplish nothing if the person bringing the sacrifice has not already, prior to bringing his sacrifice, confessed his sin, been remorseful over his sin, repented of his sin, prayed, and made restitution where possible if his sin was between man to man. Just going through the "motions" never pleased G-d and most Christians read this passage failing to realize that G-d is not doing away with the sacrificial system; on the contrary, He is admonishing those who are failing to obey it properly!

SO HOW DOES THIS AFFECT ME AND WHAT SHOULD I DO?

"The sacrifice of the wicked is an abomination to the Lord." (Proverbs 15:8).

Answer for yourself: Do you realize that if what you do based on your religious belief system, which you think is right and obedient to G-d's Law, but is in the final analysis really disobedience, but you were not aware of it being disobedience because of improper instruction by religious authorities which had it wrong, then you are guilty of sin and the death of Yeshua (if you believe in this) would not cover such sins anyway since these sins are of the Second Tablet of the Law and were never covered by blood sacrifice anyway?

Answer for yourself: Are you aware that your tithe is derived from Commandments dealing with the Second Tablet of the Law and if you are not obeying it correctly then any false belief in any sacrifice of Yeshua will not cover such disobedience?

Answer for yourself: Can you now understand why Bet Emet and other such ministries endeavors to teach you the truth and separate it from religious fiction since it is appointed for all men to die and then the judgment?

- **"To do righteousness and justice is more acceptable to the Lord than sacrifice." (Proverbs 21:3).**
- **"For I delight in loyalty rather than sacrifice, and in the knowledge of G-d rather than burnt offerings." (Hosea 6:6).**
- **"Has the Lord as great a delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices as in obeying the voice of the Lord? Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice, and to hearken more than the fat of rams" (I Samuel 15:22).**
- **"With what shall I come to the Lord, and bow myself before the G-d on high? Shall I come to Him with burnt offerings, with yearling calves? Does the Lord take delight in thousands of rams, in ten thousand rivers of oil? Shall I present my firstborn for my rebellious acts, the fruit of my body for the sin of my soul? He has told you, O man, what is good; and what does the Lord require of you but to do justice, to love kindness, and to walk humbly with your G-d." (Micah 6:6-8, cf. Amos 5:22-24, Jeremiah 7, Psalm 69:31-32).**

Answer for yourself: Since repentance, and not blood is the Biblical form of atonement, can you now better understand how in I Kings 8, Solomon explained that even if the Jewish people don't have access to the Temple, they still have access to G-d?

This will illuminate a famous story found in the book of Jonah. G-d sends Jonah to the evil city of Nineveh (Gentiles) to warn them of their impending destruction. Jonah doesn't come into the city and tell the people that unless they begin offering sacrifices they are doomed. Their response to his warnings is to repent: they fast, pray, and turn from their evil.

Answer for yourself: What is G-d's response?

"When G-d saw their deeds that they turned from their wicked way, then G-d relented concerning the calamity which He had declared He would bring upon them, and He did not do it" (Jonah 3:10).

In similar fashion, Daniel advised king Nebuchadnezzar on how to atone for his transgressions:

Dan 4:27 27 Wherefore, O king, let my counsel be acceptable unto thee, and break off thy sins by righteousness, and thine iniquities by shewing mercy to the poor; if it may be a lengthening of thy tranquillity. (KJV)

This principle will also help explain a passage in the book of Hosea. Hosea was a prophet to the 10 northern tribes in the kingdom of Israel during a time when there was a civil war going on between them and the two tribes of the kingdom of Judah in the south. Because of the strife, the tribes up north couldn't get to the Temple in Jerusalem to offer sacrifices.

Answer for yourself: Since they were deprived of “blood” in the form of blood sacrifices, did this leave them with no way of atoning for their sins? The prophet advises:

"Return, O Israel, to the Lord your G-d, for you have stumbled because of your iniquity. Take words with you and return to the Lord. Say to Him, 'Take away all iniquity, and receive us graciously, for we will render as bullocks the offerings of our lips'" (Hosea 14:1-2).

We are able to approach G-d directly with prayer, which is possible at all times; and G-d assures us that sincere prayer can achieve forgiveness for our sins:

- "Deliver me from blood-guiltiness, O Lord, the G-d of my salvation. And my tongue shall sing aloud of Your righteousness. O Lord, open my lips, and my mouth shall show forth Your praise. For You do not delight in burnt offerings. The sacrifices of G-d are a broken spirit, a broken and contrite heart. These, O G-d, You will not despise" (Psalms 51:14-17, II Samuel 12:13).
- "I will praise the name of G-d with a song, and will magnify Him with thanksgiving. This shall please the Lord better than an ox or bullock that has horns and hoofs" (Psalm 69:30-31).
- "For You, Lord, are good, and ready to forgive, and abundant in loving-kindness to all who call upon You. Give ear, O Lord to my prayer, and give heed to the voice of my supplications" (Psalm 86:5-6).
- "And listen to the supplications of Your servant and of Your people Israel, when they pray toward this place; hear from heaven Your dwelling place, hear and forgive" (II Chronicles 6:21).

THE BIGGEST QUESTION YOU WILL EVER BE ASKED

Answer for yourself: Are Christians consistent with the Jewish Bible and the G-d who changes not when they claim that atonement is only possible with a blood sacrifice?

Answer for yourself: As so often said by Christian pastors today who are devoid of the facts and knowledge of the Bible, did the Rabbis just make up the idea that we can restore our relationship with G-d through prayer and repentance because they don't believe in the Yeshua portrayed to them by the Gentile Church and his proposed message of salvation ONLY thorough Yeshua? YOU DECIDE!



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WHAT DID THE DEATH OF YESHUA ACTUALLY ACCOMPLISH # 8

THIS IS WHERE ALL THE MISUNDERSTANDING BEGINS

Context Of Leviticus 17:10-11

Lev 17:10-11

10 And whatsoever man there be of the house of Israel, or of the strangers that sojourn among you, that eateth any manner of blood; I will even set my face against that soul that eateth blood, and will cut him off from among his people. 11 For the life of the flesh is in the blood: and I have given it to you upon the altar to make an atonement for your souls: for it is the blood that maketh an atonement for the soul.

The subject of this verse, as well as the context of the verses at hand, is not to describe and instruct about the efficacy of blood as an atonement, but rather to command G-d's people to recognize the sanctity of blood and not treat it as did the heathen who drank it in their pagan rituals. But yet we can learn a very important lesson "about atonement" from this verse if we will only stop and "think."

The admonition was to the Jew as well as the "non-Jew."

1616 ger (gare); or (fully) geyr (gare); from 1481; properly, a guest; by implication, a foreigner: KJV-- alien, sojourner, stranger.

Answer for yourself: From verse 20, what is the relationship of the Gentile non-Jew to Israel? He is part of the Israel of G-d. This means what?

Answer for yourself: What actually is given upon the altar for our atonement...the "life"/"soul" of the animal or the "blood"?"

In the blood" is a modifier of the subject of the sentence. If you read the passage slowly and think you will see, as do all who study for themselves and not just listen to rhetoric, that it is the "life force" or the "life" which is placed upon the altar as an atonement for sins and not "the blood."

Answer for yourself:: Having this understanding, what is the meaning of the word used for "life" in the Hebrew?

5315 nephesh- a soulself,, life, a creature, a person, an appetite, a mind, a living being, a desire, an emotion, a passion

- a) what breathes, the breathing substance or being, a soul, the inner being of man
- b) a living being
- c) a living being (with life in the blood)
- d) the man himself, self, a person or an individual
- e) the seat of the appetites
- f) the seat of emotions and passions
- g) the activity of mind
- h) the activity of the will
- i) the activity of the character

5315 nephesh (neh'-fesh); from 5314; properly, a breathing creature, i.e. animal of (abstractly) vitality; used very widely in a literal, accommodated or figurative sense (bodily or mental):

KJV-- any, appetite, beast, body, breath, creature, X dead (-ly), desire, X [dis-] contented, X fish, ghost, + greedy, he, heart (-y), (hath, X jeopardy of) life (X in jeopardy), lust, man, me, mind, mortally, one, own, person, pleasure, (her-, him-, my-, thyself-), them (your)- selves, + slay, soul, + tablet, they, thing, (X she) will, X would have it.

Answer for yourself: What is the Hebraic meaning of the word “atonement”?

3722 kaphar- to cover, to purge, to make an atonement, to make reconciliation, to cover over with pitch

- a) (Qal) to coat (to cover) with pitch
- b) (Piel)
 - 1) to cover over, to pacify, to propitiate
 - 2) to cover over, to atone for sin, to make atonement for
 - 3) to cover over, to atone for sin and persons by legal rites
- c) (Pual)
 - 1) to be covered over
- d) to make atonement for
- e) (Hithpael) to be covered

Answer for yourself: Does the book of Hebrews teach us that “all” things are by the law purged with blood, and that without the shedding of blood there is no atonement?

Well, surprisingly it does not say that, and if you will read it for yourself in the KJV Bible you will see that for yourself.

Heb 9:22

22 And almost all things are by the law purged with blood; and without shedding of blood is no remission. (KJV)

Answer for yourself: Are we to believe then that All Things were purged by “blood” (or the “soul” within the blood), or it is possible that atonement can come for things “other” than blood?

CHRISTIANITY’S INCONSISTENCIES ARE WITHOUT LIMITS

Most Christians I know will quote Hebrews 9:22 until the cows come home, but hardly any ever notice that the credibility of “blood” being used as an atonement finds its foundation in the Law. Even Hebrews 9:22 says “by

the law” as it look for authority. Usually most Christians apply blood sacrifice and atonement to the life of Yeshua, and in doing so make a “blanket coverage” for the atonement of “all sins.” But we cannot do that. If we appeal to the Law for authority for blood atonement, then we must let this same Law be our authority in all matters relating to the same atonement.

What is staggering when your first become aware of it is the fact that blood atonement ONLY, and I stress ONLY, brought atonement for UNINTENTIONAL SINS and NOT INTENTIONAL SINS.

Lev 4:1-2

1 And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying, 2 Speak unto the children of Israel, saying, If a soul shall sin through ignorance against any of the commandments of the LORD concerning things which ought not to be done, and shall do against any of them: (KJV)

Answer for yourself: Did you hear that?

Answer for yourself: How does this relate to the death of Yeshua?

Answer for yourself: If we apply this understanding of “life” instead of “blood” for atonement, then what does this do with the traditional Christian teaching that we are saved by the blood of Yeshua?

Answer for yourself: Was it Yeshua’s life and soul, or his red blood cells that would quality for atonement?

Answer for yourself: Do we need to look elsewhere than Yeshua for atonement for INTENTIONAL SINS since the blood of animals, and even Yeshua, could never atone for intentional sins?

Answer for yourself: According To David, the writer of the Psalms, is Blood/Sacrifice the only method for Atonement in the Bible? No. Read on.

Psalms 40:6

6 Sacrifice and offering thou didst not desire; mine ears hast thou opened [to hear your Law and Commands...the Torah]: burnt offering and sin offering hast thou not required.

The Hebrew word for Sacrifice:

2077 zebach (zeh'-bakh); from 2076; properly, a slaughter, i.e. the flesh of an animal; by implication, a sacrifice (the victim or the act): KJV-- offer (-ing), sacrifice.

2077 zebach- sacrifice

- a) sacrifices of righteousness
- b) sacrifices of strife
- c) sacrifices to dead things
- d) the covenant sacrifice
- e) the Passover
- f) an annual sacrifice
- a) a thank-offering

The Hebrew Word For Offering:

4503 minchah (min-khaw'); from an unused root meaning to apportion, i.e. bestow; a donation; euphemistically, tribute; specifically a sacrificial offering (usually bloodless and voluntary):

4503 minchah- a gift, a tribute, an offering, a present, an oblation, a sacrifice, a meat-offering

- a) a gift, a present
- b) tribute
- c) an offering (to G-d)
- d) a grain-offering

KJV-- gift, oblation, (meat) offering, present, sacrifice.

The Hebrew word for desire:

2654 chaphets-

- 1) to delight in, to take pleasure in, to desire, to be pleased with (Qal)
 - a) used of men
- 2) to take pleasure in, to delight in
- 3) to delight, to desire, to be pleased to do
 - b) used of G-d
- 4) to delight in, to have pleasure in
- 5) to be pleased to do
- 6) to move, to bend down (Qal) to bend down

The Hebrew word for ears:

241 'ozen-

- 1) ear, as part of the body
- 2) ear, as an organ of hearing
- 3) (subjective) to uncover the ear to reveal; the receiver of divine revelation

The Hebrew word for sin offering:

2401 chata'ah- a sin, a sin-offering

- a) a sin
- b) a sin-offering

2401 chata'ah (khat-aw-aw'); feminine of 2399; an offense, or a sacrifice for it: KJV-- sin (offering).

SO WHAT HAVE WE SAID WITH THESE WORDS DEFINED IN THE HEBREW?

Answer for yourself: What is David really saying in this verse?

David is telling us that the killing and sacrificing of animals is not what G-d really wants of desires, for that is too easy and requires nothing from the sacrificer. Rather, he is telling us that G-d wants something more difficult from us, namely, for us to open our ears to hear His Word in order that we can live obediently to its precepts and commandments.

Answer for yourself: When did animals as sin offerings begin? After the golden calf. Think about that for a moment and wonder what and how man before the golden calf incident made himself right with G-d if there were no "sin offerings with animal sacrifice...yet. Sin offerings with animal sacrifice was a "punishment" upon Israel for "their" sin and literally pictures G-d stepping back from them because of such sin...from now on there was to be an "intermediary" called the Priesthood between Israel and G-d.

Answer for yourself: Are we to understand that sin offerings only began with the golden calf as this is the “Law” which was added to which Paul remarks? Yes

Gal 3:19

19 Wherefore then serveth the law? It was added because of transgressions (golden calf),....

Answer for yourself: To which law does Paul refer...moral and ethical laws, or the laws of ceremonial sacrifice including the Aaronic Priesthood along with its Temple sacrifices? The Priesthood and the sacrifices accompanying it which was the result of the sin of the golden calf.

Answer for yourself: Does the writer of the book of Hebrews quote Psalm 40:6 in the New Testament?

Actually no, for he misquotes and changes the entire meaning intended by King David who originally wrote it. Where King David is calling men everywhere to open their ears and hear what G-d is telling them, the verse is changed completely by the writer of Hebrews in order to make it apply to Yeshua. Where as King David is telling us G-d does not want sacrifice but obedient lives in response to His Word as it is heard and lived out by mankind, the writer of Hebrews removes totally man's responsibility to listen and obey G-d's Word as G-d's ultimate desire in question and puts the whole of pleasing G-d upon the death of Yeshua without corresponding response of hearing and obedience by mankind. If you had not compared the verse yourself, you would have read the book of Hebrews thinking that David had said that, when in reality he never did.

Leviticus? No again. Where the “life” was pleasing to G-d and used for atonement in Leviticus, now the emphasis is upon “death” (crucified body...blood) in Hebrews as the pleasing instrument.

Answer for yourself: Where is the G-d that never changes and Who is the same yesterday, today, and forever in these quotes as taken from the New Testament?

Answer for yourself: Could it be that we have misunderstood atonement as Christians, and the Jewish people have been right all along?

REPENTANCE AS A FORM OF ATONEMENT

We all remember King David and his indiscretion with Bathsheba (2 Sam. 11:2-27). David received atonement not through animal sacrifice, but through a brief confessional prayer as seen in 2 Sam. 11:12:13:

2 Sam 12:13

13 And David said unto Nathan, I have sinned against the LORD. And Nathan said unto David, The LORD also hath put away thy sin; thou shalt not die.

Notice that David only responded with six words: “I have sinned against the LORD.” Nathan was quick to point out that G-d heard his prayer of confession and had already forgiven him. This event in David's life would affect him the rest of his life and have a major impact upon the rest of his

writings. Through this profound experience with Nathan, David came to understand that blood sacrifice is not an ideal atonement for sin. In psalm 51 King David beautifully describes how sincere repentance is what G-d always desired over animal sacrifice.

Ps 51:16-19

- 16 For thou desirest not sacrifice; else would I give it: thou delightest not in burnt offering.
- 17 The sacrifices of G-d are a **broken spirit**: a broken and a **contrite heart**, O G-d, thou wilt not despise.
- 18 Do good in thy good pleasure unto Zion: build thou the walls of Jerusalem.
- 19 **Then shalt thou be pleased with the sacrifices of righteousness**, with burnt offering and whole burnt offering: then shall they offer bullocks upon thine altar.

Something was to be required before animal sacrifices, in fact, it paved the way for them and make them acceptable. Such were the broken spirit and contrite heart of the repentant.

The Hebrew word for "broken"

7665 shabar- to break, to break in pieces

- a) (Qal)
 - 1) to break, to break in (or down), to rend violently, to wreck, to crush, to quench
 - 2) to break, to rupture (figurative)
- b) (Niphal)
 - 1) to be broken, to be maimed, to be crippled, to be wrecked
 - 2) to be broken, to be crushed (figurative)
- c) (Piel) to shatter, to break
- d) (Hiphil) to cause to break out, to bring to the birth
- e) (Hophal) to be broken, to be shattered

The Hebrew word for "spirit"

7307 ruwach- a wind, breath, a mind, a spirit

- a) breath
- b) a wind
 - 1) used of heaven
 - 2) a quarter (used of the wind), a side
 - 3) a breath of air
 - 4) air, gas
 - 5) vain, an empty thing
- c) spirit (as what breathes quickly in animation or agitation)
 - 1) spirit, animation, vivacity, vigor
 - 2) courage
 - 3) temper, anger
 - 4) impatience, patience
 - 5) spirit, disposition (as troubled, bitter, discontented)
 - 6) disposition (used of various kinds), unaccountable or uncontrollable impulse
 - 7) prophetic spirit
- d) spirit (used of the living, breathing being in man and animals); as gift, preserved by G-d, G-d's spirit, departing at death, a disembodied being
- e) the spirit (as the seat of emotion)

- 1) desire
- 2) sorrow, trouble
- f) the spirit
 - 1) as the seat or organ of mental acts
 - 2) rarely used of the will
 - 3) as the seat (especially) of moral character
- g) the Spirit of G-d
 - 1) as an inspiring ecstatic state of prophecy
 - 2) as an impelling prophet to utter instruction or a warning
 - 3) imparting a war-like energy and executive and administrative power
 - 4) as endowing men with various gifts
 - 5) as an energy of life
 - 6) an ancient angel and later the Shekinah

Hebrew word for "heart"...(play close attention)

3820 leb- the inner man, the mind, the will, the heart, understanding the inner part, the midst

- 1) the midst (of things)
- 2) the heart (of man)
- 3) the soul, the heart (of man)
- 4) the mind, knowledge, the thinking, reflection, the memory
- 5) inclination, resolution, determination (of will)
- 6) the conscience
- 7) the heart (used of moral character)
- 8) as the seat of the appetites
- 9) as seat of the emotions and the passions
- 10) as the seat of the courage

Hebrew word for "despise"

959 bazah- to despise, to hold in contempt, to disdain

- a) (Qal) to despise, to regard with contempt
- b) (Niphal)
 - 1) to be despised
 - 2) to be despicable
 - 3) to be vile, to be worthless
- c) (Hiphil) to cause to despise

OBEDIENCE IS ALWAYS BETTER THAN A BLOOD SACRIFICE

We know that G-d cannot lie, nor the prophets or David, the writer of Psalms. We accept these as the foundations of your faith. Yet we have an irreconcilable problem when what is written in the Old Testament is compared with what is written in the New Testament. For example as shown before, Hebrews 9:22 leads us to believe that blood is the ONLY method for atonement, but in actuality it says "almost all things," thus indicating that other ways are available for atonement. We are led to assume that animal sacrifices were the antitype of the crucifixion. Yet Samuel and Micah inform us that obedience is far superior to a blood sacrifice.

1 Sam 15:22

22 And Samuel said, Hath the LORD as great delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices, as in obeying the voice of the LORD? [NO]...Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice, and to hearken than the fat of rams. (KJV)

The above is a rhetorical question and the answer is obvious.

8085 shama` - as a verb:

- 1) to hear, to listen to, to obey
 - a) (Qal)
 - 1) to hear (perceive by ear)
 - 2) to hear of or concerning
 - 3) to hear (have power to hear)
 - 4) to hear with attention or interest, to listen to
 - 5) to understand (language)
 - 6) to hear (used of judicial cases)
 - 7) to listen, to give heed
 - a) to consent, to agree
 - b) to grant request
- 2) to listen to, to yield to
- 3) to obey, to be obedient

Answer for yourself: Is G-d teaching us that it is better to listen to Him, to hear His Word by our ears, to listen with interest, to understand, agree with what we have heard and thus obey than the sacrificial system? Yes.

7181 qashab- to hear, to be attentive, to heed, to incline (used of ears), to attend (used of ears), to hearken, to pay attention, to listen

- a) (Qal) incline, to attend (used of ears), to hearken, to pay attention, to listen
- b) (Hiphil) to pay attention, to give attention

7181 qashab (kaw-shab'); a primitive root; to prick up the ears, i.e. hearken: KJV-- attend, (cause to) hear (-ken), give heed, incline, mark (well), regard.

- a) (Niphal)
 - 1) to be heard (used of voice or sound)
 - 2) to be heard of
- b) to be regarded, to be obeyed
- c) (Piel) to cause to hear, to call to hear, to summon
- d) (Hiphil)
 - 1) to cause to hear, to tell, to proclaim, to utter a sound
 - 2) to sound aloud (a musical term)
 - 3) to make proclamation, to summon
 - 4) to cause to be heard as a masculine noun:
 - 5) sound

Answer for yourself: Does “to hearken” carry basically the same meaning as “to obey”? Yes.

Micah 6:6-8

- 6 Wherewith shall I come before the LORD, and bow myself before the high G-d? shall I come before him with burnt offerings, with calves of a year old?
- 7 Will the LORD be pleased with thousands of rams, or with ten thousands of rivers of oil? shall I give my firstborn for my transgression, the fruit of my body for the sin of my soul?
- 8 He hath shewed thee, O man, what is good; and what doth the LORD require of thee, but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy G-d? (KJV)

Answer for yourself: Did you notice that in the presence of sacrifices, that G-d desires more that His subjects “do justly, love mercy, and walk humbly”?

First of all we notice that G-d “requires” something of us:

1875 darash- to resort to, seek, seek with care, enquire, require

- **a) Qal**
 - 1) to resort to, to frequent (a place), (to tread a place)
 - a) to consult, to enquire of, to seek
 - b) used of G-d
 - c) used of heathen gods, necromancers
- 2) to seek deity in prayer and worship
 - a) G-d
 - b) heathen deities
- 3) to seek (with a demand), to demand, to require
- 4) to investigate, to enquire
- 5) to ask for, to require, to demand
- 6) to practice, to study, to follow, to seek with application
- 7) to seek with care, to care for
 - b) (Niphal)
 - 1) to allow oneself to be inquired of, to be consulted (used only of G-d)
 - 2) to be sought, to be sought out
 - 3) to be required (used of blood)

1875 darash (daw-rash'); a primitive root; properly, to tread or frequent; usually to follow (for pursuit or search); by implication, to seek or ask; specifically to worship: KJV-- ask, X at all, care for, X diligently, inquire, make inquisition, [necro-] mancer, question, require, search, seek [for, out], X surely.

Answer for yourself: What does it mean to “do justly”?

4941 mishpat (mish-pawt');

from 8199; properly, a verdict (favorable or unfavorable) pronounced judicially, especially a sentence or formal decree (human or [participant's] divine law, individual or collective), including the act, the place, the suit, the crime, and the penalty; abstractly, justice, including a participant's right or privilege (statutory or customary), or even a style:

KJV-- + adversary, ceremony, charge, X crime, custom, desert, determination, discretion, disposing, due, fashion, form, to be judged, judgment, just (-ice, -ly), (manner of) law (-ful), manner, measure, (due) order, ordinance, right, sentence, usest, X worthy, + wrong.

4941 mishpat- judgment, justice, ordinance

- **a) judgment**
- **1) act of deciding a case**

- 2) a place, a court, a seat of judgment
- 3) a process, a procedure, a litigation (before judges)
- 4) a case, a cause (presented for judgment)
- 5) a sentence, a decision (of judgment)
- 6) an execution (of judgment)
- 7) time (of judgment)
- b) justice, right, rectitude (attributes of G-d or man)
- c) ordinance
- d) decision (in law)
- e) right, privilege, due (legal)
- f) proper, fitting, measure, fitness, custom, manner, plan

Answer for yourself: What is the term for “mercy”?

2617 checed-

- 1) goodness, kindness, faithfulness
- 2) a reproach, shame

Answer for yourself: What does it mean to “walk”?

3212 yalak-

to go, to walk, to come

- a) (Qal)
 - 1) to go, to walk, to come, to depart, to proceed, to move, to go away
 - 2) to die, to live, manner of life (figurative)
- b) (Hiphil) to lead, to bring, to lead away, to carry, to cause to walk

Answer for yourself: What does “humbly” mean in the Hebrew?

6800 tsana`-

- 1) to be humble, to be modest, to be lowly; (Qal) to show humility
- 2) (Hiphil) to be modest

PRAYER REPLACES THE SACRIFICIAL SYSTEM...BECAUSE IT HAD ALWAYS EXISTED BEFORE SACRIFICES

Hosea 14:2-3

2 Take with you words, and turn to the LORD: say unto him, Take away all iniquity, and receive us graciously: so will we render the calves of our lips. 3 Asshur shall not save us; we will not ride upon horses: neither will we say any more to the work of our hands, Ye are our gods: for in thee the fatherless findeth mercy. (KJV)

Answer for yourself: How has the writer of the book of Hebrews again changed the quote from the Hebrew Scriptures, and were you aware before now?

Heb. 13:15

- 15 By him therefore let us offer the sacrifice of praise to G-d continually, that is, the fruit of our lips giving thanks to his name. (KJV)

Answer for yourself: Can you see how problematic it was for the writer of Hebrews to quote Hosea 14:2-3 correctly?

To do so meant that the writer of Hebrews and his premise of “only blood” could not hold water, for after all Hosea had told his readers that they only need take “words” with them in their return to the LORD as they substitute for the bulls and blood of sacrifices praise and prayer unto G-d.

Answer for yourself: What is omitted entirely by the writer of Hebrews in alluding to the verse in Hosea? Any mention of the substitute of bulls as a form of atonement for prayers and praise as a form of atonement.

DID G-D EVER FOREWARN THE JEWISH PEOPLE AND PREPARE THEM FOR A TIME WHEN THEY WOULD NOT HAVE A TEMPLE AND BLOOD SACRIFICES FOR ATONEMENT? HOW COME CHRISTIANITY NEVER POINTED THIS OUT TO ME?

Of course G-d did. King Solomon prophetically looks into the future and relates the condition of the Jewish people in their future exile as he inaugurates the newly completed first temple. King Solomon prophetically anticipates the claims of Christendom, and assures them of the future generations of the Jewish diaspora that when the temple and Jerusalem are no longer here, confessional prayer will bring about a complete atonement for all transgressors. Throughout his whole prophetic declaration, King Solomon never says that the future Jewish exiles must believe in a crucified redeemer for an atonement. Let us examine what he actually said.

1 Kings 8:46-50

- 46 If they sin against thee, (for there is no man that sinneth not,) and thou be angry with them, and deliver them to the enemy, so that they carry them away captives unto the land of the enemy, far or near;
- 47 Yet if they shall bethink themselves in the land whither they were carried captives, and repent, and make supplication unto thee in the land of them that carried them captives, saying, We have sinned, and have done perversely, we have committed wickedness;
- 48 And so return unto thee with all their heart, and with all their soul, in the land of their enemies, which led them away captive, and pray unto thee toward their land, which thou gavest unto their fathers, the city which thou hast chosen, and the house which I have built for thy name:
- 49 Then hear thou their prayer and their supplication in heaven thy dwelling place, and maintain their cause,
- 50 And forgive thy people that have sinned against thee, and all their transgressions wherein they have transgressed against thee, and give them compassion before them who carried them captive, that they may have compassion on them: (KJV)

2 Chr 6:36-39

- 36 If they sin against thee, (for there is no man which sinneth not,) and thou be angry with them, and deliver them over before their enemies, and they carry them away captives unto a land far off or near;
- 37 Yet **if** they bethink themselves in the land whither they are carried captive, and **turn** and **pray** unto thee in the land of their captivity, saying, We have sinned, we have done amiss, and have dealt wickedly;
- 38 **If** they return to thee with all their heart and with all their soul in the land of their captivity, whither they have carried them captives, and pray toward their land, which thou gavest unto their fathers, and toward the city which thou hast chosen, and toward the house which I have

built for thy name:

- 39 **Then** hear thou from the heavens, even from thy dwelling place, **their prayer** and their supplications, and maintain their cause, **and forgive thy people which have sinned against thee.** (KJV)

EZEKIEL ON ATONEMENT

Throughout this chapter, Ezekiel warns Israel that the doctrine of vicarious atonement is antithetical to the will of G-d. In addition, the prophet assures the Jewish people that it is the act of repentance alone that atones for sin.

Answer for yourself: In the following verses, does Ezekiel mention anything about blood or a crucified Messiah throughout this crucial chapter which has as its theme the doctrine of sin and atonement?

Ezek 18:1-4

- 1 The word of the LORD came unto me again, saying,
- 2 What mean ye, that ye use this proverb concerning the land of Israel, saying, The fathers have eaten sour grapes, and the children's teeth are set on edge?
- 3 As I live, saith the Lord GOD, ye shall not have occasion any more to use this proverb in Israel.
- 4 Behold, all souls are mine; as the soul of the father, so also the soul of the son is mine: the soul that sinneth, it shall die. (KJV)

Ezek 18:19-23

- 19 Yet say ye, Why? doth not the son bear the iniquity of the father? When the son hath done that which is lawful and right, and hath kept all my statutes, and hath done them, he shall surely live.
- 20 The soul that sinneth, it shall die. The son shall not bear the iniquity of the father, neither shall the father bear the iniquity of the son: the righteousness of the righteous shall be upon him, and the wickedness of the wicked shall be upon him.
- 21 But if the wicked will turn from all his sins that he hath committed, and keep all my statutes, and do that which is lawful and right, he shall surely live, he shall not die.
- 22 All his transgressions that he hath committed, they shall not be mentioned unto him: in his righteousness that he hath done he shall live.
- 23 Have I any pleasure at all that the wicked should die? saith the Lord GOD: and not that he should return from his ways, and live? (KJV)

Ezek 33:10-11

1. 10 Therefore, O thou son of man, speak unto the house of Israel; Thus ye speak, saying, If our transgressions and our sins be upon us, and we pine away in them, how should we then live?
2. 11 Say unto them, As I live, saith the Lord GOD, I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked; but that the wicked turn from his way and live: turn ye, turn ye from your evil ways; for why will ye die, O house of Israel? (KJV)

ALMSGIVING AND ATONEMENT

Prov 10:2

- **2 Treasures of wickedness profit nothing: but righteousness delivereth from death. (KJV)**

Prov 11:4

- **4 Riches profit not in the day of wrath: but righteousness delivereth from death. (KJV)**

Prov 16:6

- **6 By mercy and truth iniquity is purged: and by the fear of the LORD men depart from evil. (KJV)**

Hosea 6:6

- **6 For I desired mercy, and not sacrifice; and the knowledge of G-d more than burnt offerings. (KJV)**

Dan 4:24

- **24 This is the interpretation, O king, and this is the decree of the most High, which is come upon my lord the king: (KJV)**

JEREMIAH WARNS ABOUT THE OVEREMPHASIS ON THE SACRIFICIAL SYSTEM

Jer 7:3-7

- **3 Thus saith the LORD of hosts, the G-d of Israel, Amend your ways and your doings, and I will cause you to dwell in this place.**
- **4 Trust ye not in lying words, saying, The temple of the LORD, The temple of the LORD, The temple of the LORD, are these.**
- **5 For if ye thoroughly amend your ways and your doings; if ye thoroughly execute judgment between a man and his neighbour;**
- **6 If ye oppress not the stranger, the fatherless, and the widow, and shed not innocent blood in this place, neither walk after other gods to your hurt:**
- **7 Then will I cause you to dwell in this place, in the land that I gave to your fathers, for ever and ever. (KJV)**

Jer 7:21-23

- **21 Thus saith the LORD of hosts, the G-d of Israel; Put your burnt offerings unto your sacrifices, and eat flesh.**
- **22 For I spake not unto your fathers, nor commanded them in the day that I brought them out of the land of Egypt, concerning burnt offerings or sacrifices:**
- **23 But this thing commanded I them, saying, Obey my voice, and I will be your G-d, and ye shall be my people: and walk ye in all the ways that I have commanded you, that it may be well unto you. (KJV)**

RESTORATION OF SACRIFICES IN THE MESSIANIC AGE TO COME

Isa 56:7

- 7 Even them will I bring to my holy mountain, and make them joyful in my house of prayer: their burnt offerings and their sacrifices shall be accepted upon mine altar; for mine house shall be called an house of prayer for all people. (KJV)

Jer 33:17-18

- 17 For thus saith the LORD; David shall never want a man to sit upon the throne of the house of Israel;
- 18 Neither shall the priests the Levites want a man before me to offer burnt offerings, and to kindle meat offerings, and to do sacrifice continually. (KJV)

Zech 14:21

- 21 Yea, every pot in Jerusalem and in Judah shall be holiness unto the LORD of hosts: and all they that sacrifice shall come and take of them, and seethe therein: and in that day there shall be no more the Canaanite in the house of the LORD of hosts. (KJV)

Zech 14:21

- 21 Yea, every pot in Jerusalem and in Judah shall be holiness unto the LORD of hosts: and all they that sacrifice shall come and take of them, and seethe therein: and in that day there shall be no more the Canaanite in the house of the LORD of hosts. (KJV)

Ezek 43:22-25

- 22 And on the second day thou shalt offer a kid of the goats without blemish for a sin offering; and they shall cleanse the altar, as they did cleanse it with the bullock.
- 23 When thou hast made an end of cleansing it, thou shalt offer a young bullock without blemish, and a ram out of the flock without blemish.
- 24 And thou shalt offer them before the LORD, and the priests shall cast salt upon them, and they shall offer them up for a burnt offering unto the LORD.
- 25 Seven days shalt thou prepare every day a goat for a sin offering: they shall also prepare a young bullock, and a ram out of the flock, without blemish. (KJV)

Answer for yourself: If Yeshua was the final sacrifice once and for all as Hebrews 10:10, 18 teaches, and the animal sacrificial system was merely a foreshadowing of Calvary (Heb 9-10), why will animal sacrifices be re-instituted in the Messianic era?

In light of what I have shown you, and understanding the many corruptions, changes, and alterations we have shown you in the New Testament as it was re-worked by Rome and the Anti-Semitic Gentile church, how then are we to understand such passages as these in light of what we just studied?

Rom 6:10

- 10 For in that he died, he died unto sin once: but in that he liveth, he liveth unto G-d. (KJV)

Heb 9:12

- 12 Neither by the blood of goats and calves, but by his own blood he entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption (KJV)

Heb 10:10

- **10 By the which will we are sanctified through the offering of the body of Yeshua Christ once for all. (KJV)**

Heb 10:18

- **18 Now where remission of these is, there is no more offering for sin. (KJV)**

Answer for yourself: How can these passages which exist in a document full of errors, inaccuracies, additions, and changes, and other passages like them in the New Testament, have any validity when compared with what I have shown you in this article alone which existed previously in the Law, Prophets, and Writings?

DOES THE BIBLE GIVE US AN EXAMPLE OF NON-JEWS REPENTING AND THUS HAVING THEIR SINS FORGIVEN WITHOUT BLOOD SACRIFICES?

Yes. The people of Ninevah.

Jonah 3:5-10

- **5 So the people of Nineveh believed G-d, and proclaimed a fast, and put on sackcloth, from the greatest of them even to the least of them.**
- **6 For word came unto the king of Nineveh, and he arose from his throne, and he laid his robe from him, and covered him with sackcloth, and sat in ashes.**
- **7 And he caused it to be proclaimed and published through Nineveh by the decree of the king and his nobles, saying, Let neither man nor beast, herd nor flock, taste any thing: let them not feed, nor drink water:**
- **8 But let man and beast be covered with sackcloth, and cry mightily unto G-d: yea, let them turn every one from his evil way, and from the violence that is in their hands.**
- **9 Who can tell if G-d will turn and repent, and turn away from his fierce anger, that we perish not?**
- **10 And G-d saw their works, that they turned from their evil way; and G-d repented of the evil, that he had said that he would do unto them; and he did it not. (KJV)**

DOES THE BIBLE YESHUA USED, THE OLD TESTAMENT, TEACH US ABOUT AND PROMISE US ATONEMENT THROUGH REPENTANCE ALONE?.....SURE DOES

Isa 55:6-9

- **6 Seek ye the LORD while he may be found, call ye upon him while he is near:**
- **7 Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts: and let him return unto the LORD, and he will have mercy upon him; and to our G-d, for he will abundantly pardon.**
- **8 For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith the LORD.**
- **9 For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts. (KJV)**

SO ARE WE TO THINK THAT THE JEWISH PEOPLE CANNOT BE RIGHT WITH G-D SINCE DEPRIVED OF A TEMPLE AND BLOOD

SACRIFICES TODAY?

Hosea 3:4-5

- **4 For the children of Israel shall abide many days without a king, and without a prince, and without a sacrifice, and without an image, and without an ephod, and without teraphim:**
- **5 Afterward shall the children of Israel return, and seek the LORD their G-d, and David their king; and shall fear the LORD and his goodness in the latter days. (KJV)**

SO WHY ALL THIS FUSS OVER YESHUA AS THE PASSOVER LAMB WHEN THE FESTIVAL OF PASSOVER HAD NOTHING TO DO WITH ATONEMENT ANYWAY.....SHOULD NOT YESHUA HAVE DIED ON YOM KIPPUR TO BE AN ATONEMENT?

In light of everything said so far, please understand that we are not trying to destroy anyone's faith in G-d or in Yeshua as the "non-Jews" example of G-dliness manifested through the flesh. Yet, we must be truthful to the Hebrew Text as well as the corruption, alterations, additions, and deletions in the Greek text once we come to understand them. Our faith must rest in truth, and not in desire to want to believe what we were told when we were little. G-d is seeking them to worship Him in Spirit and in Truth, and such a quest means we must be ruthless in our pursuit of truth. Having said that, understand our religious belief system must be based upon truth and not fantasy or anti-Semitic lies. Thus we at Bet Emet deal with issues most are afraid to address or even mention. Too often thoughts of doubt remain unspoken, when if exposed to the light of linguistic analysis, cultural and contextual analysis, have understandings that reveal G-d's wisdom and awesome plan of redemption.

Answer for yourself: So How Can The Writer Of Hebrews Go Against What The Many Prophets Said Which They All Were In Agreement On?

Shalom....See you in the last article.



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WHAT DID THE DEATH OF YESHUA ACTUALLY ACCOMPLISH # 9

JUSTIFICATION WITH G-D: BELIEF, BLOOD, OR REPENTANCE AND OBEDIENCE?

Hoses 6:6 6. For I desired <2654> (8804) mercy <2617>, and not sacrifice <2077>; and the knowledge <1847> of G-d <430> more than burnt offerings <5930>.

The Hebrew Word For "Delight"

Lexicon Hebrew 2654

02654 chaphets {khaw-fates'} a primitive root; TWOT - 712,713; v AV - delight 39, please 14, desire 9, will 3, pleasure 3, favour 2, like 2, moveth 1, would 1, at all 1; 75

- 1) to delight in, take pleasure in, desire, be pleased with
 - 1a) (Qal)
 - 1a1) of men
 - 1a1a) to take pleasure in, delight in
 - 1a1b) to delight, desire, be pleased to do
 - 1a2) of G-d
 - 1a2a) to delight in, have pleasure in
 - 1a2b) to be pleased to do
- 2) to move, bend down
 - 2a) (Qal) to bend down

The Hebrew Word For "Mercy"

Lexicon Hebrew 2617

02617 checed {kheh'-sed} from 02616; TWOT - 698a,699a; n m AV - mercy 149, kindness 40, lovingkindness 30, goodness 12, kindly 5, merciful 4, favour 3, good 1, goodliness 1, pity 1, reproach 1, wicked thing 1; 248

- 1) goodness, kindness, faithfulness
- 2) a reproach, shame

The Hebrew Word For "Sacrifice"

Lexicon Hebrew 2077

02077 zebach {zeh'-bakh} from 02076; TWOT - 525a; n m AV - sacrifice 155, offerings 6, offer 1; 162

- **1) sacrifice**
 - **1a) sacrifices of righteousness**
 - **1b) sacrifices of strife**
 - **1c) sacrifices to dead things**
 - **1d) the covenant sacrifice**
 - **1e) the passover**
 - **1f) annual sacrifice**
 - **1g) thank offering**

The Hebrew Word For "Knowledge"

Lexicon Hebrew 1847

01847 da`ath {dah'-ath} from 03045; TWOT - 848c; n m/f AV - knowledge 82, know 6, cunning 1, unwittingly 2 + 01097 2, ignorantly + 01097 1, unawares + 01097 1; 93

- **1) knowledge**
 - **1a) knowledge, perception, skill**
 - **1b) discernment, understanding, wisdom**

Before, during, and after the destruction of Solomon and Herod's Temples there were blood sacrifices made by Jewish people. This continued for both the Jewish people, as well as those who were believers in Yeshua up and until 70 C.E (both Jew and Gentile). Bringing of blood sacrifices after the crucifixion of Yeshua by believers "in Yeshua" pose a difficult problem for the traditional Christian who has been taught his whole life that Yeshua did away with the sacrificial system. The evidence for believers in Jesus continually bringing blood offerings and sin offerings following his death proves to us, as found in [Acts 21](#) for example, that the early church held different ideas about atonement than what we as Christians and followers of Jesus today have inherited from the Gentile Church following the destruction of the Temple and the scattering of the Jewish Church.

Answer for yourself: Just how did the Jews get forgiveness and justification from sin if they do not believe in Yeshua as their Messiah or that his sacrifice atoned for all their sins?

Answer for yourself: Does the Bible teach that forgiveness of sin is impossible outside a belief in Yeshua? No and we will see that clearly in a moment.

Answer for yourself: Does your church teach that forgiveness of sin is impossible outside a belief in Yeshua? Most likely.

Answer for yourself: Is it possible for the Jewish people to be justified before G-d yet be blinded to the identify of Yeshua? As foreign the idea is to the typical Christian, I believe that after you have examined the evidence presented you may have to say "Yes;" especially in light of the fact that the part in Romans 11 that says the Jews were "blinded" was written after 180 A.D. and only then included among the Pauline literature!

The traditional Christian's response to the above question is usually "No way." In this article I will challenge you with the Bible and the teaching of the Bible on the issue. What you will see in this article will challenge traditional Christian teaching on "salvation" as you have heard and know it.

Answer for yourself: Is the Bible to be our authority for our belief and practice, or our denominational doctrines which, as you know, vary immensely among the 22000 or more denominations that exist today? You

have to answer that for yourself.

BELIEF- FAITH-ACTION:

The Bible states emphatically that no one was or is justified / forgiven by any way other than faith. Following are several quotes from the Encyclopedia Judaica (vol. 3, pp. 654-656):

"In Judaism the need for a profession of belief did not arise and rabbinic synods saw no necessity for a drawing up of concise formulas expressing Jewish beliefs. Theologically speaking, every Jew is born into G-d's covenant with the people of Israel, and membership in the community does not depend on credal affirmations of a formal character. Jewish beliefs are voiced in the form of prayer and in the twice-daily recital of the Shema...Deut. 6:4 "Listen (Heb. Shema) Israel, G-d is our Lord, G-d is One," (The Living Torah)].

The formulation of articles of Jewish faith is largely a medieval development, even though Philo (first century C.E.) had spoken of eight essential principles of scriptural religion: (1) existence of G-d; (2) His Unity; (3) divine providence; (4) creation of the world; (5) unity of the world; (6) the existence of incorporeal ideas; (7) the revelation of the Law (Torah; oral and written); and (8) its eternity . . .

The fundamentals by Maimonides [1135-1204] are: (1) The existence of G-d which is perfect and sufficient unto itself and which is the cause of the existence of all other beings. (2) G-d's unity which is unlike all others of unity. (3) G-d must not be conceived in bodily terms, and the anthropomorphic expressions applied to G-d in Scripture have to be understood in a metaphorical sense. (4) G-d is eternal. (5) G-d alone is to be worshipped and obeyed. There are no mediating powers able freely to grant man's petitions, and intermediaries must not be invoked. (6) Prophecy. (7) Moses is unsurpassed by any other prophet. (8) The entire Torah was given to Moses. (9) Moses' Torah will not be abrogated or superseded by another divine law nor will anything be added to, or taken away from it. (10) G-d knows the actions of men. (11) G-d rewards those who fulfill the commandments of the Torah, and punishes those who transgress them. (12) The coming of the Messiah. (13) The resurrection of the dead."

The Hebrew word Emunah has a two-fold connotation - theological and human. It signifies a like faith and trust in G-d, and faithfulness, honesty, and integrity in human relations. These two concepts of **Emunah** do not conflict with each other. In Judaism, unlike other religions (and we must never forget that Yeshua is Jewish and always adhered to Judaism and not Christianity), faith is not some mystical quality charged with supernatural powers capable of winning divine favor and grace. Faith is a dynamic, a motive of faithfulness, **and faith is of value only in so far as it is productive of faithful action**; nor is there any faithful action that is not rooted in faith in G-d. The man of faithfulness is an **Ish Emunah (man of faith)**, and the man of faith is a **Ba'al Emunah (possessor of faith)**. For it is the man of the highest faith in G-d who is the man of the greatest faithfulness in dealing with his fellow man; and it is only the man of faithfulness who can truly be considered a man of faith.

From the above information we can see that it is belief in G-d and not sacrifices that produce the beginning of a relationship with G-d. Abraham, a ben Noah, is the archtype of all people of faith.

"And he (Abraham) believed in the LORD (YHVH); and he (YHVH) counted it to him (Abraham) for righteousness" (Gen. 15:6).

It was his belief in YHVH that caused Abraham to move from the land of his father and make his home in a strange land. **But Abraham's belief (faith), to be acceptable by G-d, had to produce actions based upon such faith!** IT MUST BE NOTED THAT ACTIONS DID NOT PRODUCE THE FAITH! One must have faith first! This is the formula that is shown throughout Tanakh. The members of the Nazarene Sect possessed this same belief.

"For if Abraham were justified by works, he hath something of which to glory, but not before G-d. For what saith the scripture? Abraham believed G-d, and it was counted unto him for righteousness (literally Justification, Strong's # 1343).

Lexicon Greek 1343

1343 dikaiosune {dik-ah-yos-oo'-nay} from 1342; TDNT - 2:192,168; n f AV - righteousness 92; 92

- 1) in a broad sense: state of him who is as he ought to be, righteousness, the condition acceptable to G-d
- 1a) the doctrine concerning the way in which man may attain a state approved of G-d!!!!!!!!!!!!
- 1b) integrity, virtue, purity of life, rightness, correctness of thinking feeling, and acting!!!!!!!!!!!!
- 2) in a narrower sense, justice or the virtue which gives each his due

Now to him that worketh is the reward not reckoned of grace, but of debt. But to him that worketh not, but believeth on him (YHVH) that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness (literally justification). [Strong's # 1343]. (Rom. 4:2-5).

"Even as Abraham believed G-d, and it was accounted to him for righteousness (Justification, Strong's 1343). Know ye, therefore that they who are of faith, the same are the sons of Abraham " (Gal. 3: 6- 7).

Answer for yourself: Whom did Abraham believe that brought him righteousness? G-d (YHVH)..

"For without faith it is impossible to please him (YHVH); for he that cometh to G-d must believe that he (YHVH) is, and that he (YHVH) is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him (YHVH) " (Heb. 11: 6).

Answer for yourself: Who are we to come to..Yeshua or YHVH? YHVH

Answer for yourself: Who made it possible for Gentile to know YHVH and understand those things necessary whereby we could come to YHVH? Yeshua

"Thou believes" that there is one G-d; thou doest well. The demons also believe, and tremble. But wilt thou know, O vain man, that faith without works is dead. Was not Abraham, our father, justified by works (not faith alone), when he had offered Isaac, his son, upon the altar? Seest thou how faith wrought with his works and by works was faith made perfect (complete)? And the scripture was fulfilled which saith, Abraham believed G-d, and it was imputed unto him for righteousness (literally justification); and he was called a friend of G-d: (Jas. 2:19-23).

Answer for yourself: Will faith in Yeshua without proper works result in "complete faith?" No.

Answer for yourself: Should our faith in Yeshua not be so much in his identity but his message which commanded actions that pleased his Father? Yes.

LOOKING AT OUR EXAMPLES

The Nazarene Sect went one step further than what is mentioned in the Hebrew Scriptures. The Nazarenes equated faith in G-d with faith in His messiah (**HIS MESSAGE**). To the early Jerusalem Church if one believed in G-d this would result in believing that Yeshua (Yeshua) was G-d's Messiah who came with an authoritative message and warning.

"And this is life eternal, that they might KNOW thee, THE ONLY TRUE G-D, and Yeshua Christ (Messiah) whom THOU (G-d) hast sent (Jn. 17. 3).

3 And <1161> this <3778> is <2076> (5748) life <2222> eternal <166>, that <2443> they might know <1097> (5725) thee <4571> the only <3441> true <228> G-d <2316>, and <2532> Yeshua <2424> Christ <5547>, whom <3739> thou hast sent <649> (5656).

Answer for yourself: Is there a connection between eternal life and acquiring know-ledge of G-d? Yes.

Let us examine the Greek word used in "they might know:"

Lexicon Greek 1097

1097 ginosko {ghin-oc'e'-ko} a prolonged form of a primary verb; TDNT - 1:689,119; v AV - know 196, perceive 9, understand 8, misc 10; 223

- **1) to learn to know, come to know, get a knowledge of perceive, feel**
- **1a) to become known**
- **2) to know, understand, perceive, have knowledge of**
- **2a) to understand**
- **2b) to know**
- **3) Jewish idiom for sexual intercourse between a man and a woman**
- **4) to become acquainted with, to know**

We are to "know G-d." "Knowing" is in the present tense and active voice. That means each one is himself responsible to acquire knowledge of G-d and His ways through study of His holy Word. Failure to study G-d's Torah has deceived millions into believing they are right with and in proper relationship with G-d because they belong to a church or hear 30 minutes of preaching a week. They are deceived and are in error.

Answer for yourself: Does the Bible teach us that we can know for sure that we "know G-d?" Yes.

1 John 2:3 And <2532> hereby <1722> <5129> we do know <1097> (5719) that <3754> we know <1097> (5758) him <846>, if <1437> we keep <5083> (5725) his <846> commandments <1785>.

Answer for yourself: Is the word "know" as in "know him" the same word used in John 17:3... "here is life eternal...that we know G-d?" Yes.

Answer for yourself: Does knowing the commandments and keeping them assure us of eternal life? Yes.

"But these are WRITTEN, that ye might BELIEVE that Yeshua is THE CHRIST' (Messiah), 'THE SON OF G-D) (not G-d the son); and that believing, ye might have life through his (G-d, remember Abraham believed G-d) name" [G-d's Name] (Jn. 20:31).

Thus life (eternal life) comes through believing through the same name that Abraham believed in...namely; Yahweh and not Yeshua. Have faith in G-d!

Abraham believed "G-d" (he believed what G-d had said) and then it was accounted unto him as righteousness.

Answer for yourself: Why am I making a difference between believing G-d vs believing in Jesus? **Simply because the Gentile writers and redactors of the New Testament have put into the mouth of Jesus as well as others who write of him many doctrines that the historical Jesus, let alone the Messiah, could never have believed and which are totally foreign to the faith of the Jews. Literally paganism has been put into the mouth of Jesus and others in the New Testament in many, but not all places. The hard thing for the average believer to do is to discern the meat from the bone and this can be done only after years of study.**

Answer for yourself: Would you believe the Bible more than what you often hear preached when shown that what you heard preached is in error when compared to the Bible? Don't be so quick to answer for many I know who say "yes" end up not repenting when shown error; they would rather continue following the errors and traditions of men for that is all they have ever known. To walk in a new direction when shown your errors is possibly one of the greatest manifestations of faith that man can exhibit before G-d.

John states the purpose of his writing:

- 1. ". . . that they mighty KNOW Thee (G-d...not your church or denominational doctrines), THE ONLY TRUE G-D (YHVH), and Yeshua Christ (Messiah) WHOM THOU HAST SENT"***
- 2. ". . . these are written, that ye might BELIEVE THAT JESUS IS THE CHRIST (Messiah), THE SON OF G-D."***

In view of the above statements made by the writer let us read John 3:16 in the following light. Get ready for the shock of your life!

"For G-d so loved the world that He (G-d) gave His (G-d) only begotten Son (Yeshua the Messiah) that whosoever believeth in Him (G-d) should not perish but have everlasting life."

Answer for yourself: Did you notice a monumental difference in the correct wording above over what you have accepted previously?

Answer for yourself: Have we mistakenly misunderstood to whom our faith as Christians is to be directed toward? We sure have.

Answer for yourself: Are we to direct our faith to another or G-d alone as did Abraham? G-d alone as did Abraham.

FAITH IN THE G-D (YHVH) OF YESHUA JUSTIFIES...NOT FAITH "IN YESHUA"

Let us examine three references that show clearly that it is faith in the G-d of Yeshua, not faith in Yeshua which results in justification.

"That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Yeshua, and shalt BELIEVE IN THINE HEART (MIND) THAT G-D RAISED HIM (Yeshua) from the dead, thou shalt be saved" (Rom.

10:9).

Answer for yourself: In this passage who is the active participant...*Yeshua* or G-d? G-d.

Answer for yourself: Does the above passage say we are to have faith in the acts of G-d; one of which is the resurrection of *Yeshua*? Yes.

Answer for yourself: Does the passage say that we are to confess that *Yeshua* is Lord (the Gentile's example and whose authority we follow) as well as relegating our faith to the G-d of *Yeshua* and not *Yeshua*? Yes.

Answer for yourself: Would it bother you to know that the above passage, Rom. 10:9-10, was not in the writings collected in 150 A.D. when the first New Testament was organized but only after 180 A.D. would such passages show up in the Second collection of writings we call the New Testament? What is also very troubling is that the collector of the First New Testament in 150 A.D. (Marcion) was staunchly pro-Pauline and there is no reason why such an anti-Jewish passage would not have been collected and used by Marcion in his tirade against the Jews.

"For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord (YHVH .. Joel 2:23) shall be saved " (Rom. 10:13).

Answer for yourself: Is Rom. 10:13 a quote from the Hebrew Scriptures and the book of Joel 2:32? Yes.

Answer for yourself: Are we to call upon YHVH or *Yeshua*?

Answer for yourself: Does the "Lord" in this verse (Rom. 10:13) as quoted from Joel refers to YHVH or *Yeshua*? Let us examine Joel 2:32 to determine correctly.

Answer for yourself: Would it bother you to know that the above passage, let alone the whole of Romans chapters 9-11, were not in the New Testament until after 180 A.D.? As stated earlier such passages were not available for men like Marcion and others to use since they did not exist until after 180 A.D. when Irenaeus presents us with his response to Marcion; it is called the official New Testament (the second one).

Let us examine the passage from Joel 2:32 from which the Gentile writers of the New Testament derived their theology

Joel 2:32 And it shall come to pass, [that] whosoever shall call <7121> (8799) on the name <8034> of the LORD <3068> shall be delivered <4422> (8735): for in mount <2022> Zion <6726> and in Jerusalem <3389> shall be deliverance <6413>, as the LORD <3068> hath said <559> (8804), and in the remnant <8300> whom the LORD <3068> shall call <7121> (8802).

The Hebrew word for "LORD" is as follows:

BDB/Thayers # 3068

03068 Yehovah {yeh-ho-vaw'} from 01961; TWOT - 484a; n pr dei AV - LORD 6510, G-D 4, JEHOVAH 4, variant 1; 6519 Jehovah = "the existing One"

1) the proper name of the one true G-d...YHVH/Jehovah

Answer for yourself: Is Paul quoting a Scripture to tell us to call upon YHVH or *Yeshua*? You can clearly see now that we are to call upon Yahweh but if you are honest you find this passage always taught as if one is to believe on "Jesus."

Answer for yourself: Have we been taught to trust *Yeshua* or Yahweh for your salvation and to call out to

Yeshua or Yahweh for salvation? Yeshua on both counts, yet the original Scriptures teach otherwise. Get ready for another shock to your system.

"Who by him (Yeshua) do (we Gentiles) BELIEVE IN G-D, WHO RAISED HIM (Yeshua) FROM THE DEAD and gave him (Yeshua) glory, that YOUR FAITH AND HOPE MIGHT BE IN G-D" (and not Yeshua) (1 Pet. 1. 21).

Answer for yourself: Was the purpose of Yeshua to get us to have faith in him or in his Father YHVH? YHVH.

Answer for yourself: As Gentiles, who were strangers from the covenant promises, aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, without hope and without G-d in the world, are we to understand that the purpose of Yeshua and his ministry was to get us to G-d and not get us to himself (Yeshua)? Yes, he came to get us to G-d.

Answer for yourself: Can you as a Christian say and understand that we Gentiles came to believe in G-d (YHVH) because of His Messiah who gave his life that the message of the commandments might be taken to the world in the Great Commission (teach them to observe those things I commanded you)? Yes.

In the verses cited, it is faith in the G-d who raised Yeshua, not faith in Yeshua that brings justification. This is literally an atomic bomb to the Christian church which focuses on Yeshua to the exclusion of YHVH, faith in Yeshua to the exclusion of faith in YHVH, and on the New Testament writings to the exclusion of the Hebrew Bible. The Nazarenes view of the first century (Yeshua's church) was that faith in G-d would result in believing that Yeshua was the Messiah of YHVH. This is not the same as faith in "the blood" of Yeshua, but in the Father of Yeshua.

Clearly the Nazarene Sect viewed justification as coming from faith in G-d, not from blood sacrifices (whether animal or human as taught about Yeshua). Justification means to declare just. The belief (faith) in G-d resulted in them being declared just as they obeyed the commandments of YHVH. James, the brother of Yeshua, declared that justification will result in works (action). The context of the passage would reflect the specific action taken.

Isaiah was a favorite source for the Nazarenes. Let us examine Isaiah's view of ransom / justification / redemption.

"Tell ye, and bring them near; yea, let them take counsel together. Who hath declared this from ancient time? Who hath told it from that time? Have not I, the Lord (YHVH)? And THERE IS NO G-D ELSE BESIDES ME, A JUST G-D AND SAVIOR; THERE IS NONE BESIDES ME. Look unto ME (YHVH) AND BE SAVED, ALL THE ENDS OF THE EARTH (Heb. Adam i.e., all mankind-Gentiles); For I am G-d, and there is none else. (Isa. 45. 21-22).

Answer for yourself: Does Isaiah tell the Gentile world to look to Yeshua to be saved or to YHVH to be saved? Look unto YHVH.

The death of Jesus served as a catalyst that brought repentance to the Jewish religious establishment in the first century C.E. by the taking the Laws of Noah to the world for manifestations of obedience of their new faith in the ONE true G-d...YHVH. The Nazarene community knew quite well that Gentile faith without works was a dead faith; thus the teaching directed toward them "to observe those things Yeshua had commanded...for the words he spoke were not his, but his Father's in heaven.

Remember the former things of old; for I am G-d, and THERE IS NONE ELSE; I am G-d, and there is none like me, Declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure (Isa. 46:9-10).

Thus saith the Lord (YHVH), THY REDEEMER, the Holy One of Israel: I am the Lord (YHVH) thy G-d, who teacheth thee to profit, who LEADETH THEE BY THE WAY THAT THOU SHOULDEST GO" (Isa. 48:17).

The Hebrew writings as well as the writings of the Nazarenes agree. It is faith in G-d (YHVH) which makes one just in the sight of YHVH. It is this faith that responds in obedience to YHVH's mitzvot (commandments).

I have quoted the Jewish (Judaism's) concept of faith and works in the above section. We have seen the Nazarene (Messianic) Sects' concept of faith, both are in agreement, FAITH COMES BECAUSE OF BELIEF IN G-D (YHVH).

JUSTIFICATION: FAITH OR BLOOD? BLOOD - FACTS:

Answer for yourself: What do we do with all those passages dealing with the idea of blood and blood sacrifices since what we supposed was "faith in Yeshua" in reality is "faith in G-d" instead? This will be the subject of our next section.

Answer for yourself: Was a blood sacrifice required each time a Jew sinned? No!

Answer for yourself: Was a blood sacrifice the only way to obtain atonement (a covering for sin): No!

The person making the sacrifice brought the sacrifice to the Temple ONLY after he had acknowledged his transgression and previously confessed. Let us look at passages in Exodus, Leviticus, and Numbers for the requirements of a sacrifice. Your further study is recommended in the Encyclopedia Judaica vol. 1, index p. 730 regarding various aspects of sacrifices.

Answer for yourself: What about those Jews who lived in Asia Minor and other parts of the world who did not have access to the Temple for animal sacrifices? How did they obtain forgiveness?

They could not run down to Jerusalem each time they needed to make a sacrifice.

The key verse for those (unenlightened and knowledgeable Christians) who would try to make blood sacrifices the only means of atonement is Leviticus 17. 11.

"For the life of the flesh is the blood; and I have given it to you upon the altar to make an atonement for your souls; for it is the blood that maketh an atonement for the soul."

Rashi makes the following observation. Because life is dependent upon the blood, G-d designed blood as the medium that goes upon the Altar for atonement, as if to say, 'Let one life be offered to atone for another.' So it is not appropriate for it to be eaten. Notice two things:

1. **The shedding of blood brings atonement.**
2. **Blood is not to be eaten by any man.**

Answer for yourself: What does this verse not say?

It does not say that a blood sacrifice is the only means of gaining atonement!

Answer for yourself: Should the New Testament writings contradict the Hebrew Old Testament Scriptures? No. Does it? Yes. Where? Many places...for example...

Hebrews 9:22 And <2532> almost <4975> all things <3956> are <2511> <0> by <2596> the law <3551> purged <2511> (5743) with <1722> blood <129>; and <2532> without <5565> shedding of blood <130> is <1096> (5736) no <3756> remission <859>.

The Greek Word For "Purged"

Lexicon Greek 2511 2511 katharizo {kath-ar-id'-zo} from 2513; TDNT - 3:413,381; v AV - cleanse 16, make clean 5, be clean 3, purge 3, purify 3; 30

- 1) to make clean, cleanse
 - 1a) from physical stains and dirt
 - 1a1) utensils, food
 - 1a2) a leper, to cleanse by curing
 - 1a3) to remove by cleansing
 - 1b) in a moral sense
 - 1b1) to free from defilement of sin and from faults
 - 1b2) to purify from wickedness
 - 1b3) to free from guilt of sin, to purify
 - 1b4) to consecrate by cleansing or purifying
 - 1b5) to consecrate, dedicate
- 2) to pronounce clean in a levitical sense

Answer for yourself: Does Heb. 9:22 say "all things" are purged by blood or "almost all?" Almost all.

Answer for yourself: Does the Bible teach that without the shedding of blood that there is no forgiveness of sins or does Heb. 9:22 teach that only? No the Bible does not, but Heb. 9:22 is bogus. Heb. 9:22 teaches that in error, for having previously proven repeatedly that there is not a "New Covenant" existing yet, but only a renewed Old Covenant, there is absolutely no warrant for changing the Words of G-d in the Hebrew Scriptures as has been done by those wishing to create a new religion about Yeshua instead of following the religion of Yeshua.

NON-BLOOD ATONEMENT AS TAUGHT BY THE BIBLE

Answer for yourself: Will you let the Bible dictate what you are to believe and not Catholic theology which has been written into the New Testament manuscripts in places which contradict Moses and the Bible Yeshua used, as well as where Biblical and Jewish doctrines were, in Gentile estimation, to be changed? I hope so.

Leviticus 5:11-13 'But IF HE BE NOT ABLE (if he is too poor) to bring two turtle doves, or two young pigeons, then he that SINNED shall BRING his offering THE TENTH PART OF AN EPHAH OF FINE FLOUR FOR A SIN OFFERING; he shall put no oil upon it, neither shall he put any frankincense thereon; FOR IT IS A SIN OFFERING...And the priest shall MAKE AN ATONEMENT FOR HIM AS TOUGHING HIS SIN that he hath sinned in one of these, and IT SHALL BE FORGIVEN HIM; and the remnant shall be the priest's as a meal offering.'

This passage reveals that A PERSON can bring his own atonement offering and that flour can be offered for sin when one cannot afford turtledoves (blood).

Exodus 30.16 "And thou shalt TAKE THE ATONEMENT MONEY OF THE CHILDREN OF ISRAEL...to make AN ATONEMENT FOR YOUR SOULS." Money was given as a ransom / atonement for the people when they were numbered.

This emphasizes the concept of giving that is connected to the tithe (Matt. 19 and Matt. 25 giving to the poor is connected to eternal life).

Isaiah 6:4 And the posts of the door moved at the voice of him that cried, and the house was filled with smoke. {door: Heb. thresholds} 5 Then said I, Woe [is] me! for I am undone; because I [am] a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips: for mine eyes have seen the King, the LORD of hosts. {undone: Heb. cut off} 6 Then flew one of the seraphims unto me, having a live coal in his hand, [which] he had taken with the tongs from off the altar: {having...: Heb. and in his hand a live coal} 7 And he laid [it] upon my mouth, and said, Lo, this hath touched thy lips; and thine iniquity is taken away, and thy sin purged.

This passage emphasizes confession of sin for atonement.

Answer for yourself: What is the main action that purges sin in Isa. 6:4-7? The merciful sovereignty of G-d mixed with our awareness of our sin as revealed by His Torah and our great need of G-d's grace.

Isaiah 27:8-118 In measure, when it shooteth forth, thou wilt debate with it: he stayeth his rough wind in the day of the east wind. {it shooteth...: or, thou sendest it forth} {he...: or, when he removeth it with} 9 By this therefore shall the iniquity of Jacob be purged; and this [is] all the fruit to take away his sin; when he maketh all the stones of the altar as chalkstones that are beaten in sunder, the groves and images shall not stand up. {images: or, sun images} 10 Yet the defenced city [shall be] desolate, [and] the habitation forsaken, and left like a wilderness: there shall the calf feed, and there shall he lie down, and consume the branches thereof. 11 When the boughs thereof are withered, they shall be broken off: the women come, [and] set them on fire: for it [is] a people of no understanding: therefore he that made them will not have mercy on them, and he that formed them will shew them no favour.

Answer for yourself: What is the main action that purges sin in the Isa. 27:8-11 text? The destruction of idolatry by zealous believers in YHVH.

Isaiah 55:77 Let the wicked <7563> forsake <5800> (8799) his way <1870>, and the unrighteous <205> man <376> his thoughts <4284>: and let him return <7725> (8799) unto the LORD <3068>, and he will have mercy <7355> (8762) upon him; and to our G-d <430>, for he will abundantly <7235> (8686) pardon <5545> (8800). {the unrighteous...: Heb. the man of iniquity} {abundantly...: Heb. multiply to pardon}

The Hebrew Word For "Forsake"

Lexicon Hebrew 5800 05800 `azab {aw-zab'} a primitive root; TWOT - 1594,1595; v AV - forsake 129, leave 72, leave off 4, faileth 2, fortify 2, help 2, committeth 1, destitute 1, refuseth 1, surely 1; 215

- 1) to leave, loose, forsake
- 1a) (Qal) to leave
- 1a1) to depart from, leave behind, leave, let alone
- 1a2) to leave, abandon, forsake, neglect, apostatize
- 1a3) to let loose, set free, let go, free
- 1b) (Niphal)
- 1b1) to be left to
- 1b2) to be forsaken
- 1c) (Pual) to be deserted

- 2) to restore, repair
- 2a) (Qal) to repair

The Hebrew Word For "Way"

Lexicon Hebrew 1870 01870 derek {deh'-rek} from 01869; TWOT - 453a; n m AV - way 590, toward 31, journey 23, manner 8, misc 53; 705

- 1) way, road, distance, journey, manner
- 1a) road, way, path
- 1b) journey
- 1c) direction
- 1d) manner, habit, way
- 1e) of course of life (fig.)
- 1f) of moral character (fig.)

The Hebrew Word For "Thoughts"

Lexicon Hebrew 4284 04284 machashabah {makh-ash-aw-baw'} or machashebeth {makh-ash-eh'-beth} from 02803; TWOT - 767d; n f AV - thought 28, device 12, purpose 6, work 3, imaginations 3, cunning 1, devised 1, invented 1, means 1; 56

- 1) thought, device
- 1a) thought
- 1b) device, plan, purpose
- 1c) invention

The Hebrew Word For "Return"

Lexicon Hebrew 7725 07725 shuwb {shoob} a primitive root; TWOT - 2340; v AV - return 391, ...again 248, turn 123, ...back 65, ...away 56, restore 39, bring 34, render 19, answer 18, recompense 8, recover 6, deliver 5, put 5, withdraw 5, requite 4, misc 40; 1066

- 1) to return, turn back
- 1a) (Qal)
- 1a1) to turn back, return
- 1a1a) to turn back
- 1a1b) to return, come or go back
- 1a1c) to return unto, go back, come back
- 1a1d) of dying
- 1a1e) of human relations (fig)
- 1a1f) of spiritual relations (fig)
- 1a1f1) to turn back (from G-d), apostatize
- 1a1f2) to turn away (of G-d)
- 1a1f3) to turn back (to G-d), repent
- 1a1f4) turn back (from evil)
- 1a1g) of inanimate things
- 1a1h) in repetition
- 1b) (Polel)
- 1b1) to bring back
- 1b2) to restore, refresh, repair (fig)
- 1b3) to lead away (enticingly)
- 1b4) to show turning, apostatize

- 1c) (Pual) restored (participle)
- 1d) (Hiphil) to cause to return, bring back
- 1d1) to bring back, allow to return, put back, draw back, give back, restore, relinquish, give in payment
- 1d2) to bring back, refresh, restore
- 1d3) to bring back, report to, answer
- 1d4) to bring back, make requital, pay (as recompense)
- 1d5) to turn back or backward, repel, defeat, repulse, hinder, reject, refuse
- 1d6) to turn away (face), turn toward
- 1d7) to turn against
- 1d8) to bring back to mind
- 1d9) to show a turning away
- 1d10) to reverse, revoke
- 1e) (Hophal) to be returned, be restored, be brought back
- 1f) (Pulal) brought back

The Hebrew Word For "Mercy"

Lexicon Hebrew 7355 07355 racham {raw-kham'} a primitive root; TWOT - 2146; v AV - ...mercy 32, ...compassion 8, pity 3, love 1, merciful 1, Ruhamah 1, surely 1; 47

- 1) to love, love deeply, have mercy, be compassionate, have tender affection, have compassion
- 1a) (Qal) to love
- 1b) (Piel)
- 1b1) to have compassion, be compassionate
- 1b1a) of G-d, man
- 1c) (Pual) to be shown compassion, be compassionate

The Hebrew Word For "Pardon"

Lexicon Hebrew 5545 05545 calach {saw-lakh'} a primitive root; TWOT - 1505; v AV - forgive 19, forgiven 13, pardon 13, spare 1; 46

- 1) to forgive, pardon
- 1a) (Qal) to forgive, pardon
- 1b) (Niphal) to be forgiven

Answer for yourself: What are the main actions bringing forgiveness in Isa. 55:77? Repentance in thought (renewed minds) and deeds of life.

Jeremiah 50:20 In those days, and in that time, saith the LORD, the iniquity of Israel shall be sought for, and [there shall be] none; and the sins of Judah, and they shall not be found: for I will pardon them whom I reserve.

"I will pardon" is in the imperfect tense:

Lexicon Hebrew 8811 08811 Imperfect

- The imperfect expresses an action, process or condition which is incomplete, and it has a wide range of meaning:
- It is used to describe a single (as opposed to a repeated) action in the past; the imperfect adds color and movement by suggesting the "process" preliminary to its completion.
- The imperfect is used to express the "future", referring not only to an action which is about to

be accomplished but one which has not yet begun:

WE MUST LISTEN TO THE PSALMS

Psalms 69:30 I will praise <1984> (8762) the name <8034> of G-d <430> with a song <7892>, and will magnify <1431> (8762) him with thanksgiving <8426>. 31. [This] also shall please <3190> <0> the LORD <3068> better <3190> (8799) than an ox <7794> [or] bullock <6499> that hath horns <7160> (8688) and hoofs <6536> (8688). 32 The humble <6035> shall see <7200> (8804) [this, and] be glad <8055> (8799): and your heart <3824> shall live <2421> (8799) that seek <1875> (8802) G-d <430>. {humble: or, meek}

The Hebrew Word For "Seek"

Lexicon Hebrew 1875 01875 darash {daw-rash'} a primitive root; TWOT - 455; v AV - seek 84, enquire 43, require 12, search 7, misc 18; 164

- 1) to resort to, seek, seek with care, enquire, require
- 1a) (Qal)
- 1a1) to resort to, frequent (a place), (tread a place)
- 1a2) to consult, enquire of, seek (pray)
- 1a2a) of G-d
- 1a2b) of heathen gods, necromancers
- 1a3) to seek deity in prayer and worship
- 1a3a) G-d
- 1a3b) heathen deities
- 1a4) to seek (with a demand), demand, require
- 1a5) to investigate, enquire (study)
- 1a6) to ask for, require, demand
- 1a7) to practice, study, follow, seek with application (obedience)
- 1a8) to seek with care, care for
- 1b) (Niphal)
- 1b1) to allow oneself to be enquired of, consulted (only of G-d)
- 1b2) to be sought, be sought out (study)
- 1b3) to be required (of blood)

Answer for yourself: What are the dynamics that affected forgiveness? Praise, prayer, and study.

Psalms 78:37 For their heart was not right with him, neither were they steadfast in his covenant. 38 But he, [being] full of compassion, forgave [their] iniquity, and destroyed [them] not: yea, many a time turned he his anger away, and did not stir up all his wrath. 39 For he remembered that they [were but] flesh; a wind that passeth away, and cometh not again.

Answer for yourself: What are the dynamics involved in this forgiveness? The mercy of G-d alone.

The above passages show that the individual Jew could obtain forgiveness in various ways: repentance, prayer, study, meal and flour offerings, money, jewelry, or simply out of the pure mercy of G-d. A blood sacrifice was not the only means of atonement.

Hosea, the prophet, states: "For I desire MERCY, and NOT SACRIFICE, and THE KNOWLEDGE OF G-D MORE THAN BURNT OFFERINGS" [which were blood sacrifices] (Hosea 6:6).

Answer for yourself: Is the knowledge of G-d from His Word and Torah greater than any blood sacrifice? Yes.

Answer for yourself: How can we obtain the knowledge of G-d? Study.

Answer for yourself: How could Abraham believe G-d without a knowledge of Him? The answer is he could not!

Answer for yourself: How did the great men of the Hebrew Bible obtain justification / atonement / ransom when they lived outside the land of Israel (remember there was no way for him to continuously bring blood offerings on a routine basis throughout the year for atonement and forgiveness)? G-d provided other ways just as effective as blood and burnt offerings (other ways than blood).

Answer for yourself: What about all those who lived for G-d after the destruction of Solomon's Temple (422 B.C.E.)? There were always other ways than blood and these "non-blood" atonements were not created "after the fact" so to speak.

Answer for yourself: What did the people do to be rightly related to G-d from the destruction of the First Temple until Ezra and Nehemiah returned and began the rebuilding of the Temple?

These people without Temple, priesthood, or offering, by faith in G-d maintained a relationship with Him. They believed G-d as did their father Abraham, and it was accounted to them for justification. Their belief was exhibited in G-dly actions prescribed by His Torah and not "good works" alone, for every good work is not a godly work. Many good works are motivated by the unconscious self, and since the heart is desperately wicked and we cannot know it, the only sure way to be sure that we "know HIM" is for us to keep His COMMANDMENTS and not our best intentions.

Ezekiel 11:16 "Thus saith the Lord G-d: Although I have cast them far off among the nations, and although I have scattered them among the countries, YET WILL I BE TO THEM A LITTLE SANCTUARY (Hebrew Temple) in the counties where they shall come."

Numbers 15:38-39 "Speak unto the children of Israel, and bid them that they make them fringes in the borders of their garments throughout their generations, and that they put upon the fringe of the borders a cord of blue; And it shall be unto you for a fringe, that ye may look upon it, and remember all the commandments of the Lord, and do them; and that ye seek not after your own hearts and your own eyes, after which ye used to play the harlot."

There were certain laws which only could be observed in the land. There were others that could be only observed when the Temple stood. While out of the land and without the benefits of the Temple, the individual Jew could look at the fringes on his garment and be reminded of the commandments of G-d. He would also be reminded that G-d would be to him a little Temple in the land of his so-journey. When the individual Jew acknowledged the commandments he would identify himself with G-d who dwelled in the Temple.

Each time the ancient Hebrew looked upon his "garment," the knots and "color" of blue reminded him of all the laws, ordinances, and commandments.

In keeping with our discussion of faith, the individual Jew did not need a set of dogma. He had a relationship with G-d based on belief in G-d not blood from animals. No Orthodox Jew I have ever spoken with indicated that a Jew was justified / atoned / redeemed by blood. It was a belief in G-d that produced G-dly actions that maintained his fellowship and relationship with YHVH.

Jonah, a Jewish prophet, who goes to a city of bnai Noah, Nineveh, proclaimed the judgment of G-d, "... yet forty days and Nineveh shall be overthrown" (Jonah 3:4). The result of this message is

spelled out in the text of the third chapter.

"So the people of Nineveh BELIEVED G-D, and proclaimed a fast, and put on sackcloth, from the greatest of them to the least of them . . . the decree of the king and his nobles, saying, let neither man nor beast, nor herd nor flock, taste anything; let them not feed, nor drink water. . CRY MIGHTILY unto G-d; yea, let them TURN (lit. repent) everyone FROM HIS EVIL WAY (from sins in general), AND FROM THE VIOLENCE (Hebrew-robbery," which is one of the seven laws of Noah) THAT IS IN THEIR HANDS...AND G-D SAW THEIR WORKS, that they turned from their evil ways (sins in general and specifically).

When the people repented of their sins G-d did not overthrow the kingdom. The text does not say that the people did not have faith in G-d before the coming of Jonah. What the text does say is the people of Nineveh were guilty of theft. When this is called to their attention "the people of Nineveh believed G-d," (they believed that He would overthrow them). This shows they possessed a knowledge of G-d before Jonah came to them. They did not offer a blood sacrifice. They *"cried mightily unto G-d . . . and G-d saw their works (G-dly actions in response to their repentance), that they turned from their evil ways."* Like Abraham, and all men of faith, their belief in G-d resulted in G-dly actions.

I am aware of passages in the New Testament writings that would suggest a justification / atonement / redemption based on blood sacrifices. There are verses that show a human sacrifice, which is specifically prohibited in the Hebrew writings. Following is a partial list of passages: Luke 22:20; I Corinthians 11:25-27; Ephesians 1:7; 2:13; Colossians 1:14,20; Hebrews 9:12,18,20,22; 10:19,29; 13:12,20; 1 Peter 1:2,19; I John 1:9; Revelation 1:5; 5:9; 12:11.

Answer for yourself: Having seen what is presented in this article, is it possible we have not fully and correctly interpreted the death of Yeshua, for after all, he did not die on the altar in the Temple? This bears more study.

Following is a partial list of passages from the Hebrew Scriptures which show that G-d specifically prohibited human sacrifice. Some would say that Yeshua was different. He was god-man. Regardless who they say he is or was does not abrogate the clear teaching of the Hebrew Scriptures. All the teaching of Yeshua and his followers had as their basics the Hebrew Scriptures.

'Thou shalt not do so unto the Lord thy G-d; for every abomination of the Lord, which he hateth, have they done unto their gods. For even their sons and daughters they have burned in the fire to their gods. Whatsoever thing I command you, observe to do it; thou shalt not add thereto, nor diminish from it' (Deut. 12:31-32).

'And they served their idols, which were a snare unto them. Yea, they sacrificed their sons and their daughters unto demons "' (Psa. 106:36-37)

And they have built the high places of Topheth, which is in the valley of the Son of Hinnon, to burn their sons and their daughters in the fire, which I commanded them not, neither came it into my heart" (Jer. 7:31).

Answer for yourself: What can we deduct from the above references?

G-d views human sacrifice as an abomination. He hates it and issued a specific prohibition regarding such sacrifices. There were to be no additions or deletions from the prohibition.

Answer for yourself: Could the Gentile Christian church, in retrospect, possibly interpreted the death of Yeshua in ways which were unacceptable to the faith of Yeshua, and could possibly the Jew be right today in

many areas where Gentile Christianity has erred in their interpretation? This again bears your personal study.

Human sacrifice was viewed as an offering to demons.

Jeremiah reaffirms the commandment from Deuteronomy. Human sacrifice did not come as a command from G-d, "neither came it into my (YHVH'S) heart (mind or thoughts)."

Answer for yourself: How does this stack up with "Messiah being crucified before the foundation of the world" (a totally solar belief by sun-worshippers-intersection of the celestial and the elliptical orbits of sun and earth making a "cross" where they intersect...the sun/son on the cross)? Have we been taught wrong by the Gentiles for two thousand years and accepted the wrong meaning given to the death of Jesus due to the rejection of Jewish beliefs by the Gentiles some 2 thousand years ago?

The sum of the matter is that no person has ever been justified by blood from humans.

True Saving Faith always results in G-dly actions which are responses to G-d's Word, Law, and Commandments; which in reality is the fruit of our saving faith.



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THE KADDISH

Glorified and sanctified be God's great name throughout the world which He has created according to His will. May He establish His kingdom in your lifetime and during your days, and within the life of the entire House of Israel, speedily and soon; and say, Amen. May His great name be blessed forever and to all eternity. Blessed and praised, glorified and exalted, extolled and honored, adored and lauded be the name of the Holy One, blessed be He, beyond all the blessings and hymns, praises and consolations that are ever spoken in the world; and say, Amen. May there be abundant peace from heaven, and life, for us and for all Israel; and say, Amen. He who creates peace in His celestial heights, may He create peace for us and for all Israel; and say, Amen.

Having read the translation of the Kaddish Prayer, one should realize that, although Jewish Law requires that the Kaddish be recited during the first eleven months following the death of a loved one by prescribed mourners, and on each anniversary of the death (the "Yahrtzeit"), and by custom in the State of Israel by all Jews on the Tenth of Tevet ("Yom HaKaddish HaKlali"), there is no reference, no word even, about death in the prayer!

The theme of Kaddish is, rather, the Greatness of God, Who conducts the entire universe, and especially his most favored creature, each individual human being, with careful supervision. In this prayer, we also pray for peace - from apparently the only One Who can guarantee it - peace between nations, peace between individuals, and peace of mind.

Paradoxically, this is, in fact, the only true comfort in the case of the loss of a loved one. That is, to be able to view the passing of the beloved individual from the perspective that that person's soul was gathered in, so to speak, by the One Who had provided it in the first place.



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ADON OLAM

Adon Olam (Master of the World) is a very old poem that is recited by Jews every day at the beginning of Shacharis, the morning prayers. While we are not certain who the author of this poem is, most authorities attribute it to Rabbi Shlomo ibn Gabirol, the great poet of 11th century Spain. The poem is recited before Shacharis to recall the memory of Avraham our Father, who was the first to call HaShem "Adoni" - "My Master" and who instituted the Shacharis prayers.

Master of the World who was king, before any form was created. At the time when He made all through His will, then His name was called 'King'.

And after all is gone, He, the Awesome One, will reign alone. And He was, and He is, and He will be in splendor.

And He is One, and there is no second, to compare to Him or be His equal. Without beginning, without end, to Him is the power and rulership.

And He is my God and my living Redeemer, and the Rock of my fate in times of distress. He is my banner and He is a refuge for me, my portion on the day I cry out,

In His hand I entrust my spirit, when I sleep and when I wake. And my soul shall remain with my body, HaShem is with me and I am not afraid.



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THE HISTORICAL MEANING OF “BEING BORN AGAIN” AS CONTRASTED WITH WHAT CHRISTIANITY TEACHES TODAY: WHAT ARE WE TO BELIEVE? #2

In the previous article we examined the condition of the non-Jew in relationship with Israel and it's responsibility to be a Priest to the nations. We saw historically that Israel had failed in such a mission. Yet at the same time we saw a small section of Judaism which understood Israel's failure to bring the non-Jew to God and had repented of such bigotry toward the non-Jew and had mobilized several movements and attempts to reach the non-Jewish world with the Laws of Noah and the Covenant of Noah that provided Eternal Life for the non-Jewish believer. We also saw how the doctrine of circumcision which had never been required of the non-Jew as used by the Jews as a deterrent to keep the non-Jew from interaction and fellowship with the Jews.

Answer for yourself: What was Judaism to do with the non-Jew and how would they be led to God? Would full conversion to Judaism which required circumcision and immersion be required or only immersion and what was the Jewish understanding of the **SPIRITUAL DYNAMICS** that accompanied such immersion?

You might now be aware of it at present but the answers to above questions have the potential to change you life.

Now let us continue where we left off in the first article.

WHAT DID THE CONCEPT OF “BEING BORN AGAIN” MEAN TO JESUS? SHOULD IT MEAN THE SAME TO ME?

Before going on we must provide the reader some background information about immersion and its connection to being "Born Again." We must at first understand that "Born Again" is a Jewish concept and not a Gentile concept, not a Baptist concept, not a Catholic concept, and not even a Christian concept. If you want to know what being "Born Again" means the way the Jesus of the New Testament and Nicodemus used it in John 3 then you have to ask a Jew or a Jewish scholar. To do otherwise and seek the meaning from the Vatican or any Evangelistic ministry that is on our televisions guarantees you receive an anti-Semitic replacement religious doctrine devoid of Divine truth. I apologize for other Christian ministers who have failed to such sufficiently in order to learn what these very important concepts meant to the Jesus of the New Testament before they begin to teach them; sadly doing it wrong. **We can change the meaning of "Born Again" and its intricate involvement with immersion as applied to both Jews and non-Jews but in so doing we only deceive ourselves from what God intended it mean.** We can alter religious doctrines all day long and believe me this has been done but down deep in your heart I would hope you would want to know what being "Born Again" meant to the Jesus of the New Testament and understanding it as such. For the very life of me I cannot understand how anyone can call himself a Christian or a follower of Jesus/Yeshua and not want to believe like the Jesus of the New Testament and accept what he believed about being "Born Again." Startling as it might sound the vast, vast majority of Christendom will tell you that they are "Born Again" never knowing what it

really means. Even more tragically such a declaration by the vast majority of Christians make them out to be liars as the fruit of being "Born Again" in the context used by the Jesus of the New Testament in John 3 is absolutely lacking in their lives. I will make this very plain in the forthcoming article. So this article will be one of the biggest challenges possibly in your religious life.

Answer for yourself: What did being "Born Again" mean to the Jesus of the New Testament/Yeshua? What happens when one was "Born Again" according to its Biblical definition and not the later Gentile reinterpretation of it?

In answering this we must deal with a very important issue concerning how a man comes to God and what is involved in it. This spiritual dynamic is often over looked by Gentile advocates of the current teaching of "Born Again" adopted by Gentile Christianity which finds its origins in the false atonement connected with sun worship. If you think I am kidding then I challenge you with all that I can muster to read the following website and prove it wrong.

<http://www.paganizingfaithofyeshua.netfirms.com>

Now it is time for the truth concerning being "Born Again." Biblically speaking when a person, either a Jew or Gentile turns from idols, from sin, and repents, and prays and asks forgiveness, and makes restitution, or bring alms following his repentance, confession, and prayer then he has received forgiveness of his sin. This is known Biblically as atonement. This is what the historical the Jesus of the New Testament understood concerning both his Jewish Scriptures and his faith of Biblical Judaism. Of course Gentile Christianity and its New Testament accepts an alternate atonement. Without study into the origin of this replacement atonement no one will ever know that it is reproduced sun worship applied to a Jew by Rome. Now it is given that such a one who repents, prays, confesses his sin and brings restitution and alms is one already introduced to the God of Israel. Usually of course this is a Jew. Unknown to most Christians is that a Jew was born into Covenant with God unlike Gentiles and was circumcised the 8th day of his life which was the "sign" of that Covenant. When a Jew became a son or daughter of the Covenant then they were immersed according to the teachings of the Tanakh. This was not a simple water dip as we are taught by Gentile Christianity. Something SPIRITUAL happened to the one immersed that was noticed by God but not by man. **These immersions were called "BEING BORN AGAIN" each and every time they were done; it was NOT a one time event!** The Rabbis understood that not all the Commandments from God were the same and one special group of Commandments were called "Hukkim" which was understood by the Rabbis as "commands from God that did not make human sense yet accomplished spiritual realities in the Heavens." Immersion is one such "Hukkim." This gets somewhat technical so I would like to paraphrase if I might. The Rabbis understood such an "Hukkim" concerning immersion as a "spiritual step toward the Throne of God in the Heavens." They understood to the rational mind such immersion would seem to not have any affect on our "spiritual standing before God" but yet understood that it did. This was so important to the Rabbis that we understand the great number of immersion baths located outside the Temple for the worshippers would be immersed become attending "church" if you get my drift. They understood what we as Christians don't; namely that through immersions one was accomplishing something spiritual in their walk before God. Now understand that immersions such as these "Hukkim" were not done indiscriminately; but rather they were commanded at specific times.

- **One was instructed to immerse following repentance from a sin where he was again "moving closer to God in the spirit realm."**
- **But more than that the Rabbis saw that the Tanakh commanded "being Born Again" through these immersions (mikveh) before one observes or celebrates the Sabbath and each of the Seven Biblical Festivals. These "mo'ed" are "appointed times" and "rehearsals" with God and special times with God. One prepares his heart and then "immerses" before sanctifying such "appointed times" with God because at these special times commanded by God one again is "moving closer to God in the spirit realm."**
- **A woman following her menses and her uncleanness since being tainted with blood was commanded to be "Born Again" through immersion before she could take her place again in the**

community and her husbands's bed.

As you can see the Rabbis understood such "immersions" and "mikvehs" as Commands by God that did not make rational sense yet God is God and God understands the need for these "immersions" be done by man whereby man was drawing closer to God in the Spirit realm. We find that only one "immersion" by Yeshua is recorded in the New Testament and that is the one right before Yom Kippur. Little wonder that a myriad of Jews had repented of their sins and had grouped themselves to be "immersed" like Yeshua before Yom Kippur. This was mandatory before one could observe or partake of Yom Kippur which was beginning at the dusk of the very day.

This explains the Jewish concept of being "Born Again" but does not explain it as applied to the non-Jew. This we will do now.

THE GENTILE AND BEING BORN AGAIN

The New Testament describes quite adequately the standing of the non-Jew with God:

Paul in writing to Gentiles states:

Eph 2:12 12 That at that time ye were without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope, and without God in the world: (KJV)

That is pretty bleak if you ask me. This is the Gentile's standing with God before he learns how to approach and be accepted with God. Israel we saw in the first article was hesitant in taking the non-Jew his Noahide Covenant and the ways by which he could be accepted with God. In fact we saw that Israel made it very difficult upon the non-Jew by enforcing circumcision upon a fully adult male in hopes that it served as a deterrent to keep them away from the Jewish people. We also mentioned that if a non-Jew desired to identify with the Jewish people and become a son of the Covenant as a Jew than he would be required to convert to Biblical Judaism through circumcision and immersion just like the Jew. This means that the non-Jew was being "Born Again" just like the Jew in his drawing closer to God following his repentance, prayer, confession, restitution, and alms which he was taught to bring according to the Tanakh.

This sticking issue if you remember was over "circumcision" or the "lack of circumcision" and the acceptance of such a one into the Israel of God by the Jewish people. We find a perfect example of a non-circumcised Godfearer in Cornelius in Acts 10.

When a Gentile was taught of God through the Jewish people and accepts the faith of the One God of the Universe, he identifies with God. As Gentile Christians and followers of Yeshua we likewise identify with God through the one He sent to reveal Himself; namely Yeshua (Jesus). It is through the name of Jesus we as non-Jews were instructed about the God of the Jesus of the New Testament in the first place. The Gentile (in the act of repentance and faith) literally stands at his own Sinai, as did his Gentile forefathers (the Egyptians are a type and shadow of Ephraim, the other house of Israel) and says, like the Jews of old did, "All that the Lord has spoken we will do" (Ex. 19:8). Notice that the Bible say "all" the people said it at Sinai (this included the mixed-multitude of Gentiles and Jews together)! Included in that group were a mixed multitude of Gentiles along with Jews and this fact teaches us a very important lesson for our lives. At Sinai both Gentiles and Jews confessed adherence to the Covenant offered by God. God had previously instructed that they "wash their clothes."

Answer for yourself: Is there any special significance to this mixed multitude "washing their clothes?"

The Rabbis teach that "washing their clothes" is an idiom for immersion in water of their bodies. Here we see the example of both Jew and non-Jew experiencing the concept of "immersion" and being "Born Again" as taught by the Rabbis.

This again is the Hebrew "mikveh" where both Jew and Gentile were "drawing closer to God in the spirit realm."

Having turned from the false gods of Egypt and turning to the true God and Creator Moses was instructed to have both Jew and Gentile (Mixed Multitude) draw closer to God [be Born Again} in the Spirit through immersion. This was not forgiveness of sins since that was already accomplished through their repentance. Let us be clear on that and this was not their salvation as that was already accomplished by faith and their resultant actions based on their faith in the true God. This was more of a SANCTIFICATION of setting themselves apart unto God whereby they drew closer to God. Something that they did not understand was being accomplished through their immersion. The Rabbis call this "Hukkim."

The Rabbis teach that this is an illusion to both the Jews and non-Jews being Born-Again to the God of Israel. But again understand this was NOT a one time event but an experience to be repeated throughout their lives in their worship of God.

JOHN 3 AND BEING BORN AGAIN...WAS THIS NEWS TO ISRAEL?

This might be startling to you but the concept in the Gospel of John, chapter three, concerning being "Born-Again" is not the invention of Jesus. Being You have seen if you have read these two articles that "Born-Again" is a Jewish concept that has existed since the Garden of Eden and Adam. Now hear this...being "Born Again" is to be repeated throughout one's life....even your life as a Christian! A typical Jew was "Born Again" with each new encounter with God throughout his life. A Gentile convert had his "hello" experience with the God of Israel through immersion required in conversion [that was his first Born Again experience] but yet this experience of drawing near to God was expected to be repeated throughout his live by continually being "immersed" and "Born Again" after every repentance, before each observance of the Sabbath, before each observance of a Biblical Festival, and for the woman after her menses monthly.

Answer for yourself: Can we find in Scripture examples where righteous Jews were continually "Born Again?"

Examples in scripture where the children of Israel were "Born-Again" repeatedly (immersed and attained a new-heightened status before they met with God) are before each Sabbath, before each Feast and Festival, following repentance of sin, and for a lady, after her menses on a monthly basis before she could return to her husband's bed. This will be news to most but Yeshua was immersed repeatedly in his life. Yeshua, being a Torah observant Jew, was immersed before each Sabbath service and before each Biblical Festival each year. If you added it up you would find that Yeshua was immersed a minimum of 59 times a year. That being true we are misled in understanding this concept because recorded for us is just only one immersion of Yeshua in the New Testament and that one is the immersion the day before he observed the Yom Kippur. Yom Kippur is the Festival called the Day of Atonement and as I shared earlier every Torah observant Jew had to be immersed before he could participate in observance of Biblical Feasts and Festivals. Thus we would expect Yeshua to be immersed prior to Yom Kippur and we do in New Testament.

Sadly Christian scholars debate down through history with large volumes the reason for Yeshua's immersion; never stopping once to try to understand it from a Jewish perspective. I find their lack of insight and scholarship amazing and as an ordained Pastor and Seminary graduate I am ashamed of my fellow colleagues who know so little but profess so much.

Being "Born-Again" is not a concept originated by the Gentile church. It is a Jewish concept!

Amazing! As the repentant person entered into the immersion bath (a picture of a "watery womb" and "watery tomb") only to emerge as if "Born-Again" from a watery grave and a watery womb (with a renewed spiritual status before God). It was a new start for the believer. If he had sinned and repented God granted him a new status; a new start with God was his. This was perfectly symbolized through the rising from a figurative grave to life anew with God. This was again perfectly symbolized through the emergence from a watery womb to life anew with God. The pictures and symbols and metaphors which help explain this Spiritual advance with God are perfect once you understand that something supernatural happens between the believer and God in time of drawing closer with God. God knows it; He commanded it be done. We look at it without our Hebrew Roots and interpret it incorrectly and try to relegate it to a once in a life-time experience and attach a completely foreign meaning to it that God never intended. We not only have lost truth but the opportunities to draw closer to the God we say we love.

The Rabbis call this a "Hukkim" commandment; it does not make human sense but yet God requires it. The immersed one is then considered a new creation (2 Cor. 5:17) as he emerges from the water! Remember that this was also required of a Gentile convert coming to God for the first time. He was drawing close to God for the first time in his life through this Hukkim immersion. But immersion and being "Born Again" was not only to accompany repentance after one sinned or turned to God for the first time in one's life since being a non-Jew but was commanded all the time before one observes and celebrates a Biblical Holy Day or the Sabbath. Being "Born Again" was not a once in a life-time SALVATION EXPERIENCE because one believes some theology about the Jesus of the New Testament as Paul would make it out to be in Romans 6; rather it dealt with sanctification and dedication to God which is to be repeated throughout one's life. At least that is what it meant to a Jew like Jesus. It many not have meant that to Paul, himself a Gentile convert that often departed from Jewish faith but that is whole other problem that bears your study. Also of note was that immersion and being "Born Again" applied to the non-Jew as he was immersed as part of his conversion to Judaism once he already had faith in God and had repented of his sin. This was in all the above cases a step toward God by the repentant Gentile. After his initial immersion it was then expected of him to be repeatedly immersed just like the Jew when he observed the Biblical Festivals and the Sabbath. In such a way we find the Gentile just like the Jew experiencing this drawing near to God.

Rom 10:12 12 For there is no difference between the Jew and the Greek: for the same Lord over all is rich unto all that call upon him. (KJV)

I wish everyone really believed the above verse. If you were Jewish you would have been instructed correctly concerning the mechanics of Biblical Immersion (being Born-Again) since you were a child, and would not be like many Christian Gentiles who have not had the truth taught them concerning such an important doctrine. It is startling that such a Jewish concept is considered the backbone of the Christian faith and the Christian fails to have the correct understanding regarding immersion and being Born-Again as the Jesus of the New Testament understood it. As believers we should have understood it correctly from the beginning, which we have not. A Gentile entered into the watery tomb and watery womb and emerged, no longer considered a Gentile, the old things have passed away (his condition of being a Gentile estranged from God is over), behold God made all things new (he now is a part of the Israel of God just like the Jew)! He was now considered a citizen of the Israel of God!

Eph 2:12-13 12 That at that time ye were without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope, and without God in the world: 13 But now in Christ Jesus ye who sometimes were far off are made nigh ...(KJV)

Our New Testaments teach us that the non-Jews were brought nigh to God not only by the death (blood) of Jesus which began an apostolic movement out of a Gentile hating Judaism to them in the world whereby they were instructed in the Covenant of Noah [Acts 15.16] but were brought nigh unto God by faith and immersion whereby they "drew near to God in the Spirit realm" through this Hukkim Commandment called a mikveh!

Upon emerging from the watery tomb in which he was "Born-Again" he had the status of a Spiritual Jew...a child of God. He became Israel! He was considered as if he had always been Israel, for it was said by the Rabbis following conversion that it was as if the non-Jew had no past and it was forbidden to bring up his past for it was as if he had always been Israel.

ARE YOU GRAFTED INTO ISRAEL OR NOT? OR DO YOU WANT TO REMAIN OUTSIDE THE ISRAEL OF GOD AS AN ANTISEMITIC CHRISTIAN?

The Gentile, after turning from idols and repentance (as a sign of his faith in the One God of Israel), and after following immersion in the Mikveh (baptism), was grafted into Israel as Paul would later tell us. The repentant Gentile believer chose God and His Torah. He chose to become "chosen". Since he is Israel, then the commandments given to "Israel" now apply to the Gentile "Christian" who looks to Yeshua, his teachings, and His God.

Answer for yourself: Is that your understanding? It should be!

This was the understanding of Judaism in the days of Jesus. The tragedy of the matter is that the Contemporary Christian Church has not studied to know who they are. **They are included in the House of Ephraim; they are Israel.** The Commandments of God as seen in the Torah are for them, not just the Jew born in the land!

LET'S MAKE SURE WE UNDERSTAND CORRECTLY

A "Gentile" is a term signifying a non-Jew, who is **NOT** a "son of the covenant" and is only subject to the seven Noahide Laws. Once a Gentile came to the understanding of the one true God, he would turn from idols and worship the God of Israel. **These were the "God Fearers", who accepted certain basic Jewish obligations along with the Noahide precepts. This is more than Noahidism!** People often misunderstand because my E-mail address is "bennoah1" but I am not a Noahide; I have gone beyond that and adopted Isa. 56 and consider myself a Godfearer like Cornelius in Acts 10. The Noahide movement stops short of a fuller dedication to God and that is not for me. According to the Laws of Noah idolatry, shedding of blood, and grave sexual sins were forbidden to Gentile believers. These were originally the Noahide precepts accepted also by the Synagogue on which the Gentiles were obliged. **Let me remind you that we see in Acts 15 (at least 25 years after the death of the Jesus of the New Testament) the admonition for the Gentiles to adhere to Noahide Laws to be accepted in the believing community of Israel (it was James as leader of the Jerusalem church who referred back to the Noahide Laws in addressing the question of Gentile salvation). But this was considered the "MINIMUM."** It is logical that the Apostolic Church of Jerusalem should accept the view of the Synagogue on the conditions which Gentiles needed to fulfill in order to be "saved" and "accepted" in the "family of Israel". **It can be easily shown that the fulfillment of other commandments of Judaism were not prohibited to Gentiles or Noahides. On the contrary, the Noahide precepts were only seen as the minimal condition for Gentiles to be recognized as "God-Fearers". These were so understood by the uncircumcised "God-Fearers" themselves, who**

were attracted to the Jewish way of life and accepted many Jewish commandments without becoming full proselytes (Sabbath, festivals, Tallith, etc). Understand that it would be these Godfears who were also immersed before Sabbaths and Festivals like converts and Jews. This was also the attitude of Gentile Christian "God-Fearers", as may be seen from the Epistle to the Galatians; many of them wished to observe as many Jewish precepts as they could. It is evident that, while the leadership of the mother Church in Jerusalem decided to lay no burden upon the Gentile believers beyond the Noahide precepts, it did not object to their voluntarily observing more.

Acts 15:19-21 19 Wherefore my sentence is, that we trouble not them, which from among the Gentiles are turned to God: 20 But that we write unto them, that they abstain from pollutions of idols, and from fornication, and from things strangled, and from blood. 21 For Moses of old time hath in every city them that preach him, being read in the synagogues every sabbath day. (KJV)

It would be here that the non-Jews once having come to God would continue to grow spiritually and take upon themselves other Commandments over and beyond the minimum of the Laws of Noah. Needless to say this included repeated immersions and being "Born Again" before Sabbaths and Biblical Festivals.

Among the figures of the early Church who instructed Gentile Christians to observe more precepts than these essential "Noahide" ones was Peter, as we know from Paul's criticism of him for demanding that Gentiles live like Jews (Gal. 2:14). Rather than interpreting the apostolic decree of Gentiles adhering to the Laws of Noah as a minimum, Paul saw in the Noahide precepts the maximum obligations of Gentile Christians. They need not do or observe more according to Paul. Rather than Peter being incorrect, a more comprehensive understanding of the Bible reveals Paul to be incorrect; thus the biased view of the Gentile New Testament which it totally incorrect historically and Scripturally (regarding the Hebrew Scriptures).

Answer for yourself: Are you beginning to wonder how much less of God we have in our lives today because we were never taught correctly the concept of being Born Again by the anti-Semitic Gentile Church and have failed to draw nearer to God through these Hukkim Commandments most of our lives?

GET IT CORRECT PAUL OR DON'T TEACH IT AT ALL!

Paul remarks in a letter to the Corinthians (1 Cor. 7) that the circumcised (Jews or converted Gentiles) should not remove the marks of circumcision, nor should the uncircumcised (Gentiles become Jews) circumcise themselves. Wait a minute. Paul contradicts himself (like a lot of preachers today). In Galatians 5 he says "if you Gentiles get circumcised" and then he says "don't do it."

Answer for yourself: Can't Paul make up his his mind? Under the Laws of Noah Gentiles were never to be circumcised, and it was this ruling that was given to Paul in Acts 15 and 16 in letters which he and Barnabas and others were to take to the Gentile Churches in their journeys strengthening them.

Answer for yourself: But how could a Gentile be told to not remove the marks of circumcision if it was never required of him at all? This is something that was understood by God to be voluntary as seen in Abraham's circumcision; himself a non-Jew.

In Acts 16 Paul circumcised his disciple Timothy.

Answer for yourself: Timothy was not a Jew was he?

Answer for yourself: If he was a Gentile why bother, right?

This contradiction of Paul is very puzzling.

Answer for yourself: Sadly many have incorrectly interpreted Paul as teaching that circumcision was abandoned with the coming of Yeshua the Messiah, but was it? *Acts 16 is over 20 years after Yeshua and Paul is still circumcising!*

Answer for yourself: We have failed to understand properly, so what is the clear truth of the matter?

Yeshua and his Apostles did not wish to destroy the Torah (Law) from Israel, God forbid; for it is written so in Matthew 5:17, the Jesus of the New Testament having said, *"Do not suppose that I have come to abolish the Torah. I did not come to abolish, but to fulfill. I tell you this: So long as heaven and earth endure (do they yet exist today?), not a letter, not a stroke, will disappear from the Torah (the Law) until it is achieved. If any man therefore sets aside even the least of the Torah's demands, and teaches others to do the same (the majority of Pastors who preach the contemporary Christian message), he will have the lowest place in the Kingdom of Heaven, whereas anyone who keeps the Torah, and teaches others so, will stand high in the Kingdom of Heaven."*

Bet Emet Ministries teaches Gentile and Jewish commitment and observance to the Torah, not because we desire to be "high" in the Kingdom of God, but because we love God and His Word, and would never think of destroying it by misinterpreting it or failing to study to arrive at the correct meaning of these truths for the people of God today.

It is therefore exceedingly clear that the Jesus of the New Testament never dreamed of destroying the Torah or changing the meaning of being "Born Again" as have the majority of churches today that carry his name and substitute "another Gospel" for the true Gospel of Christ.

WHAT TO DO WITH TIMOTHY?

Paul does not contradict himself because of his circumcision of Timothy, for the latter was the son of a Jewish mother, and a Gentile father (Acts 16), and Paul knew that the child of a Jewish mother is considered a "full Jew", even if the father should be a Gentile. Paul thus acted entirely in accordance with the Halakah (interpretation of Jewish Law) by circumcising Timothy. This would be in line with his position, following the Jerusalem Council of Acts 15 in 50 A.D., that no longer will Gentile believers be required to "become fully converted Jews" to be accepted into Israel; that the Gentile believers could now remain as "God-Fearers" and be accepted fully by the Jews (1 Cor 7, Acts 15) without circumcision. But yet they might not have to be circumcised to convert but in their worship of the God of Israel they will be expected to observe the Hukkim immersions before the Sabbath and Festivals [being Born Again repeatedly]. Gentiles no longer had to "convert" to Judaism and become "fully Jewish" for inclusion with equal standing with Jews within the Israel of God. The Gentiles as "God-Fearers" were to also be accepted as grafted into Israel (as demonstrated by Cornelius in Acts 10 who was a "God-Fearer" and who had not yet been circumcised). It is important to note that as a "God-Fearer", Cornelius yet observed the Noahide Laws, honored the Sabbath, and ate kosher (proper killing, dressing and preparation of animals intended for food as well as the removal of all blood). The baptism of Cornelius into the Holy Spirit as had been the Jews earlier in Acts 2 during the Festival of Pentecost was the evidence needed to convince the Jerusalem church that the middle-wall of partition was being removed between Jews and "unclean Gentiles". Understand this "baptism" of the Spirit was a miracle of hearing for Cornelius, as had the various disciples from seventy different nations in Acts 2 understood Hebrew when spoken by Peter yet never knowing the language. This was a miracle of hearing and not "tongues" as taught incorrectly by Charismatic Christianity. It literally was a reverse of the Babel curse when all nations spoke different languages but understood them. This is what we find with Cornelius and Acts 2 in spite of the erroneous teaching of Charismatics. Cornelius could all of a sudden understand Peter yet spoke no Aramaic or Hebrew. From this experience with Cornelius in Acts 10 we learn that obedience to the Noahide Laws, without circumcision (to remain only as a

"God-Fearer" and not fully convert to Judaism), was no longer to be a barrier between the "unclean Gentiles" and the Jews. This event will have a supreme impact in the Acts 15 council which is coming shortly. For example, table fellowship at the Shabbat (Sabbath observance) and the Festivals could now be shared together with the Jews without circumcision of the Gentile. This is what the Jesus movement accomplished; a new repentant understanding of the place of the non-Jew and his acceptance within the Israel of God by Jews previously blinded by their hatred of the Gentile. This was understood from Peter's vision in Acts 10 concerning "unclean foods" which the Lord cleansed (symbolic of cleansing of men [Gentiles], and not the animals designated as unclean in Leviticus). So many Christian commentators get this wrong.

Shammai's "Eighteen Measures" (one of which commanded Jews not to eat or enter into the homes of Gentiles-remember Shammai hated Gentiles) was overturned by God with the revelation at Cornelius' home. God never told a Jew that he could not enter into a Gentile's home or eat with a non-Jew; Shammai did. God corrects Shammai and those that followed his teaching. Peter's vision of the unclean foods represented the "unclean Gentiles" which God had cleansed; the vision was not meant to tell Peter that God had cleansed the "unclean foods". The message to the Jew is that no longer were they to treat the non-Jews like "dogs" and enforce circumcision upon them thereby keeping them away from God or only accepting them if they submitted to circumcision. Circumcision was to be no longer required for non-Jews to be accepted by Israel for God never required it of them; Israel was to no longer require this of them either. **But immersion, another part of the conversion process understood as being "Born Again," was to continue. This was not to change since it accomplished something Spiritual in the Heavens. Let us not confuse this issue.**

HOW DOES GOD LOOK AT YOU...A GENTILE CHRISTIAN BELIEVER TODAY?

Timothy had to be circumcised since he was Jewish (because his mother was Jewish) and, therefore, was required to observe all the commandments of the Torah (613). Gentiles who observe the Noahide Laws are forbidden to observe "ALL" the Torah like a Jew is required, unless they desire to be circumcised and identify totally with the Jew and his Torah (full-conversion); if so then they are no longer "God-Fearers" but have become full-fledged Jews and undertake all the 613 Commandments. Following Immersion into Israel the Gentile "Born Again" and is no longer considered a "Gentile", he is now Jewish (either partly or completely depending upon circumcision). All non-Jews who become circumcised following immersion are bound by ALL the commandments (613). Understand up front seldom if ever a Gentile male in the USA is circumcised on the 8th day as part of his faith or the faith of his parents according to the Bible. Let us understand as well that the immersion process is crucial for the Christian and he needs to understand it correctly as it applies to him. Once you as a Christian are immersed and identify with Israel, you emerged from that "watery womb" and a "watery tomb" as a Born-Again "God-Fearer" who is grafted into Israel without circumcision as part of any conversion process to Judaism. But yet you are immersed into the "Israel" of God and "drew close to God in a Spiritual way in the Spirit realm" and you never knew it. You are at that time considered by God as a Spiritual Jew regardless if you were aware of it or not or whether you Christian denomination or non-denomination recognizes this or not. Their doctrines cannot change the truth no matter what they think or believe. As a Gentile male who is immersed you are not considered a "partial-Jew" unless you are uncircumcised. If you are circumcised and immersed then you are yet considered a "partial-Jew" because your circumcision had no bearing upon you converting to Judaism. Of course in America circumcision is done without any spiritual significance whatsoever to the non-Jew and thereby cannot apply in any manner to a voluntary conversion to Judaism even though one is later immersed. That is why a Gentile today when he converts to Judaism still has his male member "pricked" to draw blood by the Rabbi in a token "circumcision" along with an immersion.

Answer for yourself: Did you hear that?

The majority of our readers most likely set in their churches thinking they are "Christians" and God's Word says that you are "Spiritually Jewish" (children of Abraham) and are the Israel of God. You have not replaced Israel no matter what your corrupt Christian Scriptures might fraudulently say; you became a part of Israel. Such doctrines are the fruit of Roman anti-Semitism. There is no such thing as a God ordained replacement religion even though Gentile Christianity might think in such an incorrect manner. You as a Gentile "Christian" are obligated to observe the Torah (that part of the Law that refers to you as a Godfearer and represents your Gentile Covenant before God), and sadly because of the great lack of true scholarship in Gentile Christianity you have let your unlearned pastors and teachers tell you repeatedly that you are "under grace" and "not under Law." You are under both; just examine your Covenant and you will quickly see this for yourself! I just showed you that a proper understanding of immersion and the teachings of Yeshua & Paul are in complete opposition to what Gentile Christianity believes "Born Again" means. This concept has been totally stripped from its Jewish context and given a totally different meaning that God never intended it have. Now, let me ask you as a Christian an important question.

Answer for yourself: Who are you going to believe; your pastor or Jesus as found within the faith of Judaism? It is time to do some serious study into the origin of Gentile Christianity and contrast it with what the the Jesus of the New Testament, as a Jew, believed about God and the Hebrew Scriptures before they were altered by Rome to suit their own religious beliefs.

Answer for yourself: With such an obligation to the "Christian" who now becomes aware that he is either "part-Jewish" & "Spiritual Israel" (Judaism is not a race but a religion; the religion of Jesus the Jew) what are you to do concerning the Hebrew Scriptures which by example teach that the Gentile is expected to observe the Shabbat (Sabbath), Pesach (Festival of the Passover), Hag HaMatzah (Festival of Unleavened Bread), HaBikkurim (First Fruits), Shavuot (Festival of Pentecost), Rosh HaShannah (Jewish New Year), Yom Teruah (Festival of Trumpets), Yom Kippur (Day of Atonement), and Sukkot (Festival of Tabernacles)? More than likely in your Christian Church you don't observe any of these and immersion is a one time event tied not to drawing closer to God at each of these appointed times with God but accepting that particular brand of belief and set of doctrines surrounding the Jesus of the New Testament as espoused by what particular denomination or non-denomination you are involved in at present.

Surely if you love God and desire to obey Him more than your Gentile traditions then you should want to begin to observe and keep these Holy Days of YHWH according to Scripture because informed study will reveal that not only the Jews but the non-Jews kept these Biblical Holy days all through the Hebrew Scriptures. Not only that they kept the Biblical Sabbath and not the Roman day of the Sun is our custom today. Along with this goes the concept of continually drawing closer to God at each of these "appointed times" by continually being "Born Again" throughout our lives according to the teaching of the Rabbis and the Hebrew Scriptures that the Jesus of the New Testament used and believed in with all his heart.

PLEASE TELL ME THAT IT IS BEGINNING TO MAKE SENSE

Christian scholars have assumed from certain passages in the Gospels that the Jesus of the New Testament wished to give a new Torah to take the place of the Torah of Moses. He could not do so unless he sinned.

Answer for yourself: How could the Jesus of the New Testament have then said explicitly that he came only to fulfill the Torah (Law). In Hebrew this carried the connotation of rightly interpreting the Torah and not just obeying it but obeying it properly. Yeshua never came to abolish Judaism, but came to re-establish the religion of Judaism not only for the Jews calling for repentance and return to obedience to the Scriptures but also included the same message for the Gentiles because within Judaism exists the faith that God had given the the non-Jew from the beginning-Noahidism! At the waters of Marrah Moses reiterated the Laws of Noah before he built upon them the additive Laws known today as the Laws of Noah. Noahidism is the foundation on which the Laws of Moses rests. Nor was this religion new, but actually ancient; it being the observance of the Seven Commandments of Noah, which were

forgotten purposefully by Shammai and his students because of his hatred of the non-Jew. Such hatred of the non-Jew was influencing the people of Israel in Jesus' day; thus the Jesus of the New Testament came not for those who are well but those who need a physician and who are sick; sick with hatred for the Gentiles whom God loved and to whom God had called Israel to be a light unto to show them the their own Torah-their Instruction in the Noahide Laws. Along with this was a call for Jews to return to God in repentance and this was necessary before they could be an effective witness to the nations; Israel could not give to the nations what she did not have...righteousness. God had intended for the Gentiles to be redeemed all along. the Jesus of the New Testament came for the "lost sheep of the house of Israel"; who had lost their way and forgotten their responsibility as God's Royal Priesthood to the Gentile nations. Israel had been entrusted with Divine truth for the world and she was not sharing it. She was in danger of severe judgment if she failed to repent. These truths were not only for them, but the Gentiles as well. It is important to understand that as there were "people who were lost" in Israel, there were others like the Essene Menahem and the Hillel Pharisees who had not "lost their way" and needed little if any correction by Yeshua! That is why Yeshua said the "kingdom" had been taken from the Sadducees and given to the Pharisees [Hillel School] when he said the Pharisees set in Moses' seat:

Matt 23:2 2 Saying, The scribes and the Pharisees sit in Moses' seat: (KJV)

The Greek word for "sit":

2523 kathizo- 1) to make to sit down to set, to appoint, to confer a kingdom upon one

Here we find that the rulership delegated by God to the Sadducees was stripped from them by God's representative as a spokesman for God and given to Hillel Pharisees which was the ONLY branch of Judaism that even attempted a Gentile outreach taking the Laws of Noah and the Covenant of Eternal Life to the Gentile world. Sadly the anti-Semitic Gentile New Testament blasphemes all Pharisees whereby one read and thinks that the only good Pharisee is a "dead" Pharisee. Such is the hatred spread by the New Testament; a Roman replacement religious document.

WHAT REALLY HAPPENED IN THE GREAT COMMISSION?

Jesus' Apostles, in fulfillment of the Great Commission of their master, established these Seven Commandments anew (Acts 15, Acts 16, Acts 21). However, those born as Jews (with Jewish mothers), or those Gentiles where were immersed [Born Again] and circumcised as "full-converts" to Judaism (Ex. 12:49; one law shall be to him that is home-born, and unto the stranger) are obligated to observe all 613 of the commandments of the Torah without exception. Notice if you will that the non-Jews partake of some of what the Jews were given but not all. But much was held in common by both and both Jew and Gentile keep the Sabbath, Festivals, and were "Born Again" repeatedly in their walk with God throughout their lives as this article has demonstrated beyond any doubt.

Answer for yourself: Are you a Gentile Christian [circumcised or non-circumcised] who has been immersed into the Israel of God through the ministry of Yeshua and his followers and "Born-Again" into Israel? Then that means you!

For the Gentile God reserved the Seven Noahide Commandments which they have always been obligated to fulfill. It is for that reason that they were forbidden pollution of idols, fornication, blood, and things strangled (Acts 15). Yeshua's Apostles, agreeing with the School of Hillel, would no longer enforce circumcision on the non-Jew for inclusion into the Israel of God (to do so would mean full conversion) and they would no longer enforce Sabbath observance (exactly like the Jews observed it) but teach it to the Gentile in a somewhat modified fashion. The mandatory observance of the Sabbath by "God-Fearers" was similar, but not exactly alike the Jewish observance.

This may sound so different from what your traditional Christian message has been, but your Christian message is incorrect if it does not agree or line up with the Apostle's Doctrine. I just taught it to you as it existed in the days of the Jesus of the New Testament. All of what I have shared with you is in accord with the law and custom of the Torah, as expounded by the Jewish sages, the true transmitters from Moses at Sinai, and understood by Jesus of Nazareth in the first century (they Jews today are the legacy of the Pharisees that survived 70 C.E.; they sit in Moses' seat...listen to what they say).

Our Gentile Christianity and religious dogmas and understanding today is incorrect if it violates the truths as the Jesus of the New Testament and the School of Hillel understood them. We do not know more about salvation than Jesus and the Jewish people and sages that agreed with him no matter what we think or have been taught by our Gentile authorities

It was to the Hillel Pharisees the Jesus of the New Testament referred to in Matt. 23 who set in Moses' seat and to whom we are to listen for correct doctrine. No greater example need be given than the doctrine of being "Born Again." We are not to follow the examples of any leaders if they do not line up with the Apostle's Doctrine of Acts 2:42.

Answer for yourself: Has Rome and their New Testament correctly portrayed Apostolic doctrine and how do you know for sure if have never studied Biblical Judaism and made your own comparisons of religious dogmas between them?

This teaching on immersion, being "Born Again," and conversion of the Gentile along with the role of the Godfearer is Apostolic Doctrine as Yeshua understood it and as taught by his disciples, and any other interpretation other than this is NOT correct. We are not to follow any spiritual examples unless they live what they preach and unless that line up with Biblical truth that can be demonstrated from historical and linguistic study (that means the Pharisee Preachers of Christianity today who fail to teach and live the truth of Apostolic Doctrine! No greater "Pharisees" have ever lived than the anti-Semitic Gentile Church of the last 1800 years. the Jesus of the New Testament tells us not to follow them unless they agree with him! Good advice. This same admonition is given in Deut. 17:8 ff., where the authority to teach and lead the people were given to the religious leaders God put over the people of "Israel". These occupy Moses' seat and it is time for the Christian Church to set at the feet of the Rabbis and learn truth for a change.

One of the reasons why Gentile Christianity refuses to learn from the Jewish sages and Rabbis and would rather repeat Gentile Religious dogmas which are incorrect without even knowing it because of that one passage in Romans 11 which teaches that Israel was blinded.

Rom 11:7 7 What then? Israel hath not obtained that which he seeketh for; but the election hath obtained it, and the rest were blinded (KJV)

This is all well and good **UNTIL** you find out that this passage was completely lacking from the original Romans until well after 180 A.D. when it miraculously appeared under the influence of Irenaeus which gave the world the 2nd New Testament in response to Marcion's 1st New Testament which Rome did not like. But even more the whole of Romans chapter 9, 10, and 11 cannot be shown to have existed before 180 A.D. again under Irenaeus' influence. So much for the Gentile Church's refusal to accept anything Jewish...like the correct understanding of being "Born Again."

IT IS WAY PAST TIME TO GET REAL

Answer for yourself: Do the Baptists, Methodist, Catholics, Assemblies of God, or any other denomination or non-denomination occupy Moses' seat? No. The Catholic and Protestant denominations are far from being Jewish and often very far from having truth. Salvation is of the Jews according to Yeshua and that will never change. Sadly such anti-Semitic doctrines created by Irenaeus has blinded the Gentile from truth; it is the Gentiles who are blinded to truth and not the Jews.

Answer for yourself: If by chance the Jews were wrong then what does that do to the Jesus of the New Testament and what he said concerning who is to take the reign of the Spiritual direction of Israel and the resultant responsibility for enlightening the Gentiles? Do you dare tell Jesus that he made a mistake and he should have said the Crystal Cathedral or TBN sit in Moses' seat?

It was these Sages and Pharisees who said that it is forbidden to circumcise a Gentile who does not accept upon himself the yoke of "ALL" the Commandments. In America male babies are circumcised apart from the truths of God's Word (we are commanded to circumcise on the 8th day and not within the first 2-3 days of a newborn's life or a year later as some do) and because of our failure to circumcise according to the Biblical example along with our failure to teach Biblical truth [take Born Again for an example] instead of anti-Semitic doctrines the Gentiles remain "aliens to the commonwealth of Israel." When a Gentile male is finally circumcised it has no connection to the Biblical injunction and therefore the doing so later coupled with a later immersion does not render him a "convert" to Judaism. **The Gentile becomes a "God-Fearer" and not a convert. Identification with Israel is by faith and free will. You must choose to stand at your personal Sinai and say to God "I will do all that you say".**

Answer for yourself: Do you want to obey God?

Answer for yourself: Do you want to honor His Name with your life?

Going to churches that teach error does not accomplish anything and your fellowship with darkness surely does not honor God when our worship of Him is in error and our religious beliefs as Gentile Christians are contradicted by Biblical faith.

Answer for yourself: Have you ever been to your personal Sinai and told God you will do all that He says?

Answer for yourself: Will you ever go?

Answer for yourself: Will you choose to return or remain in your Egypt of ignorance and false traditions and false religion that amount to idolatry instead of choosing the freedom of Spiritual truth when it is presented to you?

The Sages likewise said that the Gentile is commanded NOT to "fully" observe the Sabbath as does the Jew (yet he is to remember and keep it). Acts 20:6 recounts for us the Gentile believers and how they were taught by Paul to remember and keep the Sabbath. It is here we find the Gentile Church keeping Jewish ordinances well over thirty years after Yeshua's death. At one time the Gentile Church had such truths of which I speak; sadly today under Constantine's influence these truths are buried.

As far as the Gentiles ("God-Fearers") were concerned, they were **NOT** commanded to observe all the Torah (the 613 mitzvot). The Gentile "God-Fearers" did not have to accept all the 613 mitzvot and are not enjoined to observe all of the 613 commandments. However, it is completely different as far as Jews are concerned, for they became obligated to fulfill the Torah because God delivered them from the bondage of Egypt to be the people of His possession. Therefore they and their children became **subject to it forever and so are those Gentiles who make full-conversions to Judaism.**

LET'S SUM IT ALL UP

It should be easy to see that the Jesus of the New Testament and his Apostles never meant to abolish the Torah of Moses from one who is born a Jew. Likewise, did Paul write in his letter to the Corinthians (1 Cor 7) that each should adhere to the faith in which each was called. This being the case our New Testament shares with us that after Jesus' death a movement began with Jesus' followers whereby they repented of their hatred of the non-Jew and began to earnestly take the Gentile nations Gods offer of Eternal Life as found in the Laws and Covenant of Noah. Unlike before the disciples of Yeshua/ Jesus **forbid mandatory circumcision of the Gentiles before having anything to do with them. Yet they taught them correctly about being "Born Again."**

The rabbis and teachers like Hillel and the Jerusalem Church [Acts 15/16] thus took the Gentiles the revelation of God and instructed them not to be circumcised unless they wished to be fully converted to Judaism (this had no bearing upon immersion since it was required for "partial" as well as "full" conversion). **It would suffice that the Gentiles observe the Seven Noahide Commandments, as commanded upon them through the Halakhah from Moses at Sinai. This was the minimum requirements for inclusion into Israel.**

Rabbi Emden was correct; the Jesus of the New Testament brought a double kindness into the world.

- One the one hand, he strengthened the Torah of Moses majestically (Acts 24:20 states that many thousands of Jews were believers in Yeshua as Messiah and zealous for the Torah (Law); this was over 30 years after Yeshua's death and resurrection). The ministry of the Jesus of the New Testament helped return the "children of Israel back to their Fathers; the Patriarchs and their faith" and thus fulfill Malachi's prophecy.
- On the other hand, Yeshua did much good for the Gentiles (provided they do not turn about his intent as they please, as some foolish ones have done because they did not fully understand the intent of the authors of the Gospels and epistles. **Yeshua obligated his Apostles to fulfill the Great Commission by taking the Gentiles (as a minimum) the Seven Commandments of Noah so that they should not be as the beasts of the field and continue to live their lives as pagans and a little above animals. He also bestowed upon them ethical ways, and in this respect he was much more stringent with them than the Torah of Moses.** In is not necessary to impose upon Jews such extreme ethical practices, since they have been obligated to the yoke of Torah since Sinai. Israel took the oath at Sinai and are already trained in proper practice and nature of the Second Tablet of the Law (ethical monotheism and the horizontal relationships man-to-man). It would be for Paul to constantly correct, reprove, teach Apostolic Doctrine, and instruct the Gentiles in his travels since it was to his audience he would write "you are strangers from the Covenant promises, aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, without hope and without God in the world".

If Christians would study they would understand what I have detailed in this teaching. No longer would the Church erroneously teach the cessation, abolition, or replacement of the Torah of Moses and Yeshua. Such sin and foolishness would and should cease.

Because of these errant Christian scholars, hatred has increased toward the Jews who are blameless of any guilt concerning Yeshua's death and proceed innocently to observe their Torah with all their heart (intellect), soul (dedication and commitment to action) and might (resources and property). The leaders of the Churches of Jesus Christ should study to learn correctly for themselves before they lead their people into sin and astray from the will of God for their lives and teach gross error in Jesus' name. This does anything but honor him. The Jew is the brother of the Christian. Ephraim (the grafted-in Gentile) and Judah make up Israel. As members of the Christian faith, how good and pleasant it might be if you would observe what was commanded to you by your first teachers, sent directly to you by Yeshua, with his message, and not the message that anti-Semitism has created these last 2000 years. The Christian Church is in desperate need of being "Born Again" into TRUTH that its historic Fathers rejected along with forging religious documents that have almost guaranteed to this day that such truth remain hidden from the Gentile. No greater example could be given than the corruption of what

the Jesus of the New Testament knew and taught concerning being "Born Again."

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